

Don't miss out on Jesus!

A Sermon Based On Mark 6. 1-13

"He was amazed at their unbelief."

SPRINGLINE PARISH 5TH JULY 2018 – 6TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY, YEAR B

Prayer

The history of salvation, the entire Bible, both the Old Testament and the New Testament, is a great testimony. It is the testimony, the incredible story of GOD'S LOVE for us human beings.

At the heart of this story is the PERSON OF JESUS. His testimony of a life lived for us, his testimony of a life sacrificed for us, his testimony of his own blood shed for our sins on the cross, his testimony of victory over sin and death by his rising from the dead – it is for this testimony of Jesus, we are gathered here together this morning in this church.

But the point is – have we yet understood the meaning of the precious truth: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3.16)

I'm afraid, unfortunately, not many among us understand deeply and fully the utter significance of these words – that's why we are such mere nominal Christians and often hypocritical followers of Jesus. *Do we really believe in Jesus?* That is the question. And if not – *how do you experience everlasting life?* Because, that everlasting life begins now, here, today, **if** and **when** you truly BELIEVE in Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of the Father.

The Word of God this morning has something to tell us in this regard. In fact, the key verses that stand out in the gospel reading of today are found in Mark 6. 5-6. (page 308-309): “And he could do no deed of power there.....And he was amazed at their unbelief.”

In fact, in verse 3, we also read of his very townspeople: “And they took offence at him.”

His own fellow, townspeople did not accept him nor did they believe in him after all that he had done in and around Galilee – teaching, healing and curing people of all sicknesses and illnesses and preaching the ‘good news’ of the Kingdom of God. In fact, Jesus sadly said, as we also see in verse 4: “Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.”

Jesus had taught them, his people had seen and heard of his laying hands on people and curing them, but ‘they took offence at him.’ What a tragedy! They did not believe in him!

This can happen to us as well. God does all sorts of things for us. He is always present, ready to forgive, ready to heal. He is also doing things for us and our Church. But, we are so busy with our affairs and our ideas we don’t see him, we don’t meet him! And when we hear of testimonies of how God is working in other people’s lives, in the Church, we laugh at it, even take offence. We fail to meet Jesus active and alive in the world and in our Church and in our own lives!

That is why, as I earlier said, the entire Bible, the history of our salvation in the OT and the NT, in the history of salvation in THE CHURCH up to now, is a story of God’s love for us, wayward, weak, sinful human beings: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3.16)

But, Jesus was “amazed at the unbelief” of his own people. What about us? *Would he be amazed at our unbelief?*

In fact, if we don’t believe in him, as we read in verse 5, he cannot do any “deed of power” in our lives either. Your faith in Jesus is the key to God’s Power making manifest in your life. As he also tells us in John chapter 15, verses 4, 5 and 7: “Abide in me...(4) if you abide in me you will bear much fruit...(5) .if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and you will get it.” (7)”

HOW DO WE DO THAT? HOW DO WE BELIEVE IN JESUS THAT WAY?

The first and second readings affirm what we are saying here. In 2 Samuel chapter 5, verse 10 we heard, “And David became **greater** and **greater**, for *the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.*” It was David’s utter reliance on God that was rewarded by God’s presence in his life.

In the second reading, we have something similar from Paul’s letter to the Corinthians chapter 12. Verse 9-10: “*My grace is sufficient for you, for **my power is made perfect in weakness.** So, I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Such was the faith of Paul. Such was the faith of David.

Why was the Lord with David? Why was the Lord with Paul? Because, the LORD found in DAVID, in PAUL, persons who BELIEVED and TRUSTED in Him utterly!

So we come back once again to the key verses of this morning: Jesus “could do no deed of power there.....And he was amazed at their unbelief.”(Mk 6.5-6)

I invite you this morning to re-affirm your faith in Jesus Christ. May it not be that Jesus could not do any mighty work in and your life because of your “unbelief.” That would be, and is, the tragedy of many Christian lives and Christian Churches!

You remember the father of the possessed boy brought to Jesus asked Jesus, “If you can do anything, have pity on us and help us.” And Jesus said to him, “If you can! **All things are possible to him who believes.**” And the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief.” (Mk 9.22, 23,24)

You have also probably heard about George Muller who founded orphanages at Ashley Down, Bristol which still exist today after nearly 200 years. Muller’s name has become a byword for faith throughout the world.

Writing about his own conversion Muller wrote: “It pleased God to teach me something of the meaning of that precious truth: *‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’* I understood something of the reason why the Lord Jesus died on the cross, and suffered such agonies in the garden of Gethsemane: even that thus, bearing the punishment due to us, we might not have to bear it ourselves. And, therefore, *apprehending in some measure the love of Jesus for my soul, I was constrained to love Him in return.* What all the exhortations and precepts of my father and others could not effect; what all my own resolutions could not bring about, even to renounce a life of sin and profligacy: *I was enabled to do, constrained by the love of Jesus.* The individual who desires to have his sins forgiven, must seek it through *the blood of Jesus.* The individual who desires to get power over sin, must likewise seek it through *the blood of Jesus.*” (Italics and block letters mine) Cf. Roger Steer, “George Muller Delighted in God” (Hodder and Stoughton London) 1983, p 25.

Prayer.

[ST Mattapally]