

LESSON 8



JESUS SPREADS HIS TEACHING

Scripture Text: Mark 6:1-29

In the last lessons Christ's work took place in Capernaum. In today's lesson Jesus has moved into the area of Nazareth where His boyhood was spent. Now we find Jesus teaching among His own people—family and friends. We see how Jesus handled the situation. We see how unbelief limited the power of Jesus to do His great and wonderful works then and now. Jesus sent out the twelve to preach the same message and do the works He had done. Today we learn more about the price of discipleship.

MEMORY VERSE: *And they went out, and preached that men should repent.* *Mark 6:12*

Unbelief Hindered Jesus

Mark 6:1-3 Jesus and His disciples **came into his own country**, Nazareth. On the Sabbath day He **began to teach in the synagogue**. It was His custom to attend this religious meeting place but not as a mere listener or visitor. He had come to earth as a light—as a Teacher; so He taught. We should all put forth effort to follow His custom of attending services.

Many hearing him were astonished--at His teaching. This was different than they had heard before. They asked two questions: Whence? and What? **Whence hath this man these things?** Everything has a source. They recognized that the truth Jesus spoke had to come from a Source greater than they had known. **What wisdom is this . . . ?** Some great wisdom must have been given this man by which He did these **mighty works**, these miracles. The people were ready to believe that Jesus received His power from Heaven and that His wisdom was that of God. Then something that is common among mankind today happened. **Is not this the carpenter . . . ?** They knew Him and His family. They had grown up together; how could He be greater than they? **They were offended at him**--turned aside His message. They failed to see Him as the Son of God. They saw Him as just another man—one no different from themselves. Satan took away the seed before it could sprout and take root. Before they really believed, unbelief destroyed all hope of their receiving further help from Jesus.

Mark 6:4-6 The unbelief of these Nazarenes followed a law of human nature. That law is that it is difficult or nearly impossible to honor those of our **own country** (community) or **kin** or our **own house**. It behooves each of us to bear in mind that the pastor, our spiritual leader, is not a man we know in the flesh but a man of God. These Nazarenes failed to see Jesus as God dwelling among them (John 1:14). The people's unbelief limited Jesus from doing a **mighty work**. Unbelief hinders Jesus from doing much that He would do for us. Unbelief is man's most easily besetting sin (Hebrews 12:1).

Preparing the Twelve

Mark 6:7-11 Jesus came to earth to publish His Gospel. He needed help in doing it. He prepared the twelve to go **and began to send them forth**. Our hands, arms, legs, and feet are all He has to use. The account in the ninth chapter of Luke says He **gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases**--the same power He had. **And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick**--the same message He had preached. The kingdom had already begun. They were fully equipped spiritually, but they were not to take material equipment. **Take nothing . . . no scrip** (bag for carrying food or articles on a journey), **no bread, no money . . . be shod with sandals; and not put**

on two coats. The spiritual provision was most important; the material was secondary. They would obtain provision for physical needs from people moved by God to give it. This way both the disciples and the people would receive a blessing. Faith would have opportunity to work. They were to stay in one house in each place: . . . **there abide till ye depart from that place.** These rules were for this evangelistic journey alone. Later on, Jesus told them to take these things (Luke 22: 35-36). They lacked nothing. The people were responsible for hearing the message, also to help the disciples materially. **Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you** must answer for it in the Judgment. The disciples were not further obligated to those who refused their message. **Shake off the dust . . . against them**--not responsible for the future of their souls (Acts 18:6).

The Disciples Obey

Mark 6:12-13 The disciples **went out, and preached that men should repent.** This was, and is, the first necessary step to receiving salvation. **They cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.** The powers Jesus gave were effective. Anointing with oil for healing is plainly described in James 5:13-16. The oil is not the healing agent. It is something that God gives man to do along with praying a prayer of faith. It is a symbol of the power of God which does do the healing. The disciples first preached the Gospel of Christ and souls were straightened out with God. Then they prayed for the healing of the body. Healing never goes out front. It always follows behind. It is one of the signs that **follow** believers (Mark 16:17-18).

Herod Feared Jesus

Mark 6:14-19 King Herod heard of him--of Jesus. Jesus' miracles could not be hid. Herod said, **It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen . . .** Guilt brings fear. John had made it a point to tell Herod the sinfulness of having his brother's wife. The wife Herodias then schemed until she brought about the beheading of John. This fearless teaching of truth cost John his earthly life. Herod's guilty conscience remained to trouble him.

In verse 20 we read that Herod knew John to be **just** and **holy**. He **feared** him, **observed** him and **heard him gladly**. **He did many things**--obeyed many of John's teachings. This wicked man would not have been far from salvation. What hindered? His wife. We certainly see this happening time after time in our day. We each have an influence on another. Which way are we drawing those we influence? If John the Baptist suffered as he did, can we complain at the hardships we meet?

JUST A THOUGHT

What we attract men by we attract them to.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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