

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Living out the gospel with
one another in our homes

Date: 7/21/2024

Text: Mark 6:1-6

Message: James Risner: Is Jesus Familiar or Family?

Questions: Kraig Neer

With Ted still in India, we had a guest pastor in James Risner, who continued with our sermon series in the book of Mark. He started with some encouragement for our church regarding our partnership with the Greater Dayton Association of Baptists (GDAB) and the planting of Trails Church. It was a good reminder for me to be praying for Trails...maybe our CGs can all pray for Trails Church this week and/or check in with the Kennneys and Massaros to encourage them! James set the stage for this week's passage - in the first five chapters of Mark, Jesus called the disciples, healed many, cleansed a leper, taught many, calmed a storm, and then culminated with some significant healings in the last chapter. However, the first six verses of chapter 6 show the rejection of Jesus in his hometown by those who "knew him best," despite what they may have heard about his ministry thus far. As a result, this passage is arguably for us, professing Christians, and whether we're rejecting/minimizing parts of Jesus' teachings that are more difficult.

Verses 2 and 3: The people of Nazareth reacted to Jesus' teaching with contemptuous questions, not clarifying questions. The former expresses doubt about the teachings where the latter attempts to gain greater insight.

Q1: Reflect on a time when you last asked a contemptuous question of someone.

Q2: What was your motive? And what was the motive of the people of Nazareth? (also see Romans 8:5-8)

So the warning is this: don't be so familiar with Jesus that we miss who he truly is! Don't become a Nazarene! Don't become inoculated from all of who Jesus says he is by clinging to what we know and love about Jesus. Jesus is not a la carte. We can't accept the Savior (appreciate the salvation) but reject him as Lord (change the way we live and obey him).

Along this same line of thinking, a popular phrase is "familiarity breeds contempt." This often drives a mentality of "the grass is always greener." This results in us wishing for what we do not have and/or failing to appreciate what we do have.

Q3: Admit where your heart is tempted to covet that which you do not have, or admit where you fail to appreciate what you do have (*CG leaders should consider whether this would be better discussed in same sex groups versus entire CG*).

Jesus responds to the Nazarenes with the truth about a prophet's honor in verse 4, and then in verses 5 and 6 we get a glimpse into what Jesus did despite the unbelief of those around him. Although no "mighty" works could be done, he could still heal a few and he could still teach amongst the villages. James said this is a model for what we see throughout the Bible - God's transformative work in our life happens as we have faith to see him work, expect him to work, and invite him to work.

Q4: Discuss God's providence and our role in this life as his image bearers. (*Depending on the conversation, you might ask: how can the following commands be meaningful if our decisions/actions don't ultimately matter: Acts 16:31, John 6:37, and John 8:11.*)

The small things we do every day can add up to make a big difference. James encouraged us to have eyes of faith to see all of life as a tremendous gift from God, expressing gratitude for each new day, person, and opportunity - just like children see the world (Matthew 11:25).