

# The Gospel According To Mark

## Part Ten

**Mark 6:1-6** [New King James] *“Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, ‘Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?’ So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, ‘A prophet is not without honour except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.’ Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He marvelled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.”*

When Jesus Christ returned to Nazareth He put Himself to a severe test.

This was **not** meant to be a private visit to His family, because He came with His disciples as a rabbi.

Jesus Christ went into the local synagogue and taught, but His teaching was **not** greeted with wonder as elsewhere, but with a kind of contempt, *“offended at Him.”*

Familiarity can breed a mistaken contempt.

**The people refused to listen to Jesus Christ for two main reasons –**

*“Is this not the carpenter?”* – the people despised Jesus Christ because He was a *“working man,”* a layman, a man of the people.

*“Is not this Mary’s son, and brother of James, Joses, Judas and Simon?”*

The fact that they called Jesus Christ Mary’s son tells us that Joseph must have been dead for some time, and Jesus Christ had taken on the support of His mother and family right up to the age of thirty years, until the family was old enough to fend for themselves.

**Luke 16:10-12** [New King James] *“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own?”*

Jesus Christ had lived out this teaching in His own life.

The result of this attitude of mind of the people was that Jesus Christ could do no mighty works in Nazareth, [**verse 5**].

**In the atmosphere of critical coldness or bland indifference, the most inspired spiritual utterance will fall on blocked ears and minds.**

**Mark 6:7-11** [New King James] *“And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff, no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts, but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics. Also He said to them, ‘In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement than for that city!’”*

There are two interesting facts within the instructions that Jesus Christ was giving to His disciples.

1) It was the Rabbinic law that when a man entered the temple court he must put off his staff, shoes and money girdle. That is ordinary life had to be set aside on entering the sacred place.

It may be that both Jesus Christ and His disciples had this on their mind as they prepared for the disciples a new experience.

**Jesus Christ could well have been telling His disciples that the humble homes they were about to enter were every bit as sacred as the temple courts in Jerusalem.**

**2) Hospitality was a sacred duty in the East. When a stranger entered a village it was the duty of the village to offer them hospitality.**

If doors and ears were closed to their person and message the disciples were to symbolically reject even the dust in the street when they left, illustrating to that village to be seen as God to be gentile and pagan.

**Mark 6:12-13** [New King James] *“So they went out and preached that people should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.”*

The Greek word translated “preached” is “*kērussō*” meaning to herald, to proclaim the arrival of Jesus Christ and the need to repent.

**This was a King’s message to His people –**

**The command to repent, meaning a change of mind and then the actions to fit this new mind is bound to hurt.**

**It will hurt because it involves the bitter realisation that the way we were following in life is wrong and deadly in the end.**

**With this painful message the disciples also brought the King’s mercy, the help and healing of their lives.**

From the very beginning Christianity has aimed to bring health to the body [**James 5:13-15**] and the healing power of people to the mind and human spirit, [**Job 32:8; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Proverbs 20:27; John 14:27**].

The same task given to His disciples by Jesus Christ is the same for every true Christian today.

**Mark 6:14-15** [New King James] *“Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. And He said to them, ‘You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.’”*

**The reason that King Herod had not heard of Jesus Christ up until this time could be because Tiberius, although in Galilee, was largely a gentile city.**

**Mark 6:16** [New King James] *“But when Herod heard, he said, ‘This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!’”*

**This is the verdict of a guilty conscience that was the result of what King Herod had done.**

Mark gives us full details of this evil event in the next few verses, [**Mark 6:17-29**].

Herod was still haunted by his decision to allow the murder of John the Baptist.

This response [verse 16] was that of a man who was waiting for the condemning voice of God, and the voice of a prophet of God.

In those days the Jews were conscious that for some 300 years the voice of God's prophets had been silent.

The people had listened to legal disputations of the rabbis, to moral lectures in the synagogues, but **not** the "*thus saith the Lord*" from an authentic prophet of God.

**Mark 6:30-34** [New King James] "*Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. And He said to them, 'Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.' For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves. But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.*"

**When the disciples returned from their mission, Jesus Christ took them away for a rest. Doing God's work is very important, but Jesus Christ recognised that to do it effectively we need periodic rest and renewal.**

But Jesus Christ did **not** always find it easy to get the rest they needed.

The ordinary human would have resented this invasion of their privacy.

But Jesus Christ was moved with pity for these people, to Him they were like sheep who had no shepherd.

**What did Jesus Christ mean by this statement?**

**A sheep without a shepherd cannot find their way in life. –**

**In just the same way, human beings are lost without a leader who actually cares for them as a shepherd.**

**In the end, it is only when Jesus Christ leads us that we can find the very reason for our existence as human beings.**

**A sheep without a shepherd cannot find good pasture to nourish it. –**

We need in this human life both physical and spiritual sustenance, for physical and mental life.

**We need inspiration that can lift us out of ourselves to concern for other human beings if we are to mature mentally and spiritually.**

We can **only** receive such life-giving inspiration from our Creator God, Jesus Christ.

**A sheep is without defence without a faithful shepherd. –**

**A sheep has no natural defences against robbers or wild beasts.**

**Every human being faces evil forces against which we have no personal defence.**

**Ephesians 6:10-18** [New King James] "*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly*

*places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”*

**To face such an enemy without spiritual help we can only face total destruction.**

**Mark 6:35-44** [New King James] *“When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, ‘This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late. Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘You give them something to eat.’ And they said to Him, ‘Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?’ But He said to them, ‘How many loaves do you have? Go and see.’ And when they found out they said, ‘Five, and two fish.’ Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. So they all ate and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.”*

This miracle must have eventually had a great impact on the disciples for this is the **only** miracle that is recorded by all four of the gospel writers.

This account by Mark reads exactly like an eye-witness record with some vivid and realistic details that Peter remembered.

*“Green grass”* groups of 100 in 50s, twelve baskets full of fragments.

**This account shows us two reactions to human need –**

When the disciples saw how late it was in the day, and how tired and hungry the crowd were, they said ***“send them away ... to buy themselves bread.”***

In effect, *“get rid of them and let someone else worry about them.”*

In total contrast **Jesus Christ** said ***“you give them something to eat.”***

There are always the people who are quite aware that others are in trouble and difficulties, but wish to push off the responsibility onto someone else.

**It shows two responses to what was available and needed –**

What the disciples were saying that all I could earn in six months would not be enough to buy bread for this crowd.

Jesus said *“what have we got to give?”*

**The loaves were more like rolls than an English loaf of bread and were the food of the poorest people, barley loaves [John 6:9] the cheapest and the coarsest of all bread.**

**The two fishes would have been the size of sardines, that were normally eaten as a relish with dry rolls.**

**It did not seem much, but Jesus Christ took it and worked wonders with it.**

**In the hands of Jesus Christ a little can become much.**

**Even one little talent or ability or substance given to Jesus Christ will be multiplied over and over.**

**John 14:12-14** [New King James] *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do**, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.**”*

**This is a promise from our Saviour and Lord that we can claim.**

**Mark 6:45-46** [New King James] *“Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.”*

John may give us the reason, for Jesus Christ did not want the disciples to be infected and caught up in this nationalistic outburst.

Galilee was the hotbed of such revolution against Romans.

This being made a king, at the time, was exactly what Satan had tempted Jesus Christ before He started His work of preaching the future Kingdom of God.

**Matthew 4:8-11** [New King James] *“Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.”’ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.”*

**Jesus Christ had already won this battle of being tempted to be the king of kings before He had been the Saviour of the World.**

Jesus Christ then did what He found essential as a human being, He had time alone with His Heavenly Father.

**Mark 6:47-48** [New King James] *“Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.”*

This must have happened about mid-April with the Passover full moon so that Jesus Christ could see His disciples in trouble in the boat with the wind and waves rising.

**Mark 6:49-51** [New King James] *“And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, ‘Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.’ Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marvelled.”*

**Immediately Jesus Christ saw His friends in trouble His own problems were set aside, the time for prayer was past, the time for action had come. This was the very essence of the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.**

**Mark 6:52** [New King James] *“For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.”*

**The heart and mind of the disciples was still closed to full understanding of Who Jesus Christ was and what He was doing.**

**It would take the coming of the Holy Spirit into their lives for this to happen, [Acts 2:1-4].**