

MARK — Unbelief & Jesus

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What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. — A.W. Tozer

Meaning, what we think about Jesus is correlated with what will show up in our own life.

Mark 6:1-6

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. 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? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? 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.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mk 6:1–6.

“Isn’t He the Carpenter?”

Jesus started out as a wood worker or stone craftsman — Manual labor. This is a derogatory question because Jesus as a traveling Rabbi was never trained in the rabbinic tradition. “Why should we listen to him?”

"Isn't he the son of Mary?" — Was he actually the son of Joseph or someone else? Is Jesus a bastard child?

And for these reasons, Jesus' own community rejected his words and didn't see him for who he really was. They couldn't see him beyond what they knew and grew up with.

Why Take Offense?

The curse of familiarity: "*Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.'*"

Jesus aligns himself with the long lineage of prophets — Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Amos, the others whom Israel rejected and killed them. And he foreshadows his fate at the hands of Israel as well.

The Curse of Familiarity

When you think you know someone so well it blinds you from seeing the calling the person has in them, their true original design.

It takes a community to look beyond the external and pull out who they really are. Paul appeals in 2 Corinthians for Christians to get out of the myopic cultural lens through which we view people and adopt a Kingdom lens to see people for who God made them to be.

2 Corinthians 5:16-19

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 2 Co 5:16–19.

Some of the people you are sitting around the table with are going to blow us away by contributing to the flourishing of our city and the world. God has called people to make this city a better place. God has made you for Kingdom stewardship that goes beyond small thinking that you may have put on yourself or that others may put on you.

We say to you that you are made in His Image for more, and you were made well.

It is okay to fail and make mistakes! It's okay to go to other people for help. That's how we persist in this journey of following King Jesus, but we won't succeed and see who Jesus is.

Who is Jesus?

If our view of Jesus is like the view of his family, or if it's a view that results in us putting Jesus in a small box of comfort and familiarity? If we do, then that's going to cause us to stagnate, and put us in a place of hubris over who Jesus is.

If that is you, you have the gift of repentance before you, *"Jesus I repent for putting you in a box. I receive your forgiveness and receive the vision of you as my king. I'll do what you want me to do. I rebuke complacency and small faith. Help me have deeper faith."*

Why Couldn't Jesus Heal People?

We're tempted to believe that Jesus' healing factor is dependent on only one variable: His sovereign will.

However, that falls into a fatalistic view that has nothing to do with us. “Whatever God does, he will do, and I am along for the ride.”

But Mark’s gospel invites us headfirst into the mystery of our participation and agency with Jesus. Jesus’ power ran into a hard limit with the hometown lack of faith and their deep offense at him. And this is a mystery.

This should cause us to question and ponder. “Am I too familiar with Jesus? Maybe I’m the opposite; perhaps I’m unfamiliar with who he is and I don’t know what he’s like?”

Perhaps we’re stuck because of our offense and lack of faith in him.



Again, If that is you, you have the gift of repentance before you, “*Jesus I repent for being offended at you, and for my lack of faith. I receive your forgiveness and receive the vision of you as my king. I’ll do what you want me to do. I rebuke complacency and small faith. Help me have deeper faith.*”