

Intro.

- A. One of the themes of **Mk. 6** has to be *unbelief* in God's servant (by many w/ whom He came into contact).
1. Charles Darwin: *Belief* = "the most complete of all distinctions between man & lower animals."
If that is true, then a lack of faith on man's part puts him on same level as animals.
 2. Robert Ingersoll 1ce described a believer as *a songless bird in a cage*. [more appro. for – non-believer]
- B. Those people we observe in this chpt. had every reason to trust in Christ, yet none of them believed.
1. As we study **Mk. 6**, it would be good to remember the thought of **Heb. 3:12**.
 2. Make note: God takes unbelief seriously, & we should, too!

Discuss.**I. NOTICE THE UNBELIEF OF CHRIST'S ACQUAINTANCES. Mk. 6:1-6**

- A. c. 1 yr. after His expulsion f/ synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus mercifully returned.
1. Wanted to give the Jews another chance to hear His word, believe & obey – so that they would be saved.
 2. "Home" is sometimes one of the hardest places to get people to listen to the gospel, **Mk. 6:4**
- B. Friends & family marveled at report of miracles & wisdom in His words, but why wouldn't they listen?
1. They were prejudiced. *They thought they knew him. He was the neighbor boy f/ down the street.*
 2. Jesus was an ordinary person, (e.g., Wade Dunn) the carpenter's son.
 3. *Familiarity breeds contempt* (c. 2 B.C.) ---- **Aesop Publius**, the Syrian, wrote Fable re: fox & lion
 4. This maxim \gg truism. Husband + wife = strongest love after 50 yrs.
 5. Phillip Brooks: *Famil. breeds contempt, only w/ contemptible things or anomg contemptible people.*
- C. *The son of Mary* [-- an insulting title] *offended* them (i.e., scandalized).
1. They could not explain His wisdom/power.
 2. He truly was a *stone of stumbling* (**1 Pet. 2:8, Isa. 8:14**).
- *D. 2 X's script. say Jesus *marveled* at something.
1. Here, He is found marveling at the Jews unbelief., & in **Lk. 7:9** He marveled at the centurion's gt. faith.
 2. Leaving Nazareth, Jesus traveled thru out Galilee, & seeing the people who needed guidance & help, He sent out the disciples to minister by His authority & power.

II. SEE THE UNBELIEF OF THE ENEMIES OF JESUS. Mk. 6:7-29

- A. Jesus originally called 12 intending to train them to help Him, & to carry on after His ascension (**Mk.3:13f**)
1. He affirmed their authority before sending them out **6:7**, & gave them instructions detailed in **Mt. 10**.
 2. The urgency of this commission is obvious (no extra baggage=*no beggar's bag*).
 - a. They experienced both hospitality, & hostility f/ friends & enemies.
 - b. They were not to "*be picky*" re: accommodations.
 - c. God's judgment would be upon those who rejected them.
 - d. These who were sent (apostles) were representing another & working to accomplish His tasks.
 3. They were to go by 2's, helping & learning f/ each other. (**Ecc. 4:9**)
- B. Ordinary men represented the family of God, & spoke w/ Heavenly authority (via miracles).
1. Reports of Christ's teaching, & the confirming miracles reached palace of Herod Antipas, "king."
 - a. Herod was really only a tetrarch, ruler of 1/4 part of a nation.
 - b. (When Herod the Gt. died, Romans divided his territory among his 3 sons, & Antipas = ruler over Perea & Galilee.)
 2. Herod was 1st married to Kg. Aretas IV's daughter, but divorced her to marry Herodias, wife of his 1/2 brother, Philip.
 - a. This marriage was in violation of God's law (c. **Lev. 18:16; 20:21**), & had been condemned by Jn.
 - b. His bothered conscience made Herod wonder if Jesus' miracles = Jn. Bapt. returned f/ dead – haunt!
 - c. Herod feared John, but Herodias plotted his death, **Mk. 6:26**.
 - d. (Jews wouldn't permit woman dancing before men, & godly mother wouldn't allow such.)
 3. Herod = typical politician.
 - a. Worried more about reaction of public to John's teaching.
 - b. Made oath's w/o counting cost, & could not swallow his pride.

- c. Will see Herod again at Jesus' trial, hoping to see a miracle (**Lk. 23:6-12**)
 - d. In A.D. 39, Herod Antipas was exiled by his nephew, Herod Agrippa. (c. **Mk. 8:36**)
- C. John, Jesus, James, Steven, & many others have laid down their lives for what was right.

III. SADLY, UNBELIEF ALSO CHARACTERIZED MANY DISCIPLES. Mk. 6:30-56

- A. It was time to rest, reassess, regroup. "*If you don't come apart & rest, you'll come apart.*" (Vance Havner)
1. Even Christ took time for rest & renewal.
 - a. Periodically, good to back off & evaluate the work accomplished so far.
 - b. The strains of labor & special challenges (political & religious opposition) necessitate momentary rest.
 2. Coupled w/ weariness f/ labor & stress of opposition => effect of the overzealous crowds.
 - a. They followed Christ hoping to see some miracle performed near Bethsaida (c. **Lk. 9:10f & Jn. 6:1ff**)
 - b. Christ always graciously received interested individuals & groups, & used opportunity to teach & heal.
- B. Just here Mark records 2 miracles Jesus performed.
1. The feeding of 5000, **vs. 33-44**
 - a. Drove of people flocked to Christ: a problem to disciples, & a need that demanded attention to Christ.
 - b. One of the problems crowds manifest: *How do we feed them???*
 - c. → They can find own food, or we can take up a *special collection*.
 - d. With 5 loaves & 2 fish Jesus fed all – miraculously – w/ plenty left over.
 - e. Good leaders view potential problems w/ an eye focused on faith in God, not on man's feeble abilities.
 - * (Often view prob. w/ a checkbook mentality, asking – *Can we afford this?* Better approach, -- *What would God have us do, & are we willing to do it?*)
 - f. John (**Jn. 6:22ff**) tells us that Christ used this occasions for His lesson on *The Bread of Life*.
 2. 2nd miracle -- Christ stilling the storm – actually involved several miracles, **vs. 45-56**.
 - a. Jesus walked on the water, (Peter walked on the water **Mt. 14:28ff**), stilling the storm, & arriving on shore instantly.
 - b. Christ had sent the disciples away, they were not equipped for a riotous crowd, & his time was not com
 - c. Also, they still needed to develop a stronger faith if they would be successful in their mission.
 - *d. As is often the case, sp. blessings must be balanced w/ burdens & battles. (Ex.—Stephen killed after 5000 were added to the church.

Concl.

- A. On the storm-tossed sea, Jesus told the disciples to *take courage*, **vs. 50**.
1. The disciples lacked sp. insight & receptive hearts, **vs. 52**.
 2. Even having seen the power of Christ, 1st cent. disciples missed the real message: *If Christ can increase resources & feed multitudes, He can also provide in times of other crises.*
- B. How do you react to the teachings of Christ TODAY?
1. Jesus offers *provision & protection*.
 2. Have you demonstrated your trust & confidence in Him in obedience to His word?
- C. **Vs. 56** closes this chpt. on positive note: *People w/ faith brought their problems to Christ, confident of His ability to help.*
1. Have you taken all your cares & concern & burdens to the Lord, believing that only He can help.
 2. While the text illustrates His care & concern re: physical needs, we know His gter. concern are our spiritual needs.
 3. Are you ready to trust & obey the Lord tonight...?