

Sunday Ser

Sermon Text: Mark 6:1-6

Sermon Theme: It's all about Jesus. 1. He is the Savior 2. He Gives us the Way to Heaven

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ² When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! ³ Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

⁴ Jesus said to them, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.” ⁵ He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

I don’t know anyone famous, maybe you do. When I think famous people, I always think of people who are “someone else”, someone bigger, stronger, or more famous than the people I know. If someone famous walked in this morning, I would probably be blinded by their fame and not be able to say much.

But for every person like me, who thinks that famous person are special, there are those who don’t think of them as anything special. Every famous person has those who knew them before they were famous. Maybe it is their parents, siblings or their grade school friend.

These people can tell you what they were like before they became famous. They can tell you what they were like in high school, or how they were so quiet and shy growing up, or maybe about when they weren’t so good at sports. These people were close to the person before the fame, so the fame doesn’t mean much to them.

In our sermon text we get to see people who were close to Jesus, those who knew him even when he was young. Jesus comes home to preach to the people who knew him the best and they get a front row seat to meet their Savior. All that they needed was right in front of them. But they missed it. They weren’t blinded by his fame, they were blinded by their own thoughts about who they wanted Jesus to be. It has to be all about Jesus, not who we want him to be, but who he is: Our Savior, who gives us heaven.

The name Jesus was on the lips of many people. His fame was growing as he was preaching and teaching. There was power in his words, as he preached and taught that he was the Messiah. And the proof of his powerful word was in the miracles that he did. He had done many miracles of healing and driving out demons. Something that the other rabbis and teachers were not doing.

Mark begins chapter 6 with a very simple phrase, **He left there and went to his hometown.** It’s important to know what he was leaving so that we know where he was going. Jesus was leaving a place where people wanted more. Besides his normal preaching, teaching and healing, he also had performed two amazing miracles. In one miracle he had healed a woman, simply because she touched his robe in faith. In the second, he had raised a little girl from the dead with the gentle words *Talitha koum*. The people he was leaving wanted more, but he left them to come to his hometown of Nazareth.

For many congregations, it is a very special day when a young man, who has grown up in the congregation, returns from the Seminary to preach his first sermon. The congregation has seen this child grow into a young man. Maybe he sang in the choir, maybe he had special parts in the Christmas service. He was confirmed in this congregation. The congregation supported the young man’s schooling through gifts and prayers and now they are ready to listen as this young man is ready to show what all the hard work, dedication, and the Holy Spirit can accomplish.

At first glance, the people are eager to hear from the hometown boy. The son of Nazareth had returned. Maybe now he will do some miracles and healings here. Even the rabbi at the synagogue in Nazareth recognized that Jesus is a noteworthy visiting rabbi and allows him the honor of preaching on the Sabbath.

As the people gathered, they must have wondered what his first sermon to them would be about. What would lesson from the Torah would he preach, what Psalm would he speak about, what prophet would he use. Jesus picked a well-known portion of Isaiah, Isaiah 61. (*See below for the words of Isaiah 61.*)

This was a great selection because it was all about the Messiah. As was the custom, Jesus read from the scroll. When the scroll was rolled up and put away it was time for the teaching.

Why did the people come? What did they want to see from Jesus? What words did they want to hear from his mouth? Now that he had read from Isaiah. What would he say, what new message would he give about the Messiah?

Whatever message they were waiting for, it was not the one that Jesus preached to them that day. As he begins to preach, the hometown crowd goes from eagerness and anticipation to something else. Mark tells us that they were amazed, but not in a good way.

Nobody likes to see the hometown team lose. But when the losing streak gets really bad, there are those people who will boo the team. They will pick it apart because they don't like what they see,

That's what was happening here. Whatever the hometown crowd came to see and hear, it wasn't the message that Jesus was preaching to them. They began to murmur. Instead of listening to his word, they turn on him quickly and find things to pick apart. He is no longer the hometown boy. Now he is someone to discredit. Where does he get these things? What is this wisdom, this teaching he is giving to us? Where did it come from, how do we know it is true? What makes him such a special rabbi, he is Jesus.... we know his mother and brothers. There's nothing special about him. They took offense at him.

In Luke, we hear that the closing statement of Jesus sermon left no doubt what he was preaching and teaching to them. Jesus said, "**Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.**"

The hometown crowd took offense, at his message, what he was preaching and teaching. Jesus is preaching to them a sermon that he had already preached many times in cities, towns, and villages to many people. This is the message he came to preach: This prophecy is about the Messiah.... and I am the Messiah. This prophecy is about the Savior of the world.....and I am that Savior.

What Mark records at the end of this section is probably one of the saddest collections of Biblical words. **He could not do any miracles there, except lay hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith.** Strangers believed Jesus. Foreigners believed in Jesus. Even unbelievers turned to Jesus in faith, but many of these people who knew Jesus the best, did not believe in him.

As we think about the sadness of that statement, why did they come? What did they expect at the synagogue that morning? Let's put ourselves into a similar situation. What did we come to church to hear this morning, what message? If we are looking for selfish things from church, validation that our sins are not so bad, a message of acceptance and inclusion, rather than sin and grace, the music to be the style and type that I want, the pastor to motivate me to be a better Christian, maybe just a good cup of coffee and conversation, we'll be let down.

If we are looking for these things as we come to church, we will start to murmur as well. We will begin to pick apart the church and the message we're hearing. We will point out reasons why our church or our pastor is not fulfilling our needs because we're not coming to listen to Jesus, we want something else. The pastor doesn't preach well enough, the congregation isn't organized the way I would like it, the music is not good enough, we are too churchy, we are not churchy enough. I want more of this and less of that.

When our worship is not all about Jesus, we can become just like Jesus' hometown crowd. What do we need when we walk through those doors? We don't need Dr. Phil or Dr. Laura, we don't need a medical doctor to diagnose what is wrong with us, we don't need a life-coach to get us on the right track.....we need a Savior who takes us from hell and gives us heaven. We need it to be all about what Jesus has already done for us.

If walking through those doors is about me, what I want it to be about, or what I have done for Jesus, it will be a short service. What I bring to Jesus is my sins. I bring him my sexual sins, I bring him my selfishness, I bring him my lack of trust, I bring him my lack of love and caring, I bring him my lies.

What I bring is terrible, what I receive is not what I deserve. Every Sunday we bring these sins to Jesus and we confess that we are sorry that we have committed them. What we hear is the Savior we need. What we receive is the forgiveness that we don't deserve.

It is the same message that Jesus preached that Saturday in his hometown. Your sins are forgiven, your hearts are healed, you are released from the chains of sin. You are a new person. Your sins are washed away and your robes are white in my blood.

When we walk through those doors we hear Jesus' words of love. We have the Savior sinful people like us need. **For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life.**

Jesus said the prophecy of hope and salvation in the Messiah was fulfilled before them that day. Even though they did not believe him, he continued to carry out that work of saving sinners His hometown people and us.

Jesus continued to promise that there is hope and comfort, not only in forgiveness, but also in the eternal life that he gives. He told Mary and Martha that he was the resurrection and the life, this too was the prophecy fulfilled. The prophecy was also fulfilled when the nails were driven through his hands as he suffered the torture, pain and agony of hell for us. When this same mouth said, **“It is finished.”** this prophecy and many others were sealed in that blood. Heaven is ours through Jesus.

This morning and every morning it’s all about Jesus. That’s not because I said it, that’s because in his hometown, before the people he knew, Jesus pointed to himself and said it. He told them the Scriptures were about him because he was the Messiah. He told them the way to heaven was through him, because that was what the Messiah came to do. May we stand in faith and praise and thank our Savior, Jesus, because it’s all about him.

The beautiful words of Jesus’ sermon text from Isaiah 61:

Isaiah 61:1-11

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,² to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. ⁵Aliens will shepherd your flocks; foreigners will work your fields and vineyards. ⁶And you will be called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God. You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast.

⁷ Instead of their shame my people will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a double portion in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs.

⁸ “For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity. In my faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹ Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed.”

¹⁰I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.