

More than a Carpenter

Mark 6:1-13

July 21, 2024 Pastor Jeremy Cagle

Good morning, everyone. I want to let you know that I, since it's kind of warm in here, I don't plan on preaching a super long sermon here today. We've talked about putting fans in the room to kind of cool it down. The challenge we have is that they're loud. And so we'll just pray for some fresh air to keep blowing through here. Someone asked me, could we go back to the tent? Since we're in the gym here, should we go back to the tent? It was hotter in there, if you remember that. So the gym is actually more comfortable than the tent was. But it's reminding us of that summer, if you remember that. And we had some pretty warm Sundays out there on the farm.

But with that said, if you were to just take your Bibles and turn with me to the Gospel of Mark. That's the book we're in today. We are going to be looking at the second book of the New Testament, continuing our studies and the Gospel of Mark.

And as you're turning there, I want to let you know also that my family and I had the privilege of visiting Banff recently and seeing all the sights over there. And if you've ever been there before, you'll know that we were blown away by it all. It's one of the prettiest places on earth. Banff is a town located in the Rocky Mountains where the lakes are full of glacier runoff, causing them to turn a very unusual color. While we were there, the water was green, the sky was blue, and the mountains were full of snow. But as we're looking at all that I noticed that our tour guide was acting strangely because he was really bored with it all. So I asked him why. And he said, "Because I get to see it all the time." He said, "I guess the saying is true, that familiarity, really does breed contempt."

And I tell that story because that's what our text is about today. In Mark 6, Mark is going to continue his story of the life of Christ by telling us about some people who had contempt for Him because verse one says they came from His hometown of Nazareth. That's why they did that. Because He grew up right around the corner from them, which made Him seem so familiar. To the point that down in verse three, they call Him the carpenter. Imagine that. Not the Messiah, but the carpenter. They don't refer to Him as the Saviour the way other people did at the time; they viewed Him as a common day laborer and nothing more. So when He burst on the scene, they said, "I'm bored. I've heard it all before." Jesus is great. "I've heard it before." He's awesome. "I've heard it before." He does signs and wonders. "I heard that one too, so I don't care." They took it all for granted.

If we're honest, for a moment, it's not hard to do that in churches. It's pretty easy to come into a place like this and take it all for granted. And just by show of hands, how many of you have ever walked into a room like this and said, "I'm bored" afterwards? I don't think anybody wants to raise their hand at that. But some of us have; it's not that unheard of. To say another way, how many have showed up in places like this and heard a story like this in the Bible and done that? Because you said, "I know, I heard

before. Jesus was rejected. I heard it, Pastor Jeremy. He was spurned, I heard it. He was called a carpenter and a day laborer. I know. I grew up in church. I studied that ever since I was a kid.” Well, that may be true, but the issue is, has it ever made an impact on you? See, that's all that matters. The Bible says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you'll be saved.” It does not say, “Hear about Him and you will be saved, or learn about Him and you'll be saved, or read stories about Him in the Bible.” That's not enough. You need to give your life over to Him in faith and repentance.

This is a very important thing we have to talk about today because in all our years here at Grace, we've known some people who have left our church over the issue of sin, but there's far more who have done it over the issue of apathy. Because like my tour guide, they came to a place where they were just bored with it all. They didn't make a decision to leave. They didn't storm out the door. They just got distracted and did it. And if this story teaches you anything it's that you have to be on guard against that, instead of being careless; it can happen to any one of us.

And that's what we're going to talk about this morning with four things Mark tells us about these people's rejection of Christ. So if you're taking notes, this is the outline in Mark 6, in the first half of the chapter, we're going to look at four things Mark tells us about these people's rejection of Christ.

And the first one we just talked about, is that they rejected Him in his hometown. So Mark begins by telling us these people rejected Christ in His hometown, which means they didn't do it in Jerusalem or somewhere far away where nobody knew Him. They did it where everyone did, in His own community. That makes it personal.

If you look at Mark 6:1, it tells us this when it says that Jesus went out from there, or He went out from the area around the Sea of Galilee, where He's at in chapter five, and He came into his hometown of Nazareth. Now, the name Nazareth is not in the passage, but every scholar I could find says this is what it's referring to. Because the word for hometown means land of your father in Greek. And that's what Nazareth was for Christ. It was a place where His earthly father Joseph used to live.

And I want to stop and say a few words about this for a second because if you were to pull out a map of Israel, from the first century, you would see that Nazareth was located about 15 miles southwest of the Sea of Galilee, where so many things take place in the Gospel of Mark. I've told you before, every time you go through Mark, it's like every other page you're in the Sea of Galilee. Now He's going 15 miles away into an area that's not a lakeside town, it's further inland making it harder to find. That's why Nazareth is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It's not mentioned in any of the Jewish writings at the time. Some have even said many rabbis didn't know where it was because it was situated in the hillsides, kind of like Banff, except everybody knows where Banff is. The area around the Sea of Galilee is very steep. But once you get out of there, it flattens out for several miles, until you enter into the southern end of the Lebanon mountain range. And that's where Nazareth could be found causing it to be hidden. Now there was a road going through there called the Via Maris, way of the sea. And so it wasn't isolated in

every regard. You could find it, but it still had a reputation for being small. Do you remember what Nathaniel said when he heard Jesus came from this place? He said, “Nazareth, can anything good come from Nazareth?” That’s how people looked at it. It was an area you sneered at. It’s not where you expect the Messiah to come from.

Yet, interestingly enough, the Bible says Jesus would spend most of His life there. He would be born in Bethlehem; His family would then flee to Egypt for a season; and He was raised there. So that the people of Nazareth would have the privilege of knowing Christ ever since He was this tall. Now, some of you understand what this is like. You were raised in Chilliwack, and there are people in this town that have known you ever since you were this tall. Some of them still pat you on the head, even though you’re a full-grown man. What does that do? It gives you a sense of stability. Right? When I go back to my hometown in Tennessee, it makes you feel like you belong somewhere. They talk like you, they like ranch dressing like you, all those types of things. That’s what Nazareth should have done for Christ on a human level. It should have been a place of comfort to Him. But it was not. It was the site of some of His greatest sorrows in ministry.

And just to give you a taste of this, if you keep your finger in the Gospel of Mark, turn with me to Luke 4 because this is not the first time Jesus ever went to Nazareth to preach. He did it before in Luke 4. And you need to see what happens there to get some perspective on this because Luke 4:16, says this, it says that,

And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to Him. And He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME,
BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO BRING GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR.
HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO CAPTIVES,
AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,
TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

And He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all *the people* in the synagogue were intently directed at Him. Now He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

When He said that everyone knew what He meant. “I am the Messiah.” Those words would have told everyone in the room that He is claiming to be the one Isaiah wrote about, which caused them to be positive at first. They really liked it, but not for long. It was only superficial, so Jesus confronted them on it and look at what they do down in verse 28. Look at how quickly a crowd can turn on you. It says,

“And all *the people* in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; and they got up and drove Him out of the city, so that they could throw Him down from the cliff.” I would say that's not much of a homecoming, is it? Talk about a reaction. But it occurred because get this, they knew Him ever since he was this tall. The reason that people of Nazareth respond this way toward Christ and then lash out at Him in rage is because they spent more time with Him than almost anyone else on earth. And they didn't think He had the right to talk to them like that, of all the nerve.

Now, if you turn back to Mark 6, what I want you to see right now is that after all that happened, Jesus goes back. Now let that sink in for a moment. That means that after the people of Nazareth in His hometown, friends, family, tried to kill Him, He returned so He could give them one more chance to be saved. Would you do that? Let me tell you what I would do, I'm a preacher, I'll tell you what I would do, you get one chance right? You ain't throwing me off a cliff. One opportunity to hear the gospel no more. He's much more gracious.

And as He returns to show His grace and mercy to the stubborn people, verse one says, He brings the disciples with them. Now, what do you think they would have been thinking about? No thanks, right. What would have been going through their heads? “Let's get out of here. Jesus. These people are nuts. Do you remember what they tried to do to You?” Jesus says, “I didn't forget. I know what they tried to do, but I want to go back. I am a God of mercy.” Aren't you glad He's a God of mercy like this? Listen, friends, none of you would be saved if Christ was not merciful. And just like it was with Nazareth, all of us would go to hell if He gave you one chance to be saved and that was it. Many of us grew up in church, like I just said, We rejected Him. We heard the gospel for years. We said no, we went to Sunday school, children's church, VBS, Awana, Christian High School, Christian College, Christian Grad school, and what did we do? We said, “It's also boring.” Did we get excited? No. Passionate? No. Did we get worked up about it and thank the Lord and say Hallelujah? No, we checked out. And yet Christ just kept coming back in His love and kindness, not once or twice; but some of you heard the gospel hundreds of times before you believed? Which really means if you don't trust in Him now, you have no one to blame but yourself. You can't blame Him. He's been abundantly kind.

I think some people make it harder than this. They say, “Well, it's not that simple. Pastor Jeremy. The reason I don't believe is because Jesus hasn't given me enough proof.” That's not true. He's given you all the proof you would ever need. For some of us, you have decades of proof. The problem is you don't want to hear it. Like Nazareth, you're rejecting it this morning. If you think about it, no one had more reason to believe in Jesus than these people. They knew Him longer. They had more access. They saw His life up close and personal. They knew He never sinned. They knew He was holy. And when He comes back to reveal himself, they try to kill them. Which shows you that when someone rejects Christ, the issue is not a lack of proof. It's your cold and darkened heart. Some of you want to take that home because even now, you might be telling yourself, “Oh, I hear what you're saying, but I still have questions. And until I get them answered, I cannot believe.” That's the wrong way to look at this. The

fact is that if you've been in church for a long time, if you don't believe by now, some of you may never do it. You need to trust in Him right away.

That brings us to another thing Mark tells us about these people's rejection of the Lord, and that is that they now reject Him with questions. So first, they do it in His hometown. That's the setting. That's the scene; but now here's the method. They do it with questions or objections to what He's preaching. Or rejections to Him personally, because if you continue reading in verse two, it says, "When the Sabbath came, Jesus began to teach in the synagogue."

Now, that's interesting after what we saw in Luke 4 because it means that after throwing Him out of the synagogue, the people of Nazareth bring Him back. Same place because Jesus was popular at the time. The whole nation was talking about Him. And so after violently removing Him on the previous visit, they bring Him back. They invite Him to return so He could speak to them again. They want to hear what all the fuss is about.

And as He does, Mark tells us they're astonished. That's not because they agreed with Him, but because they question it. And they say, "Where does this man get these things?" Now, if you look in your Bibles, that doesn't come across well in English, but the following statements are pretty blunt in Greek; they're almost harsh. Because they don't mention Jesus' name. Now they know His name, they know exactly who He is. Instead, they refer to Him three times as "this guy" in the original Greek. Do you hear the scorn in that? They just keep saying "this guy, this guy, this guy," as if He's a stranger.

And they ask each other five things about Him. Let me walk you through them here in the text. The first one is, and I'm going to insert that phrase in here so you can feel what it sounded like, "Where did this guy get these things?" That's a reference to His teaching because that's what Jesus is doing at the time. He is preaching the Word of God to them. And so they're wondering, where did He come up with all this stuff that He's saying, This is unbelievable. We've never heard anything like this before. And then they ask, "What is the wisdom given to this guy?" Because they acknowledge that Jesus is wise. He's not preaching the Bible over their heads. He's driving it home. Pressing it in. So now they're wondering, Where did He learn how to do that? Which brings you to the third question, and I'll borrow from the ESV here. But "How are such mighty deeds done by this guy," because they had seen Jesus' miracles, or they'd heard about them; most people had in Israel at the time. And it blew them away. So now they ask, "Is not this the carpenter?" In other words, He's no rabbi. They knew that Jesus did not go to school for this. He's a builder by trade. He makes houses. And furthermore, He's Mary son, and His brothers are James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon, which brings it to the last question that sums it up in that is, "Are not His sisters here among us?" And if you have a pen, you could even take it out and circle the words "among us." That's the key. What they're saying is, are His relatives not just up the road, around the corner, so you can reach out and touch them? Of course they are. Go see for yourself, which means one thing, and that is that He is not the Messiah. If you put all these things together in their context, and

you understand how they're coming across, what they're telling themselves is Jesus can't be the Christ, because He's nothing special. He's just a normal person like us.

And as I say that I want to tell you, when I first read this passage, I really thought there was more to it. Because I looked at these questions, and I said, "Wow, these people are hungry." Right? I mean, look at them. They're searching for truth. They're not. Down in verse six, it says they don't believe. Which means they're not searching for anything here. They're just lost people talking like this, so they don't have to face the truth. When you read these questions, they don't bring up one thing He said in the sermon. They're not interacting with the doctrine. They're not talking about the Scriptures that He's expounding. They're just talking about Him. In Latin, it's the ad hominem argument, against the man, where you don't even pay attention to the content. You're just going after the preacher. It's a common thing to do, isn't it? It's not unusual.

So many people come to church and act like this, so they don't have to face the truth. They hear a sermon and question it. They listen to one of the messages and they object because they say, "Well, how can that be right when it makes me feel bad?" Or "Shouldn't the church be more encouraging? Shouldn't a preacher be more encouraging?" Well, yeah, sure, He could at times. He needs to be that way. But that doesn't mean you're not bad and you shouldn't feel convicted by the sermon. But rather than deal with that some want to avoid it on a tangent. That's what's taking place.

In fact, the way this is worded makes it sound like these people are just chasing after all kinds of tangents. Instead of listening to Jesus, they just keep firing off question after question, because they don't agree with what He's saying. I talked to people in our church who have told me they've witnessed to someone who's done this because they just peppered them with questions all night long. And it frustrated them until they realize that it's happening because they don't agree either. They're not asking all those questions because they're trying to listen and learn. They're doing it out of a heart of defiance. That's the posture here. I mean, in this passage, it's interesting, because they're not trying to push Him off a cliff anymore, thankfully. But that doesn't mean the hostility is gone. It's not; it's still there, just brewing underneath the surface. The people of Nazareth have learned manners, but they haven't gotten converted.

In one of his books to the Jews, the historian Josephus tells a story of a time a skeptic was asked, "Why do you question God so much?" And he said, "Why not? He deserves it, because I can't stand Him." I believe if you were to take the Nazareth people aside and ask them about Jesus, they might give you a similar answer. He deserves this because I just can't, He just drives me crazy. They're not being teachable.

Brings you to another thing Mark tells us about these people's rejection of Christ, and that is that they reject Him because they took offense. A third thing Mark tells us about these people's rejection of Christ is that they reject Him because they took offense. And this is helpful because it takes you behind the

scenes to show what's going on in the minds of these people and that is that they are angry at Him. And you can see this in your Bibles in verse three when it says after they ask these questions, they took offense.

And again, I don't know where those words are strong enough to convey the idea because the word for offense is *skandalizō* in Greek from which we get the word scandal. In other words, Mark says these people were not offended as much as they're really outraged at these words from Jesus because it throws them into a tizzy like a scandal would. The apostle Paul uses this word in 1 Corinthians 1:23, when he says that the gospel is a *skandalizō* or stumbling block to the Jews. It makes them trip and fall, like the town of Nazareth. Jesus' message figuratively pushes them over the edge again. They did it once in the Gospel of Luke, now it's doing it again.

Which is why the Lord goes on to explain in verse four, these famous words that “a prophet is not without honour, except in his hometown.” And that's an important statement in the text because it's the only time we actually find out what Jesus says here. And that is that the reason you guys are so upset with Me is because I come from your hometown. And the thing that's causing you to trip and fall is the fact that I grew up right around the corner from you. And instead of acknowledging that, and treating you differently, I'm talking to you like a prophet would. I'm cutting it straight, which makes you say, “Of all the nerve. Just who do you think you want to talk to us like that Jesus?” Because their familiarity is giving them contempt.

Now, before we're too hard on these people of Nazareth, let me just say they're not alone in that. This is something that men and women have done for ages in the Bible. Because this phrase, “a prophet is not without honour, except in his hometown and among his relatives and his household” could be understood to say that any prophet is not without honour, or all of them are this way because they've all been treated like Jesus. He's no exception. And when you open the Bible, you find that who was it that beat up the prophet Jeremiah, and put him in stocks? Well, Jeremiah 20 says it was a man named Pashhur who knew him on some level. The two of them were acquaintances. They weren't strangers, which is why he assaulted him. The familiarity gave him contempt. Then going back a little further than that, who was it that threatened to kill the prophet Elijah in the book of First Kings? It was the wicked Queen Jezebel, who knew him too. The two of them were acquainted. They had a relationship, even though it was a bad one. You see it again in the life of Isaiah. According to tradition, King Manasseh put him between two logs and sawed him in half even though some believe Isaiah was his court minister. And Jesus' point here is that after all of that, now you guys are doing it to Me. I'm just the next one in a long line of martyrs. Jeremiah showed up, they assaulted him. Elijah came and they threatened him. Isaiah appeared and they murdered him. Why should I expect it to be any different with you? It's pretty direct, isn't it? I would say that's not very seeker sensitive. It's a dangerous thing to preach in the land of Israel. You take your life into your hands when you do that.

And as I say that it reminds me of these words from Steve Lawson that he told us at Shepherd's Conference years ago, when he said, "The problem with today's preachers is that nobody wants to kill them anymore." But you couldn't say that about Jesus. There were times when it was like everybody wanted to kill Him. You almost had to take a number and stand in line. He also said, "Another problem with the current state of the church is that it's full of mild-mannered men telling mild-mannered people to be more mild-mannered." You couldn't claim that about Christ either. There's nothing mild about Him here. He offends everyone in the story twice. from the least to the greatest.

And I think this is helpful because we are in the process of looking for a new teaching pastor here at Grace. And as we do that, you need to remember the kind of Pastor leader Shepherd Jesus was. He was a fireball. No marshmallow here. He was the kind of man who would start fights and cause riots because He told people the truth, and you need a search for the same spirit in the next man. You pick to lead you. You don't want to quarrelsome man or giver of blows, but you want to brave one.

To highlight this, some time ago, I came across an interesting resume that someone created for their church when they were looking for a new pastor. And it said this, It said,

To whom it may concern,

I understand that your pulpit is vacant, and I'm writing to apply for the position to be your pastor. In order to do so let me say a little about myself because although I was not raised in a fancy place, I can safely say God has been with me my entire life because I and the Father are one. I've never received any formal training, but my preaching has generally received a good response, except for the time several members of my town tried to kill me, and I got interrupted by a few demons that I had to cast out. As far as church growth goes at the end of my ministry, I had 12 main men following me until they deserted me at my arrest. One of them went on to commit suicide because he hung himself. Thankfully, there were several women who stuck close by my side, including my mother. Since I've been an itinerant preacher, you also need to know I've never stayed in the same place for long. In addition, I haven't really gotten along too well with other religious leaders in the communities I served in because most of them ostracize me, before banning me from the synagogue.

But needless to say, if you choose me as your leader, I will promise to lead you to God, because nobody comes to Him, but through me. However, it will not be easy, you will have to take up your cross and follow. Either way, please let me know what you decide. I eagerly await your answer with love and grace, signed the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to read that to you because I think it raises a good issue, and that is that a lot of churches today would not want Jesus to be their pastor. They they'd pass Him by; He's just too controversial. He didn't come to bring peace but a sword. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't pick Him. You should.

You should pick any candidate who follows in his footsteps. You don't want a people pleaser. What's that? You don't want to pick a man who melts at the first sign of pressure; you want one with a backbone. And someone asked me the other day, "How do you know if you're called into ministry?" And that's what I told him. You have to have a backbone among other things. Ministry is hard work, those who are called to it, show it in their willingness to keep going no matter the cost. When troubles come, they stick with it, just like Christ. Jesus showed an incredible amount of resilience here. Some men if they went back to their hometown and preached and were treated this way, that would be it. They're done. They'll never go to a pulpit again. You'll never see them up there. They'll just throw in the towel. Not Christ.

And that brings us to one more thing Mark tells us about these people's rejection of Him, and that is that it just didn't stop Him. The final thing Mark tells us about their rejection is that their rejection did not stop Him. Which means that even though the people of Nazareth deny Him again, He keeps going in the ministry because He had a backbone.

By the time you get to verse five, you can tell Mark is bringing this to a close when he says that as a result of this, Jesus could do no miracles there. And now, that doesn't mean Jesus could not do miracles there because He was unable. Jesus is able to do anything he wants. It means He couldn't do miracles because He didn't want to. These people didn't want His help so He said, "Fine, you don't want it, you can't have it." And he moved on. Except it says that "He laid hands on a few sick people and healed them first, but for the rest, He wondered at their unbelief," making it seem like his ministry was over in the region.

Maybe this was the end of the trail for Him as far as that corner of Galilee was concerned, but it's not because the end of the verse says He was going around teaching. And that means that after the people of Nazareth reject Him, Jesus does not quit. He starts preaching the gospel in other places to anyone who would listen. Went here, there and everywhere. He goes far and wide all across the land on a preaching tour.

And not only this, but verse seven says He got the disciples to help Him. Historians tell us, there were about 240 villages in the area of Nazareth at this time in the first century, which was too many for Jesus to get to by Himself in a short period of time. So He summons the twelve to join Him in the work. And by the way, a lot of them are going to go into their hometowns; they're from Galilee. And so if they start preaching in the villages, they're going to go into the same type of group that Jesus did. They're going to preach to their uncles, cousins, aunts, stepsisters, whoever. It's fun preaching to strangers. Can I tell you that? Because if they get mad at you, they're strangers. It's no big deal. This is not easy work.

And as they do, His words imply how hard it'll be because it says they were given authority over unclean spirits. And that means that they're going to face demons and unclean spirits as they preach.

They'll go up against the powers of hell itself. And verse eight says they were to take nothing but their staff. They're going to be so busy, they're going to pack light and travel fast. Verse 11 says they also have to be ready to shake the dust off their feet when someone does not receive them because they're going to be rejected like Christ was. As they go into their communities and talk to their families and friends. They're not going to make everyone happy. They're going to ruffle feathers, but when it occurs, His advice is simple. Don't let that stop you either. You keep going until you find someone who will listen.

Because there's a lesson in this and that is it for people who reject your message this way, they can lose their opportunity to hear the gospel. If they keep refusing you like this, there's consequences. And one of them is that I will refuse them too. Jesus says, "I'll give them opportunities to hear the gospel; I will make sure the villages have chances to be saved, but if all they do is stick their fingers in their ears, there will be a time when I will say, 'fine' to them too. 'You don't want it you can't have it.' They need to take this seriously. When you come to town," Jesus says, "they need to know you mean business. There is a decision to make."

This phrase "shake the dust off your feet" is not really familiar to us, but it's kind of like the phrase "wash your hands of it." It was a custom the Jews employed whenever they came back from Gentile lands to symbolize that I'm done with this now. I don't want anything else to do with that anymore. And the Lord tells the disciples to use it toward anyone who does not receive what they have to offer. If you go into a place and someone says, "No, I don't want to hear about Jesus. No, I don't want to learn about the Messiah. No, I don't want to listen to you tell me about the grace and love and mercy that He brings." There's only one thing left for you to do and that is just walk away. Shocking, isn't it?

And as we reflect on this, it makes me just ask the question, do you know God still does that today? Has anyone ever told you that if you continue to say "no" to God, "no, I don't want to hear about Jesus and No, I don't want the Messiah," He will wash his hands of you, at some point. It may not be today, may not be tomorrow, but it will happen eventually. In fact, John 3 says that "He who believes in the Son has life, but for everyone who does not the wrath of God abides on them." And that's in the present tense. It means that the wrath of God is not waiting to abide or starting to abide. It's on you now. Because you've sinned. Because for some of you, you're listening to this sermon and saying, "No." And you might be hearing me talk about Christ and you're rejecting it because you're saying, "I heard it all before." Jesus is great. "I heard it before, Pastor Jeremy." He's awesome. "I heard that" He goes into Nazareth, they did not accept them. "I know, I grew up in church. What's the big deal?" Well, the big deal is, if you don't believe it, Christ will have nothing to do with you. Yeah, He'll be patient and He will reach out not once or twice, but for some of us multiple times, hundreds of times. But a time will come when it'll end. And you have to start thinking that way. I'm afraid some of us don't do that because we think our time in church will never end. And we believe this kind of thing will go on indefinitely so we can come in this week, and do this in our hearts. And we can come back next week and just do it again. It's not true. Jesus didn't let these people do that. He won't let us do it either.

I mean, as far as we know, the apostles would not go back to some of these villages again. And Jesus would not return to the town of Nazareth. At least if He does go back to Nazareth, I couldn't find it in the Bible. This is the last go round. And it should be a reminder to you that if you're wrong, Jesus may have a last trip scheduled for you as well and it needs to shock you into action. I told you we had an important thing to talk about today we do. You can go to hell from the doorsteps of a church. Did you hear what I said? You can lose your soul sitting right here in this room if you continue to show disdain for the Lord Jesus Christ, and you don't want to do that. You need to be urgent about Him.

And speaking of that, next week, we're going to look at the life of a man who was not urgent about Christ. He was the opposite. And that's King Herod. Can you think of anyone more wicked in the Bible than the Herods? They're so wicked, you get confused which one was wickeder. According to verse 18, he's living with his brother's wife to such a degree that John the Baptist confronts him over it. And what does Herod do? He throws him in jail, and he even goes on to cut his head off through a series of circumstances. And his story should be a reminder not to let your heart go down that path. If you're showing apathy towards Christ this morning, you need to repent right away, and we'll talk about that the next time we're together. So please come back and join us for that.

For now, I don't want to end this sermon without going back to the way I started it because I began by telling you about that tour guide in Banff, who was so bored with everything. But I didn't have a chance to tell you about another person I met when I was there, and that was a lady who was visiting from elsewhere. And she was anything but bored because she kept taking pictures of everything. If you've been to Banff before, you've seen how many cameras are pulled out in Banff; there's thousands of cameras. When she went over here, she took a picture. She went over there, and she took a picture. And asked her about that too and she said it was because "I don't know if I'll ever have the privilege of seeing this again. I want to take advantage of it." Friends, you need to do the same thing today with Christ. Take advantage of Him. believe on Him now. You don't know if you'll ever have the privilege of doing it again; that's not guaranteed for you. The Bible says, "Behold now is the accepted time. Today is a day of salvation." He is more than just a carpenter.

Let me close us in a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, Lord, I do pray for those here this morning who are identifying with the people in the town of Nazareth because they come from a place where they have just heard about Christ, and they've heard about You more times than they can even shake a stick at, and it has caused them to develop a veil of complacency in their hearts. I think many of us have been there before, Lord, but some of us are still there. And Father I pray for them because that is a horrible place to be because You end up just coming becoming a machine in church. And You go through a fake Christian life mouthing words, repeating things, just acting really. Father, I pray, if there's any here this morning who are behaving that way, You

would drive them to the cross in repentance. Lord, my heart goes out to them. I was there. I think there's many who have been there before. And Lord, it's a horrible thing to witness.

Father, for those here who are in Christ, Lord, we thank You because You have saved some of us out of that spiritual stupor. In Your grace and mercy, the 100th time or 200th time or 300th time, You called out, the Holy Spirit opened our eyes, and we were born again. Father, that's all of You. We can't take credit for any of that. It is just Your complete and sovereign will in mercy. We thank You for that Father. But in all these things, Lord, we don't want to just be hearers of the word, we want to be doers. And when we hear these things in the Bible, we want to make them applicable. So Lord, I pray that we would leave in that spirit this morning.

Thank You for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank You that He would not just go to Nazareth once, but He would do it again. And then He would continue His ministry because He is a Saviour of complete persistence, and patience. Thank You for Him. May we go from this place and worship Him more, on account of what we've heard. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.