

## Jesus Rejected at Nazareth a Second Time

### Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:1-6

Twice in the Gospels, it is recorded that Jesus went to reveal Himself to his hometown of Nazareth. Both times they rejected His claims. Christ was known as “Jesus of Nazareth,” (21x’s in the NT; Luke 24:19) His followers were known as “Nazarenes,” (Acts 24:5) but in reality Nazareth wouldn’t believe in Him.

#### Let’s Review Jesus’ First Recorded Ministry Trip to Nazareth – Luke 4:16-30

- 1) Jesus’ First Galilean Tour – Jesus had drawn great crowds in Judea. Though He had not selected the twelve disciples by this time, He did have a following and they would have accompanied Him to Nazareth this first time. When Jesus arrived, all would have heard how their “son” had preached and healed. They were anxious, honored, proud, and ready to have Him display His greatness to them! They were eager to hear and see Him perform!
- 2) Jesus Taught in the Synagogue – On this first trip back, Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue but didn’t finish the entire passage. Everyone in the room probably realized it. Where He quit in Hebrew there was no comma or period, He literally stopped mid-sentence. Isaiah 61:2 speaks of the work of the Messiah, but it spans the ages of time from His earthly incarnation to His reign over the Earth! Jesus stopped reading shy of the section containing the earthly reign. Everyone knew Jesus was reading from a Messianic passage, so when He said, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears,” it was absolutely shocking!
- 3) Citizens’ Evaluation – At first we read the people started with admiration and joyful wonder! But the thought that Jesus was Joseph’s son became a point that stole any seed of belief in Jesus the Messiah! Within the congregation, confusion seemed to arise, BUT we know this man and His background! How could He be the Messiah? He’s Joseph’s son! No one seemed to do a fact-check! No one seemed to interview Mary for details. No one asked the pointed questions about Jesus’ origin!
- 4) Citizens’ Reaction – So, they went on in blind disbelief! They had commended Jesus’ gracious, wise words, yet didn’t believe He was the Messiah! Their anger was so stirred that murder was in their heart. We read in Luke 4:29 that the crowd rushed Jesus, physically grabbed Him, mishandled him, dragged, jostled, pushed, and pulled Him with the desire to throw him off the local cliff!
- 5) Jesus’ Reaction – Luke tells us, “But he passing through the midst of them went his way.” There are many theories on what this means exactly, but most feel Jesus either disappeared completely or the power of His presence and person, caused them to stand down and let Him pass. The next verse simply states Jesus went “down to Capernaum....and taught them on the sabbath days.” Jesus just left Nazareth behind, until now!

“And he went out from thence, and came into his own country (Gk – homeland; hometown); and his disciples follow him. <sup>2</sup>And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished (Lit. greatly amazed; astounded), saying, From whence hath this man

these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?” Mark 6:1-2

## I. Citizens' Reaction in the Synagogue

“And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples followed him.” – Jesus would have left Capernaum for Nazareth. On the second and third tours of Galilee, Jesus had His disciples with Him.

“he began to teach in the synagogue:” – As was His custom, Jesus went to the synagogue and taught. It is interesting to consider, why Nazareth would let Jesus speak again. It was only about 12-18 months before when they tried to throw Him off the local cliff! We can be sure, that Nazareth had heard of the large crowds and the miracles Jesus was famous for. It does not seem Christ so clearly presented Himself as the Messiah this time, but we can be confident that His topic would have been about the kingdom of God!

“many hearing him were astonished,” – But like the first time in Nazareth and so many other times elsewhere, we see the same initial reaction towards Jesus – amazement!

“these things?”

- “wisdom” – This would have to do with Christ’s divine knowledge of Scripture and the human heart. His understanding had always amazed Jesus’ listeners. (Luke 2:46-47) In the temple, 20 years before the Religious Leaders' amazement, but now the citizens of Nazareth were amazed that He lacked all formal training and was not sanctioned by the Jewish elite, yet He knew “these things.”
- “mighty works” – The discussion on His works probably was based on the many testimonies of Jesus’ healings, casting out of demons, and other miracles. The townspeople found this very hard to understand how this hometown man had the power to do “these things!”

Again, the people were faced with the question, “What manner of man is this?” But this time it reads, “From whence hath this man these things?”

**“Is not this the carpenter (“the carpenter’s son?” Matthew 13:55), the son of Mary (only time Jesus is called by this name – could be an insult poking at Jesus’ alleged illegitimate birth – John 8:41; 9:29), the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.” Mark 6:3**

**II. Citizens' Evaluation in the Synagogue** We see two areas that caused Jesus’ hometown citizens to say, “From whence hath this man these things?” and not believe.

Jesus’ Occupation – We see in this passage that not only was Jesus’ father a carpenter, but Christ was known as “the carpenter!” Many in the town would have known about and even used His services in the past! Building shelves, a table, putting on an addition! He wasn’t trained in the Scripture; He was a carpenter. He wasn’t taught by the Rabbis; He was taught by His father! This Jesus is a carpenter!

Jesus' Family – Another hard obstacle for the citizens of Nazareth to overcome was Jesus' family connections to their town. This came up the first time Jesus visited as well. He must have been a pretty ordinary child, young person, and young adult before leaving Nazareth to begin His ministry. Nothing about His early life gave the people of Nazareth any clue as to who He really was! The people brought up His father Joseph, who seems to have already died, His mother, His four brothers who are named, and an unnamed, unnumbered group of sisters. It does seem strange that no one would have done some checking on the details of Jesus' early life. But now during His ministry, He had all this unearthly wisdom and the amazing signs that pointed to Him being the Messiah, yet no one believed He was the Promised One.

Final Decision – Their final evaluation: “He’s no better than we are, just a common laborer, from a common family.” While many in Judea and Galilee saw Jesus as a prophet or perhaps even the Messiah, the people of Nazareth were unimpressed. Instead of being thrilled, and filled with love and respect toward Christ, His background caused His people to stumble and miss the truth! John MacArthur said, “They refused to see Him as higher than themselves and found it impossible to accept Him as the Son of God and Messiah.” p. 188 Dr. MacArthur went on to say, “The residents of Nazareth were deeply offended at Jesus’ posturing Himself as some great teacher because of His ordinary background, His limited formal education, and His lack of an officially sanctioned religious position.” p. 189

### III. Jesus' Reaction to the Citizens

**“But Jesus, said unto them, A prophet (Jesus is calling Himself a prophet in this passage.) is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. <sup>5</sup>And he could there do no (“did not many” Matthew 13:58) mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them (“because of their unbelief” Matthew 13:58). <sup>6</sup>And he marveled (Lit. astonished; amazed ) because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching .” Mark 6:4-6**

“A prophet is not with honor” – They didn’t believe Jesus was anything special, not even a prophet. They could not see beyond the man. Realize unbelief extended to those in “his country,....kin, and **in his own house.**” v. 4 There’s an old saying, “familiarity breeds contempt,” or here’s another, “an expert is an ordinary fellow from another town.” This is what Jesus was fighting. No honor because of familiarity! They could see no farther than the child they saw grow up among them.

“no mighty work...because of their unbelief” – There may be two different reasons why Jesus didn’t do many miracles in Nazareth.

- 1) We often read that when people came, Jesus would heal out of compassion and need, not necessarily because of faith. But here in Nazareth, **the sick people didn’t even come.** When in other towns, they would line up, push, and shove, to be healed by Jesus, in Nazareth, the Scripture tells us, He only “laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.” Where were the sick and injured? They didn’t believe and didn’t even come! The Life Application Bible gave this perspective on the event of Christ, “Lack of faith blinds people to the truth, and robs them of hope.” p. 1591
- 2) Jesus often rebuked unbelievers and hid from them the blessings and truths of God. Don’t forget, He threw the scorners out of Jairus’ house just days before. And could it be that **these unbelievers just didn’t receive blessings because of their unbelief?**

“And he marveled because of their unbelief” – As we study the life of Christ, we find Jesus marveled twice. The first time was at the great faith of the centurion. Luke 7:9, “When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel.” Here Jesus marveled – was amazed – at the faith of this Gentile soldier! But in this event, Jesus again is amazed, and marvels at the unbelief of his hometown's citizens, his relatives, and his family! The contrast could not be bigger!

At the end of Mark 6:6, we are told Jesus left Nazareth and went to preach in other small towns and villages. He took His wonderful message of hope, and the kingdom elsewhere. The people of Nazareth had made their decision – twice, and we never read of Jesus returning to His hometown again.

### **Believers Application:**

1. When we bring the message of the truth and light of Christ to loved ones and family, we may meet with the same attitude of rejection as Jesus did. As I have taught ladies Bible studies over the years, one recurring heartache I hear from many women is the lack of effectiveness their witness for Christ or Biblical teaching has among their family and loved ones. Here in this event of Christ, we can see the same thing, and for the same reason: their closeness to the messenger. This has always been true for God's people. In his commentary on Matthew, Blomberg said, “Throughout Christian history, many of Jesus' followers have experienced the truth of this teaching: those who have known them best from an early age on are often least willing to accept them as spiritually gifted or empowered.” p. 228 In Psalm 69:8-9 David said, “I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up: and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.” His very brothers saw David's love and dedication to God as strange and separated themselves from him. Again, in David's life, we read in 2 Samuel 6 when he brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem that he “danced before the Lord with all his might.” When David went to bless his family Michal, his wife sarcastically scolded him for his over-the-top emotion and lack of dignity. Verse 16 tells us, “she despised him in her heart.” Who was Michal? David's first wife, the wife of his youth! She should have been a friend and encourager, yet, she didn't share his heart and love for the Lord. The rejection and unbelief of Nazareth and His family amazed Jesus, but it did not stop Him from continuing His mission. Jesus came twice to Nazareth, and later after His resurrection, He came again to His brothers. Jesus did not give up on those closest to Him; that is our example! So, Jesus would say to us, “Go boldly to those you love, and pray, look for opportunities, and pray, be wise, be consistent, and pray, be loving, available, truthful, and patient, and pray, and realize My Father does the work in their hearts.” Have the attitude of Paul and remember, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

2. As we study the life of Christ, we find Jesus marveled twice. The first time was at the great faith of the centurion of Luke 7. But in this event, Jesus again is amazed, and marvels at the unbelief of his hometown's citizens, his relatives, and his family! We must ask ourselves; do we make God marvel at us? Is He amazed at our great faith or our faithlessness!? “Like the centurion, we must also have faith in the power of Christ even though Jesus is not physically present with us! We must walk through life trusting Him. The centurion had very little background that helped build his faith, but we have the Holy Spirit living with us, the Word of God to lead us, and examples of saints who have walked in faith before us. It is wonderful to realize we can please God and cause Him to marvel at our faith! Let's commit to living by faith! Proverbs 3:5-6; Hebrews 11:6; I John 5:1-5”  
Quote from *Ladies Studying Jesus Jesus Heals the Centurion Vol. 4 #1*