**Follow – Gospel of Mark - Wk 12 – Ruined Homecoming Reunion**

**Happy distant Thanksgiving & Merry Covid Christmas – the Holidays are here! A time of homecomings family gatherings – with limited people of course. What an odd time. But God is working and moving!**

**Today we read from Mark of a Homecoming for Jesus.**

**Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.**

**So far things are moving fast for Jesus - crowds growing, news is out, healing the sick, casting out demons, controlling weather, raising the dead – all while preaching the kingdom.**

**Jesus heads home for a much-needed break. Mark 6:1 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, (Luke says Nazareth the place he grew up) accompanied by his disciples. (show map) 2 When the Sabbath came, (a few days later) he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.**

**Luke 4 longer - Jesus read Isaiah 61 (700 yrs old) about the wonderful works of the Messiah (The Spirit of the Lord is on me to proclaim good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight, set the oppressed free!) After that he rolls it up and sat down. All eyes on Jesus, He says, “Today this is fulfilled in me.” You can imagine their response…**

**“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? 3 Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? (slam on Joseph – Jesus father was always in question in his hometown) Aren’t his sisters here with us?” (big family – brothers and sisters – in a small town) And they (the town) took offense at him.**

**What a Ruined Homecoming Reunion – They knew His**

* **Abilities – Knew he came back a rabbi with followers**
* **Wisdom – Knew and heard his teachings firsthand**
* **Miracles – knew of the healings and resurrections**
* **His life story – knew all about his birth and life**

**They saw him grow up, play at their house, babysat, fixed him meals, sat in class, did chores, bandaged skinned knees, saw him at school, he repaired their house, build their tables, and now he says he’s God?**

**His hometown knew Jesus’ more than anyone but didn’t really know him at all. They saw who he was but could not see who he really is.**

**6:4 Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.”**

**Echo’s 1 Kings 17-19 – they knew the story. The prophet Elijah picked a heart broken starving pagan woman in a time of famine to bless because he was rejected by his own people.**

**5 He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. 6 He was amazed at their lack of faith. (in Him) Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.**

**There was no Hometown advantage**

**His hands were not tied or restricted due to lack of faith (false - our faith unleashes miracles – word of faith / prosperity movt) Jesus is almighty!! Jesus do often heal people of little and even no faith.**

**He chose to not work there. He did not / would not - do a mighty work there. It was not in his will to do so - he was done with them. He honors faith and does as He wills.**

**Luke says they drove him out of town and tried to throw him off a cliff - he slipped away. (You don’t want me. Okay fine, I’ll let you live without me)**

**In comparison we see the next passage - Mark 6:7 Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. (disciples never to work alone – we work together with one mission, preach the kingdom and set people free) 8 These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. 9 Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. (Btw – this was a specific ministry trip instruction – not the norm) 10 Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. (Build relationships – discipleship is not a program – discipleship is a relationship) 11 And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” (shake shake - shake it off – shake it off)**

**Present the message and leave God to do the rest.**

**In ministry you won’t survive if you keep a record of offenses or worry about everyone who did not respond to Jesus.**

**Move on - walk in grace and forgiveness.**

**12 They went out and preached that people should repent. (turning to God from self) 13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.**

**Luke 10 says Jesus did this often - one time sending out as many as 70/72 disciples at the same time.**

**Another comparative two stories – intentionally side by side.**

**2 sides – 2 perspectives - One stays put, one is sent out. One grew up with Jesus the other just met a year earlier. Both knew things about Jesus – but the interpretation of what they knew was different.**

**The Difference Between the Two Groups – What’s the Difference?**

1. **Church going vs. God transforming**

**“2 When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.” (astonished – shocked)**

**This event all goes down at church. The church goers were not interested in change – just routine. They listen, they know, but have no intention to grow. They show up, tune in and walk out and tune off.**

**Check the box, see you next week – then back to the grind.**

* **Why do you tune and or show up? To be changed?**

1. **Unteachable vs teachable**

**3 Isn’t this the carpenter? (a slam - he has no formal training, a simple laborer - not qualified to teach me.) They were unable to truly see, watch, & learn.**

**They were so focused on what they knew – that their eyes were closed to something new. However, the disciples grew in understanding.**

**Nope that’s not God – God can’t use him – he’s our little Jesus**

**“God would never do it that way,” so they thought.**

* + **Are you teachable?**
  + **Are you teachable from anyone?**

**BTW - “Carpenter” - lit builder – using both stone & wood. Of all things he could have bene – he was Jesus the builder. Jesus build my life.**

1. **Unrealistic expectations vs flexible**

**2 …“Where did this man…?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom…? What are these miracle…? 3 Isn’t this the…?**

**God would not do that, he’s a carpenter, he should keep to what he knows and get back to work.**

**On the other hand, the disciples were not only teachable but willing to go with he flow. Jesus when sending them out instructed them… (6:8 These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff…”)**

**\* Do you have unrealistic expectation of Jesus? Limit Jesus?**

**\* Are you willing to trust Jesus and follow his instructions?**

1. **Belief vs Faith**

**There’s a huge difference between a Christ believer and Christ follower**

**Mk 6:3 they took offense at him. / 6 He was amazed at their lack of faith (in Him).**

**What is the difference?**

**\*\* Belief is what we know, faith is how we live**

**One were merely part time believers - rather than fulltime faith filled followers.**

**You might agree with a sermon or verse (mental nod to God), but does it reflect in your life, do you follow it. (James faith = action)**

**Mark 8:34 (Jesus welcomes anybody but says) "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.**

**In a warning against false teachers – Jesus says you will know who the true followers by this – Matthew 7:20 …by their fruits you will know them.**

**\*\* Belief is a subscription – true faith in Jesus is a submission**

**A head knowledge and opinion vs a life reflection and lordship**

**Lordship is a complete surrender of our will to God’s will**

**Daniel 11:32 - The people who know their God shall stand firm (faith) and take action. (Obedience) \*\* Those that know the will of God and do it.**

**The car may look good - but what is going on under the hood?**

**Many have a saccharine substitute spirituality - it’s sweet but not real sugar. Tastes like it for a while, but leave a bitter taste.**

**Matthew 7:21-23 21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**

**There are many that know and have a belief in Jesus and look good on the outside – but there are few who truly follow.**

**Mk 6:3 - they took offense at him. Why were they so offended by Jesus?**

**The crowd was offended by what Jesus demanded**

**What did he demand – faith in Him. To trust and follow Him.**

**All many want is the weekly bible study, a good sermon, community – but don’t ask me to surrender my life. I am fine knowing all about Jesus and knowing Jesus people – but don’t ask me to follow. Jesus calls us to sign over the title of our life**

**\* Do you subscribe to Jesus or submit to Jesus?**

1. **Staying vs going**

**One stayed put and complained, the other stepped out and changed, the world.**

**God is calling his disciple to break up the Holy Huddle**

**Crowds often sit, complain & give excuses… but disciples go.**

**Satan (Sat) – God (Go) - only works in English**

**Go – as in, tell others about Jesus and set people free.**

**Mk 6:12 They went out and preached that people should repent. (turning to God from self) 13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.**

* **What did Jesus negative hometown neighbors get – nothing**
* **What did Jesus followers get – to be a part of Jesus story of…**

**This echoes back to the very passage Jesus read that day in his hometown - Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor (in spirit). He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (these are all spiritual references) / 21 And He said to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”**

**After the resurrection Jesus tell his disciples – John 20:21 Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."**

**That is our mission – that is what we are to proclaim – You can be set free! Eyes opened; chains broken – in Jesus!!**

**\* Will you tell others – will you proclaim this good news?**

**\* Will you sit, watch, complain, and know about Jesus – or follow?**

**Truth is - you may know the Christmas story, the life of Jesus, know of his miracles, and his teaching – and still walk away with nothing…**

**Two crowds – both knew Jesus pretty well – but only one group trusted, followed, and set the captives free!**