

Approximately 35 minutes Expository



When Familiarity Becomes Unbelief

Mark 6:1-6

Opening Prayer:

Father God, we come before You today in the name of Jesus Christ. Lord God, we ask You to open our hearts, open our ears, and open our understanding to Your Word. Keep us from being hard-hearted, casual, or familiar with “the things of God” in a way that keeps us from faith. Lord God, speak to the new believer, strengthen the mature believer, and draw the lost person to salvation today. We ask this in Jesus’ mighty name. Amen.

Introduction: Setting the Stage

Mark chapter 6 takes us into a very personal moment in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

Up to this point in Mark's Gospel, Jesus has been moving with power. He has cast out demons. He has healed the sick. He has calmed the storm. He has raised Jairus' daughter from the dead. He has shown authority over disease, demons, nature, and death.

And now Jesus returns to His hometown.

Mark chapter 6 verse 1 says, **“Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples.”**

His hometown was Nazareth.

Nazareth was not a famous city. It was not Jerusalem. It was not a religious center. It was not a place people bragged about. In John chapter 1 verse 46, Nathanael even

said, **“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?”**

Nazareth was a small village in Galilee. People there knew one another. They knew each other’s families. They knew who built the table, who fixed the door, who worked with wood and stone, who had children, who had land, and who had a reputation.

And Jesus had grown up there.

Think about that. The eternal Son of God, the Creator of heaven and earth, lived for years in a small town where people simply knew Him as “the carpenter.”

They had seen Him as a boy. They had watched Him grow. They knew Mary. They knew His brothers and sisters. They had probably bought things from His shop. They may have said, “Jesus, can You fix this yoke?” or “Jesus, can You repair this doorframe?”

But now He returns, not just as the local carpenter.

He returns as the **Messiah**.

And here is the tragedy of this passage: the people who had the closest earthly acquaintance with Jesus missed who He really was.

  That is a warning for all of us.

- You can grow up around church and miss Christ.
- You can know Bible words and miss the Savior.
- You can be familiar with worship songs and still not have a heart of faith.
- You can know about Jesus and still reject Jesus.

The title of this message is:

When Familiarity Becomes Unbelief

Let us open with God's Word....



(NIV)



Mark 6:1-6 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ² 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? ³ 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.

⁴ Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” ⁵ He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ He was amazed

at their lack of faith. Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.

1. Jesus Came Home With the Word of God:

  (NIV) **Mark 6:2** says, **“When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue...”**

The Sabbath was the Jewish day of rest and worship. The synagogue was the local gathering place where Scripture was read and taught. So Jesus goes where the Word of God is honored, opened, and explained.



Notice what Jesus does first.

He teaches.

Before the miracles, before the signs, before the wonders, Jesus gives them the Word.

That is important.



Faith is not built on entertainment. Faith is not built on emotion. Faith is not built on religious tradition. Faith comes through the Word of God.

  (NIV) **Romans 10:17** says, **“Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”**

Jesus stands in the synagogue and teaches with authority.

The people are amazed. Mark tells us they asked, Verse 2...   (NIV) **“Where did this man get these things?...”**

They could not deny the wisdom. They could not deny the authority. They could not deny that something powerful was taking place.

They also said, Verse 2...   (NIV) **“...What’s this wisdom that has been given him?...”**

They recognized the wisdom.

But recognition is not the same as faith.

A person can be impressed with Jesus and still not surrender to Jesus.

Many people today say, “Jesus was a great teacher.”

- They say, “Jesus was a good man.”
- They say, “Jesus had wisdom.”
- They say, “Jesus was loving.”

But Jesus is more than a teacher.

- He is more than an example.
- He is more than a religious figure.
- He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.


The people of Nazareth heard the wisdom of Jesus, but instead of bowing before Him, they began questioning Him.

2. They Stumbled Over His Humanity:

In Verse 3...   (NIV) **Mark 6:3** says, **“...Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon?...”**



They are basically saying, “Wait a minute. We know this guy. He grew up here. He worked with His hands. We know His family. Who does He think He is?”

They did not stumble because Jesus lacked power.

 They stumbled because Jesus seemed too ordinary to them.

That is one of the mysteries of the incarnation.



Jesus is fully God, and Jesus is fully man.

  (NIV) **John 1:14** says, **“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”**

The eternal Son of God stepped into human history. He had real hands, real feet, a real voice, real hunger, real weariness, and real emotions. He worked. He walked dusty roads. He sat at tables. He knew family life. He experienced rejection.

The people of Nazareth could not accept that the Messiah could be someone they knew.

They were offended by His humility.

And Mark chapter 6 says at the end of verse 3,   (NIV) **“...And they took offense at him.”**

That word means they stumbled over Him.

Jesus became a stumbling block to them.

 **Why?**

Because He did not fit their expectations.

They expected the Messiah to come with outward glory, political power, and national

triumph. But before Jesus comes as **conquering King**, He first came as **suffering Savior**.

And this fits perfectly with a pre-millennial understanding of Scripture.

- Jesus will reign.
- Jesus will rule.
- Jesus will sit on David's throne.
- Jesus will establish His kingdom.
- Jesus will return physically and visibly to the earth.

But before the crown, there was the cross.

Before the kingdom glory, there was the suffering Lamb.

Before Revelation 19, there had to be Calvary.

The people of Nazareth wanted a Messiah they could admire from a distance, but they could not receive the Messiah who stood right in front of them.



That can happen today.

- People may say, “I want God to work, but not like that.”
- “I want Jesus, but not the cross.”
- “I want blessing, but not repentance.”
- “I want heaven, but not surrender.”
- “I want forgiveness, but not Lordship.”




But Jesus does not come to us on our terms.

👉 We come to Him on His terms.


3. The Danger of Familiarity Without Faith:

  (NIV) **Mark 6:4** says, “...A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.”

Jesus is saying something very sobering.

   Sometimes the people closest to the truth can become the most resistant to it.

Nazareth had more earthly exposure to Jesus than almost anyone else.

- They had seen His character. They had known His family.
- They had watched Him live without sin.
 Yet when He revealed Himself, they rejected Him.

Familiarity can be a blessing, or it can become dangerous.

It is a blessing when familiarity leads to deeper worship.

But it is dangerous when familiarity leads to indifference.

The church person can become so familiar with sermons that the Word no longer pierces the heart.

The worshiper can become so familiar with songs that the words no longer stir the soul.

The Christian can become so familiar with grace that repentance no longer feels urgent.

The Bible can sit on the shelf, not because we hate it, but because we assume we already know it.

That is dangerous ground.

The people in Nazareth were not atheists. They were religious. They were synagogue-attending people. They believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They believed in the Scriptures. But when God the Son stood among them, they took offense at Him.

That tells us something very important.

Religion cannot save you.


Church attendance cannot save you.

Family background cannot save you.

Growing up around Christian things cannot save you.

👉 Only Jesus saves.

4. Unbelief Limits What We Receive:

  (NIV) **Mark 6:5** says, **“He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.”**

Now we need to understand this carefully.

This does not mean Jesus lacked power.

- Jesus is God.
- He is omnipotent.
- He has all authority in heaven and on earth.

The issue was not a weakness in Jesus.

The issue was unbelief in them.

In other places, Jesus healed multitudes. He delivered the demon-possessed. He raised the dead. But in Nazareth, the atmosphere was one of rejection, offense, and unbelief.

Their unbelief did not overpower Jesus. Their unbelief kept them from coming to Jesus.

- If a person refuses to come to the doctor, the doctor's skill does not help them.
- If a person refuses the rescue boat, the boat's strength does not save them.
- If a person rejects the Savior, they remain lost, not because Jesus cannot save, but because they will not come.

  (NIV) **John 5:40** says, **“...You refuse to come to me to have life.”**

That is heartbreaking.

- Jesus was willing.

- Jesus was able.
- Jesus was present.
- Jesus was teaching.
- Jesus was healing.

But the people would not receive Him.

Let that speak to us today.



The Lord may be working all around you, but unbelief can blind you to it.

The Lord may be speaking through His Word, but a hard heart can resist it.

The Lord may be calling you to repentance, but pride can say, “Not today.”

Unbelief is not a small thing. It is not just doubt. It is not just confusion. It is a settled refusal to trust God.

And yet, even in Nazareth, notice the mercy of Jesus.

Mark says in   (NIV) **Mark 6:5** He laid His hands on **“...a few sick people and healed them.”**

Even in a place of unbelief, grace still reached a few.

That encourages me.

- Maybe the crowd rejected Him, but somebody came.
- Maybe most were offended, but a few were healed.
- Maybe the town missed Him, but someone received mercy.

Do not wait for everyone else to believe before you come to Jesus.

You come.

- Even if your family does not understand.
- Even if your friends mock you.
- Even if your hometown rejects Him.
- Even if others are offended.

👉 You come to Jesus.

5. Jesus Was Amazed at Their Unbelief:

  (NIV) **Mark 6:6** says, **“He was amazed at their lack of faith.”**

There are only a few places in the Gospels where Jesus is described as being amazed.

In Luke 7, Jesus was amazed at the faith of a Roman centurion. That man understood authority and believed Jesus could heal with just a word.

But here in Mark 6, Jesus is amazed at unbelief.

The centurion had little religious background, yet great faith.

Nazareth had great exposure, yet little faith.

That is convicting.

The question is not, “How much have I been around spiritual things?”

The question is, “**Do I trust Jesus?**”

The people of Nazareth had evidence. They had wisdom. They had testimony. They had the presence of Christ. But they lacked faith.

And Jesus marveled at their unbelief.

What amazes the Lord about your life?

Is it faith?

Or unbelief?

- Are you trusting Him with your salvation?
- Are you trusting Him with your family?
- Are you trusting Him with your future?
- Are you trusting Him with your pain?
- Are you trusting Him with your calling?
- Are you trusting Him with the promises of His Word?

For the mature Christian, this passage calls us to examine our hearts.



- Have we become too casual with holy things?
- Have we become hearers only?
- Have we gotten used to Jesus, but not truly surrendered fresh areas of our lives to Him?

For the new Christian, this passage teaches a simple truth:

- Do not judge Jesus by the unbelief of others.
- Do not reject Jesus because someone close to you rejected Him.
- Do not assume you know Him just because you have heard about Him.

Open the Word. Look at Christ. Believe Him. Follow Him.

6. Jesus Continued the Mission:

The end of   (NIV) **Mark 6:6** says, **“Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.”**

I love that.

Nazareth rejected Him, but Jesus did not quit.

Their unbelief did not stop His mission.

He continued teaching. He continued serving. He continued moving toward the cross. He continued obeying the Father.

   That is a word for us.

When people reject the message, keep going.

When family does not understand your faith, keep following Jesus.

When your hometown does not honor the Lord, keep walking with Him.

When others are offended by the truth,
keep speaking the truth in love.

Jesus was rejected in Nazareth, and later
He would be rejected by the nation's
leaders. He would be betrayed, arrested,
beaten, mocked, crucified, and buried.

👉 But on the third day, He rose from the
dead.

And because He rose, we know He is not
merely the carpenter of Nazareth.

He is the **King of kings and Lord of lords.**

And one day, before the tribulation
judgments come upon this world, we
believe Jesus will catch away His church.
The dead in Christ will rise first, and those
who are alive and remain will be caught up
together with them to meet the Lord in the
air.

Then, after the tribulation, Jesus will return to the earth in power and glory. He will establish His kingdom and reign.

Nazareth rejected Him in humility.

But the world will see Him in glory.

The question is: will you receive Him now?

Invitation: Do Not Miss Jesus:

Maybe today you realize you have been familiar with Jesus, but you have never truly been born again.

- Maybe you grew up hearing His name.
- Maybe you have attended church.
- Maybe you believe He existed.
- Maybe you respect the Bible.
- Maybe you know Christian language.

But you know in your heart that you have never surrendered your life to Him.

Jesus did not come merely to be admired.

He came to save sinners.

The Bible says we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Sin separates us from God. No amount of good works, religion, or family background can remove sin.

But Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on the cross for your sins.

- He shed His blood.
- He was buried.
- He rose again on the third day.
- He is alive today.

To be born again means you turn from trusting yourself and place your faith in Jesus Christ alone. You receive Him as Savior and confess Him as Lord.

Come to Him today.

If you want to be born again, pray from your heart:

 Let us Pray...

Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner.... I believe You are the Son of God.... I believe You died on the cross for my sins and rose again.... Please forgive me.... Cleanse me.... Save me.... I turn from my sin and place my faith in You.... Be my Lord and my Savior.... I surrender my life to You.... In Jesus' name, amen.



(NIV)

Romans 10:9⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

If you prayed that sincerely, the Bible says that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Closing Encouragement:

Mark 6:1-6 is a powerful warning.

The people of Nazareth were close to Jesus physically, but far from Him spiritually.

- They knew His name, but missed His identity.
- They heard His wisdom, but rejected His authority.
- They saw evidence, but chose unbelief.
- They were familiar, but not faithful.

So let us not become casual with Christ.

- Let us honor Him.
- Let us believe Him.
- Let us obey Him.
- Let us worship Him.
- Let us receive the Word with soft hearts.

Because the carpenter from Nazareth is more than a carpenter.

- He is the eternal Son of God.
- He is the suffering Savior.
- He is the risen Lord.
- He is the coming King.
- And He is worthy of all honor.

 **Closing Prayer:**

**Father God, thank You for Your Word.
Lord, forgive us for the times we have
been too casual with holy things.
Forgive us for unbelief, pride, and hard-
heartedness. Help us not to miss what
You are doing because we think we
already know. Give us fresh faith, fresh
hunger, and fresh obedience.**

**Lord Jesus, we honor You as Savior,
Lord, Messiah, and coming King.
Strengthen the believer, encourage the
weary, and save the lost. May our hearts
never take offense at You, but may we
fully surrender to You.**

We ask all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.