

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Mark 6:1-6.**
- B. One of the central themes in this section of Mark's gospel is the unbelief of people who came into contact with God's Servant.
- C. As we study this chapter, keep in mind the solemn admonition of Hebrews 3:12.

I. THE UNBELIEF OF NAZARETH.

- A. See **Mk. 6:1-6.**
- B. What was their problem? They thought that they really knew Him. After all, He had been their neighbor for nearly thirty years, they had seen Him at work in the carpenter's shop, and He appeared to be just another Nazarene. He was a "commoner" and the people saw no reason to commit themselves to Him! Since X's family did not have the powers that He did they were "offended" and "stumbled over Him." They could not explain Him, so they rejected Him. (This was the movie plot of *Phenomenon*.)
- C. Dick Oliver, one of the elders at Philo Rd. in Urbana, has said concerning this passage, "An expert is someone who lives at least 30 miles away!"
- D. "Familiarity breeds contempt" is a well-known maxim that goes all the way back to Publius the Syrian (2BC). The maxim however, must be taken with a grain of salt. "Familiarity breeds contempt, only with contemptible things or among contemptible people." The contempt shown by the Nazarenes said nothing about JC, but it said a great deal about them!
- E. Our lesson is: It is possible to be so close to Jesus; to know Him so well that we actually lose faith in Him. I have found, that many who do not grow up in the church have a greater appreciation for their salvation than those who do.
- F. Kellogg's Corn Flakes had a commercial slogan that said, "Try them again, for the first time." We need to do that with Jesus--fall in love with Him again." Don't become like the Nazarenes who refused to believe in Jesus as the Son of God.
- G. Love is the only motivator that will last. By falling in love with Jesus again, we can renew our spiritual vigor, dedication, and commitment.

II. THE UNBELIEF OF HIS ENEMIES.

- A. See **Mk. 6:7-29.**
- B. The word translated *sent* in 6:7 is the Greek, *apostello* which means to send someone on a special commission to represent another and to accomplish his work. The Twelve were specially commissioned by X to preach, teach, and heal.
- C. When Herod heard about all these wonderful works being performed in the land by Jesus, he thought that John the Baptist had come back from the dead to haunt and condemn him (6:14,16)!
- D. Beginning in 6:17, Mark goes into a kind of flashback to explain how John the Baptist had been slain. Herod had divorced his first wife and married his brother's wife, Herodias. This was contrary to the Law of Moses, and John the Baptist told Herod just that! The common people considered John a prophet sent from God, but the religious leaders did not obey John's message (11:27-33). Herod was also perplexed over John himself. He considered John a righteous and holy man and enjoyed listening to his preaching.
- E. With John in prison, Herodias executed a plan to have John killed. She had her daughter dance before Herod. When Herod promised her up to half the kingdom for her exhibition, Herodias told her daughter to ask for the head of John on a platter. When Herod heard the girl's request he was "greatly

distressed” but he wanted to please his wife, and honored the request as to not lose face before the group of influentials at the party.

- F. Herod had not been courageous enough to obey John’s word, but now he had to obey his own word! The result was the death of a godly man.
- G. Our lesson is: unbelief will cause us to please the wrong people. Herod pleased his wife and his peers, but did not please God. When we place peer approval above God’s approval we have sinned. Believing in Jesus means we will be obedient to Him (1Cor. 4:3-5).

III. THE UNBELIEF OF HIS DISCIPLES.

- A. See **Mk. 6:30-56**.
- B. Jesus knew that His disciples were physically tired from their work. He admonished them to get some rest. Writer, Vance Havner said, “If you don’t come apart and rest, you will come apart.”
- C. But the crowds followed. In their exhaustion the apostles asked Jesus to send them away so that they might go into town and find something to eat. They had not yet learned to look at life through the eyes of the Master. So Jesus replied, “You feed them!” Jesus was forcing the disciples to learn upon Him (God) rather than themselves.
- D. You know the rest of the story. Jesus takes a small lunch, 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread, and feeds 5,000 men plus the women and children.
- E. So the apostles get on the boat. And then during another storm, Jesus comes walks on the water out to the boat. Notice 6:52! The apostles had just completed a very successful missionary/healing campaign; they had just witnessed the feeding of 5,000 from a small lunch. They were on a “spiritual high” but were still trusting themselves! They had already forgotten the miracle of the loaves and were right back in unbelief.
- F. Our lesson: unbelief will cause us to lose our victory over the world. Faith is the victory, that overcomes the world (1Jn. 5:4). The storms and problems of life will only intensify if we lose our faith in the One who can feed our hunger, and calm every storm.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Xians must learn to trust Jesus.
- B. Learn about Jesus all over again (is this series of lessons helping in this?).
- C. Stop pleasing all the wrong people, and please God first.
- D. Grab the victory that overcomes--faith in God’s Servant--JC.
- E. Remember Hebrews 3:12.
- F. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.