

THE RISK WORTH TAKING

I. [Mark 6:1-6](#)

A. So when we read the Scriptures we learn that everybody loved Jesus, right? Far from it! Besides being despised by the Jewish leaders, we learn that people in His hometown of Nazareth didn't much like Him either. And we also learn that people in His own family thought He was out of His mind. Today we're going to see some of this firsthand and discover if it has any relevance for us.

B. Many people in our day think they know and love Jesus until they actually learn what He said. People have all kinds of ideas about the family, church and government; the poor and marginalized; marriage and sexuality; views on work and vocation; wealth and security; death and dying; heaven and hell. Regardless what Jesus said or what the Bible says, people assert that whatever notions they hold personally are the gospel truth even if God's Word says differently. For example, most people don't really believe in Satan or hell or a coming judgment. They say Jesus loves people too much to ever judge them or send them to hell. But no one throughout the Scriptures talked about such things more than Jesus.

C. First let's take a look at what Jesus' family thought of Him. Then let's consider what folks may think of us who've become His followers. Our first passage occurs after many people have come from far and wide to hear Him teach. Scores have been healed and delivered. And He's also just appointed the twelve apostles.

D. [Mark 3:20-21](#) (ESV) **20** Then He went home, (*Capernaum*) and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. **21** And when His family heard it, they went out to seize Him, for they were saying, "He is out of His mind." (Ever happened to you?!)

E. Then, Jewish leaders come all the way north from Jerusalem to confront Jesus. They declare He's possessed by Beelzebul and casts out demons by the power of Satan. Jesus rebukes them masterfully. He also teaches on blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Then Jesus' mom and brothers show up to conduct an intervention...

F. [Mark 3:31-35](#) (ESV) **31** And His mother and His brothers came, and standing outside they sent to Him and called Him. **32** And a crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are outside, seeking You." **33** And He answered them, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" **34** And looking about at those who sat around Him, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! **35** For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother." (That intervention apparently didn't go well.)

G. After this, Jesus teaches using lots of parables. He calms a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee. He delivers a demon-possessed man, the one where the demons come out, enter a herd of pigs, and race down a cliff and drown. (*The first Bay of Pigs!*) Then He raises a little girl from the dead. On the way to do that a woman with a blood disorder touches the hem of His garment and she's healed. Meanwhile crowds swell. Then Jesus decides to visit His hometown of Nazareth. Expect a parade? This is where He grew up and worked as a carpenter with His dad. The homies all think they know Him and consider all the swirling rumors as far fetched and untrue.

H. Mark 6:1-6 (ESV) 1 He went away from there and came to His hometown, and His disciples followed Him. **(Look who's coming to dinner!)** **2** And on the Sabbath He began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to Him? How are such mighty works done by His hands? **(Think there's buy-in? Mostly skepticism! Their astonishment is rooted in unbelief. Their faith implodes. They choose instead to diminish the One who should be honored as their Favorite Son.)** **3** Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" **(The rest of Mary's kids turned out normal!)** And they took offense at Him. **4** And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." **5** And He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. **6** And He marveled because of their unbelief. And He went about among the villages teaching. **(Luke tells of a previous visit where they usher Jesus to the edge of a cliff to push Him off but He eludes them as 'His time had not yet come.')**

I. So let's extract a few choice nuggets...

1) Let's set things straight: The power of God is never limited by someone's faith. God is God and He does whatever He wants, wherever He wants, no matter what anyone else wants or doesn't want. So while Jesus could've healed all the ailing people in Nazareth, He wasn't about to reward their unbelief. (He would not throw pearls before swine!) Why? Because their unbelief was a form of hostility towards God. That's why they so fiercely rejected Jesus. He was far more than Mary's boy. Neither was He her illegitimate Son which their remarks implied. He was the promised Son of the Most High God but they were just too blind to see WHO He truly was!

2) Jesus had brought His disciples to Nazareth with Him. They saw their Master's rejection in living color. They'd also had a front row seat to Jesus' messages and miracles. They had a sense as to WHO He truly was. Despite all the signs and wonders and words, they knew Jesus was a perfectly righteous Man. Without fault. Without spot or blemish. They witnessed Jesus' rejection firsthand. So what about you--are you willing to be rejected by your friends and colleagues and family members for the sake of Jesus? If you truly belong to Christ and they rejected Him, can your rejection be far behind? In John 15:18-21 (NLT) Jesus warns: **18 If the world hates you, remember that it hated Me first. **19** The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. **20** Do you remember what I told you? 'A slave is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted Me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to Me, they would listen to you. **21** They will do all this to you because of Me, for they have rejected the One who sent Me.**

3) But are you also willing to be received? Welcomed even? Are you willing to take the risk of sharing Christ with others? If you belong to Him and you live for Him, you're bound to be asked about your faith. If Christ has made you His own, put His Spirit within you, He will certainly prompt you to tell others. Are you willing to be bold and courageous for Christ? Will you take the risk of being received? When Jesus was preparing to send out the disciples, He said this in Matthew 10:40-42 (ESV) **40 Whoever receives you receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. **41** The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous**

person's reward. **42** And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.” (Some fear rejection. But some also fear being welcomed. So what will it take for you to be unafraid of either of the two?)

J. So let's say you visit someone this week. You pray before you go but you go with the intent of delivering some encouragement. Then you kindly ask before you leave if it would be okay to pray for them. They say yes. In your humble, simple, and unpretentious way you voice a prayer for this person. What might come of that? Great harm or great good? Might they toss you out of their house? It's possible but doubtful they will. Might there be tears? Maybe. But tears are often someone's profession of faith, a sign they're not just merely receiving you but receiving the One who sent you. Is doing this worth the risk?

K. As we go forth with the Gospel, we certainly risk rejection. But we likewise risk reception. Your family and friends may turn a cold shoulder. Strangers may sit up and take notice. Either way there's risk. Every believer in Christ at some point became someone on the receiving end of His grace. Someone risked rejection to share Christ with each of us. Sharing the Good News is always a risk worth taking. So here's your challenge, not just for this week, but for the rest of your life: Go and share the truth with love. Share it with whomever, wherever, no matter, and let come what may. Leave the rest up to the Lord...

* **John 1:11-13** (ESV) **11** He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. **12** But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

* Close with Prayer...

[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)

[Mark 3:20-21](#) (ESV)

20 Then He went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. **21** And when His family heard it, they went out to seize Him, for they were saying, “He is out of His mind.”

[Mark 3:31-35](#) (ESV)

31 And His mother and His brothers came, and standing outside they sent to Him and called Him. **32** And a crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, “Your mother and Your brothers are outside, seeking You.” **33** And He answered them, “Who are My mother and My brothers?” **34** And looking about at those who sat around Him, He said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! **35** For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.”

[Mark 6:1-6](#) (ESV)

1 He went away from there and came to His hometown, and His disciples followed Him. **2** And on the Sabbath He began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard Him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom

given to Him? How are such mighty works done by His hands? **3** Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. **4** And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." **5** And He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. **6** And He marveled because of their unbelief. And He went about among the villages teaching.

John 15:18-21 (NLT)

18 If the world hates you, remember that it hated Me first. **19** The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. **20** Do you remember what I told you? 'A slave is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted Me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to Me, they would listen to you. **21** They will do all this to you because of Me, for they have rejected the One who sent Me.

Matthew 10:40-42 (ESV)

40 Whoever receives you receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. **41** The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. **42** And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

John 1:11-13 (ESV)

***11** He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. **12** But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Bonus Stuff

"Crown Him With Many Crowns" - Fountainview Orchestra and Singers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INo42lyvszY>

Jesus Rejected in His Hometown of Nazareth - Drive Thru History - Dave Stotts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvtLLn61uDA>

The Secret Small Town Churches Know Best - Stephen Witmer

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-secret-small-churches-know-best>

"Man of Sorrows" - Jill Phillips

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1eOfRm7MEc>

Amazing Unbelief (Mark 6:1-6) - John MacArthur (Full Sermon)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQJ6p7i-rEE>

Matthew 13:53-58 (ESV)

53 And when Jesus had finished these parables, He went away from there, **54** and coming to His hometown He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? **55** Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And are not His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? **56** And are not all His sisters with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" **57** And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." **58** And He did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

Theological Note on Matthew 13:55-56

The ESV Study Bible

"55 Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not His mother called Mary? And are not His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not all His sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" - Matthew 13:55-56 (ESV)

Matthew 13:55-56: Since they know Jesus' human roots, the people of Nazareth assume He cannot be anything special. He is a hometown son making fantastic claims for Himself. **His brothers and His sisters** refers to other children born to Joseph and Mary after the birth of Jesus. Some interpreters, seeking to defend a doctrine of the "perpetual virginity of Mary," have suggested that these were cousins, or children of Joseph from another marriage, but no evidence in the Greek words *adelphoi* ("brothers") and *adelphai* ("sisters"), or in any other historical information, gives support to that view. For Mary to have sexual relations with her husband, Joseph, and to bear children, would contribute to her holiness, not detract from it (cf Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 7:3-5; 1 Tim. 5:14). On Jesus' family, see note on Mark 6:3.

Luke 4:16-30 (ESV)

16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as was His custom, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and He stood up to read. **17** And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, **18** *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."* **20** And He rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21** And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." **22** And all spoke well of Him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from His mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's Son?" **23** And He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to Me this proverb, "Physician, heal yourself." What we have heard You did at Capernaum, do here in Your hometown as well." **24** And He said,

“Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. **25** But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, **26** and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. **27** And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” **28** When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. **29** And they rose up and drove Him out of the town and brought Him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw Him down the cliff. **30** But passing through their midst, He went away.

Quote by Thomas à Kempis

"When Christ was in the world, He was despised by men; in the hour of need He was forsaken by acquaintances and left by friends to the depths of scorn. He was willing to suffer and to be despised; do you dare to complain of anything? He had enemies and defamers; do you want everyone to be your friend, your benefactor? How can your patience be rewarded if no adversity test it? How can you be a friend of Christ if you are not willing to suffer any hardship? Suffer with Christ and for Christ if you wish to reign with Him."

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"God had a Son that had no fault, but He never had a son that was not found fault with. God Himself was slandered in paradise by Satan. Let us not expect, therefore, to escape from the venomous tongue."

Quote by John Bunyan

"Therefore, I bind these lies and slanderous accusations to my person as an ornament; it belongs to my Christian profession to be vilified, slandered, reproached and reviled, and since all this is nothing but that, as God and my conscience testify, I rejoice in being reproached for Christ's sake."

Quote by William Secker

"Neither the persecuting hand of men, nor the chastising hand of God, relaxed ancient singular saints. Believers resemble the moon, which emerges from her eclipse by keeping her motion, and ceases not to shine because the dogs bark at her. Shall we cease to be professors because others will not cease to be persecutors?"

Quote by J.C. Ryle

"We have no reason to be discouraged and cast down, if the religion we profess is not popular, and few agree with us. We must remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ ... "The gate is narrow." Repentance, and faith in Christ, and holiness of life have never been fashionable. The true flock of Christ has always been small... This is "the narrow way." Surely it is better to enter into life eternal with a few, than to go to "destruction" with a great company."

Quote by Henry Smith

"God examineth with trials, the devil examineth with temptations, the world examineth with persecutions."

Quote by John Piper

"Once upon a time, there was a safe, private place to take your controversial stand for Jesus. No more. If you are going to stand, you will be shot at--either figuratively or literally."

Quote by Josh McDowell

"As a reward for their efforts, however, those early Christians were beaten, stoned to death, thrown to the lions, tortured and crucified. Every conceivable method was used to stop them from talking."

Quote by John R. Rice

"The world never burned a casual Christian at the stake."

Quote by Leonard Ravenhill

"If a Christian is not having tribulation in the world, there's something wrong!"

Alexamenos is Faithful

Archaeologists digging in the remains of a school for imperial pages in Rome found a picture dating from the third century. It shows a boy standing, his hand raised, worshiping a figure on a cross, a figure that looks like a man with the head of an ass. Scrawled in the writing of a young person are the words, "Alexamenos worships his God." Nearby in a second inscription: "Alexamenos is faithful." Apparently, a young man who was a Christian was being mocked by his schoolmates for his faithful witness. But he was not ashamed; he was faithful.

- Dr. Leighton Ford, *Good News is for Sharing*, 1977, David C. Cook Publishing Co., p. 78.

Quote by Calvin Miller

"Our problem is this: we usually discover Him within some denominational or Christian ghetto. We meet Him in a province and, having caught some little view, we paint Him in smaller strokes. The Lion of Judah is reduced to something kittenish because our understanding cannot, at first, write larger definitions."