JESUS WOW! SERIES PART 23

Jesus is Unappreciated

Mark 6:1-6

Pastor Andrew Neville 27/9/20

Sermon Summary

Mark is at a point in his gospel where he breaks his opening narrative with Jesus returning to his home town. This is probably the first time Jesus has been home since His baptism and 40 days in the "wilderness," followed by the selection of his team (the apostles), and his early ministry around Capernaum. Now he comes home and two significant results become apparent: the people were amazed at Jesus, and Jesus, in turn, becomes amazed with them.

In those days, Israel had plenty of capable teachers (rabbis), yet Jesus comes along and immediately stands head and shoulders above them all. He has something all the rabbis do not have. Today we would call it the X-factor.

Point 1. The townspeople were amazed at Jesus. Verses 2 and 3 contain 6 questions: First 3: "Where did this man get these things?" "Where did his wisdom come from?" "How does he perform miracles?"
The second set of 3 questions show the doubts of the people: "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?"

His fellow townspeople cannot believe a mere builder can teach like this or perform such incredible deeds. Isn't he merely one of the many brothers and sisters in the mother Mary's family? And because of this familiarity that breeds contempt, "they took offence at him" (v.3).

The fact that the Jesus they had known has suddenly become so much more perplexes the folk of his home town. They obviously had heard of Jesus' earlier miracles while he was away – that sort of news would have travelled quickly throughout the land – even to insignificant Bethlehem (which could be likened to Eketahuna's notorious distinction as the nowhere place in New Zealand), where everybody knows everything about everyone.

Andrew now segued into a parable of his own about knowing a person deeply. This concerned paintings, especially those belonging to Picasso. Andrew, like most of us knew the painter for the bizarre work of his later years. In a Parisian museum he got to see Picasso's earlier work and realized the genius in the man. The portrait of his mother, done when Picasso was 15 years of age, shows the example of his developing talent. Andrew recounted another story of a man in a hurry visiting a Parisian art gallery. He had little time and only spent seconds in front of each exhibit. As he walked out, he mentioned to an attendant that he found nothing inspiring in any of them. The attendant replied that the problem lay not in the pictures but the people looking at them.

As it takes time to understand art, so it is with understanding Jesus. One cannot fully understand Jesus if we are giving him a superficial look at periodic intervals. If we are stuck in a proverbial rut with the word of God, then we are never going to see the genius in His ministry.

Point 2. Jesus was amazed at the people of his town: "He was amazed at their lack of faith" (v.6).

Jesus knew the faults of humans before he came to Earth – yet He was still amazed by their reaction to him. In his hometown they lacked faith – so Jesus did little or no work there. God did not come down to our planet to entertain the world. He came to save it! But that saving only comes through faith. Faith is utterly essential to understand the things of God. It is our lack of faith that separates us from God – **NOT** the other way around.

"He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:10-12).

The world did not recognize him; even his own people (Israel) did not recognize him. Sad! Yet, triumph at the conclusion – those who receive and believe him become the children of God.

Jesus came from heaven to show the way back to the Father. To anyone who is offended by this message, tell them, tenderly and sadly, that should they persist in this attitude they will be permanently separated from God.

Discussion Questions

Three questions are given in Mark 6:2. (See below). Limiting yourself to Mark chapters 1-5, find examples that answer each question. Take your time and discuss how each example you find illustrates each question. Remember, stick to Mark's first 5 chapters and dig deep.

Question 1: **"Where did this man get these things?"** Where can you find the sources or origins of Jesus' truth and actions? Find examples of Jesus' divine authority.

Question 2: **"What's this wisdom that has been given him?"** Find examples of Jesus' teaching.

Question 3: **"What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?"** Find examples of Jesus' miracles.

Prayer Suggestions for Life Groups

Pray that, no matter how fractured and divided the situation is globally, including COVID-19 lockdowns, Christians will always respond with love and grace – for the sake of the gospel.

Pray for the 60 million Christians in China. The Chinese government has imposed the worst crack down on Christianity since the Cultural Revolution – closing churches, and jailing pastors and congregants.

Pray for people who, because of COVID-19 border restrictions, have family overseas that they are unable to be with (perhaps until 2022)