



Growth Group Questions
March 3, 2024
“Resisting the Prophet”

Context:

Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth is never mentioned in the Old Testament. Apart from the New Testament, it is not found in any literature until 200 years after his birth. It was an out of the way place, that was about 60 acres in size, and was built into a rocky hillside. There may have been around 500 people who lived there. After the Assyrians defeated the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC, Galilee became home to a mostly Gentile population. Matthew 4:15 calls it Galilee of the Gentiles.

Jesus takes his teaching to the synagogue. Though his teaching was remarkable, he had not been trained by another rabbi, nor could he have learned what he did at home. Rather than celebrate, the people question his authenticity. Notice they don’t even call him by name.

The word for carpenter was also used for stoneworkers and because of the geography of Nazareth there is strong evidence that Jesus could have been a stoneworker, instead of a woodworker. Some of Jesus’ family is mentioned. We know about James who ran the church in Jerusalem and Jude wrote a letter which we find near the end of the New Testament.

The word used for taking offense is “skandalon” which means a stumbling block. Mark uses the word eight times and it has to do with the idea of keeping someone from coming to faith and following after Jesus.

It is hard to imagine that Jesus was unable to do his work because of the lack of faith, but Mark emphasizes that what amazes Jesus is not sin and evil, but the unwillingness to believe.

Scripture:**Mark 6:1-6**

6 He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ² On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary^[a] and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense^[b] at him. ⁴ Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown and among their own kin and in their own house.” ⁵ And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. ⁶ And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching.

Questions:

1. Mark 6:1-3 tells us that the people of Nazareth were astounded by what they heard Jesus teach, yet they “took offense at him.” What was it about Jesus that offended them?
2. Pastor Scott told us that the people in Nazareth had false stereotypes of who they thought Jesus was. What false stereotypes of Jesus might exist today?
3. How might these false stereotypes of Jesus hinder our ability to hear His voice and follow Him fully?
4. The people of Nazareth used their familiarity with Jesus to justify their unbelief. What do you see as the difference between “doubt” and “unbelief”?
5. In Mark 6:5 we read that Jesus “. . . could do no deed of power there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and cured them.” Why do you think Jesus did not do more healing and miracles in Nazareth?
6. Mark 6:6 tells us that Jesus was “amazed at their unbelief.” What does that mean to you?
7. How does Jesus’ response to the unbelief of the people in Nazareth differ from His response to others in the New Testament who expressed their doubts about Him?
8. What lessons can we learn from the story of Jesus in Nazareth as presented to us in Mark 6:1-6?

Extra Credit:

In the March 1st entry in Pastor Chad’s Lenten Devotional, we are told that many times in life we take credit for the things that God has done. Why do you think this happens? How can we guard against not giving God the credit he deserves?

Spend time in your Growth Group discussion your answers to these thoughtful questions.

