

95-05-21Mark

The disciples could look at it and make the object of their faith. We're going to the other side. We're not going halfway and sink.

We're not going halfway and drown. We're not going halfway and turning back. We're going to the other side.

The Lord has said it. To Jairus, Jesus says, I will come. And he starts on his way.

Then suddenly, there is an unforeseen, unexpected interruption. A lady of unknown origin, a lady whose name we do not know, a lady who had an affliction that resulted in the loss of blood, an issue of blood that she had endured for some twelve years. She developed this malady at the same time that Jairus' daughter was born.

And during the time that Jairus' daughter was growing and coming to full flower and reaching the point of fruition and adulthood, this lady was declining and growing progressively worse and worse. She had expended all of her resources trying to find a solution to this physical problem. And no one had been able to help her.

It had only gone from bad to worse. And these two situations meet at the person of Jesus Christ. As Jesus is on his way to Jairus' house, this woman comes up.

Instead of approaching directly as Jairus does, she approaches indirectly. This is a long-standing problem, not an immediate crisis. She comes up and she says, if I but touch his garment, I will be healed.

And she does so. In the push and pull and the throng of the crowd, she comes up, she reaches out and she touches the tassel on the outer garment that Jesus Christ is wearing based on the Old Testament guidance, the Mosaic law. All of the men in Israel wore this square outer garment that had a hole for the head and holes for the arms.

It was simply folded in half and stitched. And those four corners, two in front and two behind, each had a tassel. Those tassels were of a very specific construction.

They were to be made of white thread. And tradition had even determined the number of windings in the knots that held these tassels. And God had also prescribed that this tassel contain a single thread of a reddish color, a rose color, a bluish red, almost a violet or purple color, this special thread.

And God said these tassels are to remind you of the law. These tassels are to remind you of my covenant with you, my word to you, my instructions to you. And in addition to the other reminders that were built into society and to worship life in Israel, these tassels on the corners of the garments were a reminder of the word of God to Israel.

This is what this lady reaches out and touches. And as she contacts the threads of this tassel, the power of the Holy Spirit issues forth and heals her immediately. She is instantly and completely made whole by the power of God.

Jesus feels this power issue forth from himself and he twirls about in the crowd and he says, Who touched me? And the disciples laugh and they say, Lord, who hasn't touched you? Everybody in this crowd has touched you. You're asking, who touched you? You ought to be asking, who has not yet touched you? And yet Jesus searches intently through the crowd looking for this person. And while Jesus does this, and this is in a participle, this is in a construction that tells us that it took some time.

Jesus searched intently through the crowd. Here's Jairus thinking if he'd had a watch, he would have looked at it and said, time is passing. My daughter is getting worse and the Lord has stopped.

The forward progress of getting my daughter's problem resolved has halted. There's a delay, there's an interruption. Lord, this lady's waited twelve years.

Can't she wait another hour, another day? Why does she have to come up now? Why does she have to stop the Lord now at this critical moment? I've got an immediate problem, an immediate crisis and the Lord has stopped and now he's searching through this throng trying to find who knows whom. For what purpose I don't know, all I know is the Lord has stopped. This is a tremendous challenge to Jairus, to his attitude and to his faith.

Jesus finally sees this woman come forward and she tells her life story. The story of twelve years of seeking for answers, twelve years of failure of human solutions and then of this miraculous cure. And Jesus says, daughter, go your way.

Your faith has made you whole. He calls her daughter. This is a tale of two daughters.

If you looked in the bulletin last week, that's what the name of the lesson was. A tale of two daughters. This daughter of unknown origin that is healed and this daughter of Jairus who now has died.

By the time Jesus finishes speaking with this lady, it's too late. The servants come up and they say, don't trouble the Master any further. Your daughter died.

She's gone to be with the Lord. She's gone to Sheol. She has gone into the pit.

In Israel in the Old Testament days, death was viewed as a shadowy nether realm. There wasn't the bright hope of eternal life. Very few Israelites studied the Mosaic law enough to recognize the promise of resurrection that a few of them did perceive like David and like Job and like some of the other Old Testament saints.

But most of them viewed death as the end and as a shadowy status with no discernible future. And these people came and they said, don't trouble the Master anymore. She has gone to that nether realm.

Jesus turns to Jairus and what does he say? What is that great quote that we should all know? Don't fear, only believe. The answer to fear is faith. The answer to uncertainty, the answer to doubt.

The answer to delay. The answer when we question whether God knows what he's doing in his plan is don't fear, only believe. Jesus continues on and arrives at Jairus' house.

And now he divides his disciples. He doesn't take the twelve to the upper room where the child is laid out. He takes three.

He takes Peter, James, and John. He takes the parents of the child, the mother and father, and drives everyone else out. All of the mourners.

The mourners say, why have you come? She's dead. And Jesus says, why are you mourning? She's not dead, she's asleep. And they laugh and they mock him.

What do you know? How could you? We've seen her. She's dead. Jesus says, she's not dead, she's asleep.

What an odd thing to say. So then Jesus goes in with the doors closed and with these very few witnesses, he takes her by the hand and he says, little girl, arise, and she does so. And she walks around because she's twelve years old.

And Jesus says, give her something to eat. Don't tell anyone what I have done in this closed room. This is a privilege just for you, mother and father, you, Peter, James, and John, to see.

People will know that she's alive, but they won't know how it happened. They won't have the details. They won't have the first-hand account because I'm instructing you not to tell.

That's what Jesus says. And the lessons that we brought away from that were two-fold. First of all, as we have seen in the case of Joseph in the Old Testament, as we've seen in the case of Moses in the Old Testament, as we see in the case of David in the Old Testament.

Many times, there is a great distance between the giving of a promise and its fulfillment. Between the giving of the Word of the Lord that promises deliverance, that promises fulfillment, that promises blessing and its fulfillment. Joseph, who had the gift of the interpretation of dreams, was given a dream as a young boy where his sheaf stood in the field and the sheafs of his brothers and of his father bowed down before his sheaf.

And then he had another dream where he was pictured up in the sky as heavenly bodies and the

sun and the moon and the stars bowed down to him. Joseph knew what that dream meant. God had given him the gift of interpretation.

He interpreted the baker's dream and he interpreted the butler's dream and he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. Joseph knew what that dream meant. That dream was a promise to Joseph that his family would accept him.

His family would recognize him. His family would depend on him one day. And that promise of God sustained Joseph through imprisonment, through slavery to Potiphar, through 13 or so years in the prisons of Egypt, and through disappointment after disappointment as he hoped for deliverance and it did not come.

Joseph had the promise, but he didn't have the fulfillment. Moses had the promise, but it was 40 years as a goat herd in Midian before it started coming to fulfillment. David was anointed by Samuel to be king of Israel, and yet it was years of wandering, years living as a fugitive, years as an outlaw sought by the king and his armies before that promise came to fulfillment.

Now here's Jairus summing up in a way the history of Israel, the true Israel, the Israel of faith who waits for the fulfillment of the promise. What is that promise? The covenants of God in the Old Testament. The promise of the land.

The promise of the throne. The promise of freedom from oppression and freedom from enemies. The promise of a son of David sitting on that throne forever.

Those promises in the Davidic covenant and the Palestinian covenant, the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and through Moses, await their fulfillment. Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Here is the fulfillment on the way.

Here is Jesus saying, I will come. Here's Jesus saying the time is at hand. The kingdom of God is near.

And what happens? There's an interruption. There is a delay. Jesus on his way to fulfill the promises to Israel is interrupted by the need to deliver someone else.

Someone whose problem began the same time as the promise began for Israel. When God called out the nation of Israel to be his chosen people, that put the Gentiles in a bad way. That put the rest of the world outside the covenants, outside the promises, without hope and without God in the world.

And at the same time that that daughter of Jairus was born, representing the future and the fulfillment and the hope and the promise in his life, this woman developed the issue of blood and began to deteriorate and grow worse and worse. And what happens? At the point when Jairus' daughter is to be healed, representing the fulfillment of the kingdom promises and the instigation of the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ, there's an interruption and there's a break. And Israel

must wait.

Israel must now wait by faith for the promises to be fulfilled because why? Because an unknown, unforeseen person, an unforeseen, unknown group needed deliverance. And that's us. We're the church, the bride of Christ.

And in solving our problem, it puts the program for Israel on hold. This is what the theologians call the great intercalation, the great insertion of the mystery age into the age of Israel. There's seven years left to run in the age of Israel and it hasn't occurred yet and it won't occur until God completes his deliverance of the church.

And at the point that the rapture takes place and we're taken home to be with the Lord, God's program for Israel will resume. And in the meantime, what does God say to Israel? Don't fear, only believe. Who is it in Israel that will see the fulfillment of God's promises? All Israel is not Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called, Paul tells us.

Who is it that goes to the upper room and sees Jairus' daughter raised to life? It isn't all of the disciples. It isn't all of the Israelites who are on hand. Jesus could have taken this girl out on the balcony and done it before the world.

And he does not. Who sees it? The household of faith. Many will come in that day and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom and the sons of the kingdom will be thrust out.

Who is it that will see the fulfillment? Who is it that will be raised by God to enjoy the blessings of the kingdom? It's the true Israel, the Israel of God, the faithful Israel, those who have responded to the word of the Lord by faith, represented by Peter and James and John, represented by the mother and father in that room. Why does Jesus say she's not dead? She's asleep. What an odd thing to say about a dead girl.

But it's symbolic. It reminds us of the status of Israel. Israel is not dead.

The nation, the kingdom, the fulfillments of the promise are not gone. They're not passe. They haven't been blended or fulfilled in the church.

They will be fulfilled to Israel. And we have a great prophetic teaching in this blending of miracles. In each of the gospels where these two accounts are presented, they're exactly the same.

The sequence and the interruption and the resumption is the same. And it's a great promise and it's a great reminder to us that in our lives we have received the promise of salvation. We ourselves, at the point of receiving Christ, know that we have eternal life.

God has given us the authority to be called the sons of God, everyone who believes on His name. But we live in an evil world. We live in a fallen society.

We live in sinful bodies. We're susceptible to our sinful nature. We fail.

We err. We come short. We struggle against pressure.

We struggle against testing. We struggle against temptation. We struggle against the pull of tradition and human viewpoint and all of the enemies that face us.

Why? Why has God given us the promise and not given us the fulfillment? Why does God say, wait? What should our response be to the fact that we are in this interim period? The same thing that Jesus told Jairus. The same thing that God says to Israel, don't fear, only believe. Our lives are designed to be lives of faith.

The just shall live by his faith. We were saved by faith. As you have received Christ, so walk by faith.

That's a nice sounding phrase, but what does it mean to walk by faith? It's not a simple, vague hope that the future will turn out all right. Any unbeliever can do that. Any unbeliever can endure and say there'll be a brighter day tomorrow.

Faith has an object. Faith takes hold of the Word of God and treats it as a reality and says because that is real, I have joy. Because that is real, I have peace.

Joseph in prison, David in the wilderness, Moses in the wilderness, Elijah in the wilderness, Jeremiah in the wilderness, watching his nation go out under divine discipline. Why did these men have joy? Why did they have hope? Why did they have peace in their souls? Because the Word of God was the object of their faith. They knew where they were in God's plan and they knew that God's plan would come to fruition.

Jairus saw the plan of God come to fruition in his life as his daughter was raised from the dead. And only those select few who represent the household of faith observed that. And that's our opportunity in this life.

We have the opportunity to make the Word of God the object of our faith. As we start chapter 6 of Mark this morning, we're going to see the failure of people to take advantage of this great opportunity during the lifetime of Jesus Christ. In Mark chapter 6, verse 1, the evangelist tells us, Then he went out from there, where is there? He went out from Capernaum.

He went out from the house of Jairus. He went out from the place of these two great miracles. He went out from there and he came to his own country and his disciples followed him.

This phrase, his own country, is a single word in Greek and it is a reference to Nazareth. It's the place where Jesus grew up. It's not Bethlehem where he was born.

It's his hometown. It's where he was raised. It's where he grew to manhood.

And we see this over in Luke chapter 4 where this word is used as a synonym for Nazareth. And we'll be seeing that here shortly. So, he has gone down to Nazareth and his disciples followed him.

And when the Sabbath had come, he began to teach in the synagogue. We've seen this pattern over and over again. Where is Jesus on the Sabbath? He's in the synagogue.

What is he doing in the synagogue? He's teaching. What did he state his purpose was back in Mark chapter 1? Let us go around to the towns and villages that I may preach there for this reason I came forth. Why is he preaching? Why isn't he healing? Why isn't he bringing in a new form of government? Why isn't he sitting on the throne of David? Jesus knows the plan of God and he knows where he is in the plan of God.

And this is an interim period. This is a period of opportunity. And the issue is faith.

What's the object of faith? The Word of God. How can we believe in what we have not heard? How can we hear without a preacher? If we're going to have faith, if we're going to live a life of faith, we've got to have the Word of God. We have to have something to believe.

Faith isn't a nebulous gritting of teeth and enduring of pain. Faith is taking as fact the statements that God makes, the promises that he gives us. It's treating those as a fact.

We've got to know them. We've got to hear them preached and taught. And that's what Jesus came forth to do, to communicate the Word of Truth.

He's in the synagogue teaching. And the many who heard him were astonished. They were more than astonished.

They were dumbfounded. They were struck out of their minds, it says in the Greek. Saying, where did this man get these things? What wisdom is this which is given to him that such mighty works are performed by his hands? Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joseph, and Judas, and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us? So they were offended at him.

But Jesus said to them, a prophet is not without honor, 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 he healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief.

He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching. This is not the first time that Jesus returned to his hometown. This is the second time.

The first time is recorded for us over in Luke chapter 4. And I'd like you to turn there to Luke chapter 4. Shortly after Jesus began his ministry, it's possible that taking the widely accepted chronology, this would have been in the spring of the year A.D. 27, the first year of Jesus' ministry

which had begun the previous fall. As he was concluding the first year of his ministry, this is the spring of A.D. 27, Jesus decides to go to Nazareth, back to his hometown. He hasn't been there since he began his public ministry.

He hasn't been there since he was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan. He hasn't been there since he did the miracle at Cana and the other miracles that he has started to gain notoriety for. And so here in Luke chapter 4, Jesus returns to Nazareth.

And in verse 16, it says, He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up. And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. How many times have we seen Jesus not forsaking the assembly? He goes to the place where people assemble and teaches.

That's what should happen at an assembly of believers. He stood up to read and he was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he opened the book, he found the place in chapter 61 where it was written.

Of course, it wasn't divided up into chapters back then. It was on a great huge scroll, two great cylindrical pieces of wood around which this long Isaiah scroll was wrapped. And since the Hebrews read from right to left, the beginning of the book is what we would call the end of the scroll.

This right hand stick would be empty and here would be chapter 1 of Isaiah. And he would take these handles and turn them and wrap up the scroll on the right stick and unroll it from the left stick. And he had to do this.

I'm sure it took him a couple of minutes to roll this scroll all the way over to chapter 61 of Isaiah. And when he got there, he stood before them and in a very beautiful reading voice from the original, Jesus read, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Then he closed the book and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. Sitting slightly raised above the rest of the audience was the standard pose for teaching in those days. Some of us wish it was the standard pose today rather than standing.

But he sat down at the front of this assembly and the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. And all bore witness to him and they marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

And they said, Isn't this Joseph's son? He said to them, You will surely say this proverb to me, Physician, heal yourself. What we have heard done in Capernaum do also here in your country.

Then he said, Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.

But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah when the heaven was shut up three years and six months. And there was a great famine throughout all the land. But to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath in the region of Sidon to a woman who was a widow.

Where is Sidon? Is that in Israel? Tyre and Sidon? You know where that is today? It's up in Lebanon. Not a part of biblical Israel. It's not a part of God's promise to Abraham.

It's a Gentile area. It's a pagan area. To whom was the prophet sent? All of these widows in Israel during this famine and during this great scorching three and a half years.

Where did the prophet go? He didn't even go to any widow in Israel. He went up to Sidon to the widow of Zarephath. Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elijah the prophet.

None of them was cleansed except Naaman. Where was Naaman from? Syria. Pagans.

Outside the nation of Israel. Outside the promise to Abraham. Why did Elisha go to Naaman and cleanse him? Why did Elijah go to the widow of Zarephath and be a blessing to her and eventually raise her son from the dead? What was it about Naaman and what was it about that widow that was lacking among all the other widows and all the other lepers in Israel? Faith.

Faith. Does faith accomplish the miracle? It does not. But faith puts us in a position to receive the power of God.

Faith qualifies us as targets for God's grace and God's blessing. The arm of the Lord is not shortened. He can heal whom He wills.

He can provide for whom He wills. Who does He will to bless? Who does He will to heal and to provide for? Those of the household of faith. Faith, looking at the statements that God makes, looking at the character of God and the plan of God and believing it and acting on it as though it were fact, qualifies us for the benefits of God's grace and God's blessing.

And a lack of faith takes us out of position to be blessed, to be provided for by God. When these people in Nazareth on this first return visit hear what Jesus says they are outraged. Now notice just a verse or two earlier they bore witness to Him and they marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth.

He read the Scriptures and they said, oh, what a wonderful reading voice. What a great command He has over the original Hebrew there. It sounds so wonderful when He reads it.

He's a great reader. That was marvelous. We enjoyed it.

And then Jesus says, this Scripture is being fulfilled as I speak. This Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing today. And as it is fulfilled, you are going to say to me, Physician, heal yourself.

And why is that? Because you won't honor Me. You won't recognize Me. You won't take this Word of Truth out of Isaiah and make application of it today.

You're not going to make this the object of your faith today and recognize that this is being fulfilled. That Jesus Christ of Nazareth is in fact the Messiah of Israel. And by failing to take that Word of Truth it sounds great when it's read, but to apply it, to put it into practice and make it the object of faith today and say I believe, you're not going to do it.

The pagans will be more responsive than you from my hometown. You in the center of Israel. And this outrages them.

How dare you say that the pagans have more faith? How dare you? And did Jesus even directly bring this up? All He did was point out the truth of Scripture in the Old Testament. Where did Elisha go? Where did Elijah go? Who received the benefit of their ministry? And yet they get the point and they are outraged. How dare you? You grew up here.

We raised you. Our community nurtured you. We used to come down to the carpenter's shop and while you were pounding a fresh rivet into my spade handle or into my plow we would talk and we would have a good time.

We've got a community here. We like each other. We respect each other.

We speak well of one another. We think well of ourselves. And you're coming in and upsetting the apple cart.

You're saying we're not faithful. That we don't trust the Word of God. We don't believe the Word of God.

How dare you compare us to the pagans in Sidon and in Syria? And they are outraged. They're filled with wrath. And they rose up and thrust Him out of the city.

They led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them He went His way. Do you remember our Scripture reading this morning from Psalm 141? Let a righteous man strike me.

It is a kindness. Let him rebuke me. It is oil on my head.

My head will not refuse it. Is that the attitude that we have? Are we willing to be rebuked? Are we willing to look at ourselves in the light of Scripture? Are we willing to take what the Word of God says and believe it today and be changed by it today? My prayer is ever against the deeds of evildoers. Their rulers will be thrown down from the cliffs, the psalmist says.

These people in Nazareth are trying to throw Jesus down the cliff. But the author of Psalm 141

knows that it is the evildoers who will be thrown down the cliff. In our last chapter it was the herd of swine that went down the cliff.

Or the demons that went down the cliff and were drowned in the sea that had tried to drown the disciples. The victory of faith overcomes the world. It's the victory of faith that God honors.

It's the victory of faith that God exploits to reflect His own glory. But these people in Nazareth can't see it. Why is that? What was the problem in Nazareth? Why couldn't they respond to what Jesus was saying? What was that Scripture that Jesus read out of Isaiah 61? What did it say? The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.

Jesus is standing up and He's preaching and He's saying, you're the poor and I'm preaching the Gospel to you. I'm here to heal the broken down. I'm here to heal the impoverished.

I'm here to heal the oppressed. To proclaim liberty to the captives. By implication, this Scripture says you're a captive.

You're oppressed. You're afflicted. You are in need of deliverance.

You are blind and you need recovery of sight. You are held captive and you need deliverance. Why would someone reject such a message if they don't think they need it? I'm not blind.

I'm not poor. I'm not oppressed. I'm doing fine.

I'm righteous. I'm upright. I don't need this message of deliverance.

I don't need recovery of sight. I'm not blind. Remember the Pharisees? Because you say we see, your sin remains.

This is the problem in Nazareth. They're doing what the Pharisees do. They say, we see.

Why are you bringing us this message? You're the carpenter's son. You're blue collar. We're rulers in the synagogue.

We're upstanding citizens here. We don't need this message. So, our first point here as we look at the Nazarenes is they don't see themselves as poor.

They don't see themselves as needy. They don't need the message that Jesus presents from Isaiah 61. They're not captives.

They're not blind. They're not oppressed. They recognize the grace of His words.

They like the sound of them. They sounded great, but hey, don't try to hang that on me. I'm not poor.

I'm not blind. I like it when you read it. I'm sure it applies to someone and it sounds great, but

that's not for me personally.

I don't need that. No application to themselves. You remember over in Revelation 3 when Jesus Himself is speaking to the Laodicean church? The only place in Scripture in Revelation 2 and 3 where Jesus Christ talks directly to the church.

Those seven letters. Jesus talks straight to us. And what does He tell the Laodiceans? He says, You do not know that you are poor and miserable and blind and naked.

You say, I am rich. I have prospered. I need nothing.

You do not know that you are wretched. You are pitiable. You are poor.

You are blind. You are naked. Be zealous and repent, Jesus says to the church.

He says, Your problem, Laodicea, is you don't recognize your need and because you don't recognize the need, you are unwilling to accept the Word of Truth. You're unwilling to make the Word of Truth the object of your faith because you say, I don't need it. This is what happened at Nazareth.

And so, they are angered. Jesus says, The Gentiles recognize their need. Look at Naaman.

Look at the widow of Zarephath. Look at the lady who is willing to be called a dog lapping up the crumbs that fall from the table of Israel. Look at the centurion who has such great faith he doesn't even consider himself worthy that the Lord Jesus Christ come under his roof.

The Gentiles are putting Israel to shame because Israel refuses to recognize their need and the Word of God is of no effect if it doesn't become the object of our faith. And we're not going to believe it. We're not going to make it the object of our faith if we don't think we need it.

This is the great failure in Nazareth. What happened the first time? He came and he taught this passage and they rejected it. It's not for us.

Then we go back to Mark, chapter 6 where we are today. And in this second visit, he came and began to teach and many hearing him were astonished. They were even more astonished than last time.

Last time they were Thaumazo. T-H-A-U-M-A-Z-O They were amazed. This time they are ekpleso.

They are struck out of their minds by what Jesus says. This is some year to year and a half later this second visit to Nazareth. And Jesus stands up and teaches just as he did before to the same community, the same people.

And last time they said isn't this the son of Joseph? This time they say where did this man get

these things? What wisdom is this which is given to him that such mighty works are performed by his hands? Keep your finger in this Mark, chapter 6 and turn back to Isaiah 61. The last time Jesus was here we know the text that he preached from. He preached from Isaiah 61.

They ask the question where does this man get these things? What does Isaiah 61, 1 and 2 say? The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach. The answer to question number 1 in Nazareth is in the very passage that Jesus taught them. Where does this man get these things? Jesus already told them the Spirit of the Lord is upon me.

The Lord has anointed me to preach. That's where they come from. That's the answer to question number 1. Back in Mark 6, what's the second question? What wisdom is this that is given to him? They recognize that it's given.

He got it from somewhere. It was given to him. What does it say in Isaiah 61? The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to preach good tidings to the poor.

He has sent me to heal, to proclaim. The Lord has sent me. That's the message.

That's the wisdom. What is the wisdom? The kingdom of God is at hand. The opportunity for the fulfillment of the promises of God is here.

And it's me in person. This Scripture has been fulfilled today in your hearing, Jesus told them on His first visit. So that's the answer to the second question.

What wisdom is this that's given to Him? It's the truth of God. It's the Word of God. It's the power of God.

What's their third question? Where do these mighty works come from that are performed by His hands? What are these mighty works? What are the mighty works? Isaiah 61 tells us. Healing the oppressed. Proclaiming liberty to the captives.

Opening the prison to those who are bound. Giving sight to the blind. Proclaiming the didn't sink in.

It didn't become the object of belief or the object of faith. So Jesus pointed out when He was there before that they would judge Him by what He did rather than what He said. He said, you're going to quote this proverb to me, physician, heal yourself.

You're going to say, what you did over in Capernaum, do it here. You're going to be looking for what I do. You're going to want me to pull a rabbit out of a hat.

Maybe you'll be able to take pride in me and say, oh, yes, we've got a great healer here in Nazareth. Nazareth is a fine town. We've got lots of things.

We've got industry. We've got trade. We've got agriculture.

And we've got this fellow down the street here that does a great job of healing. He did it over in Capernaum and we brought him back home. And now he's a permanent fixture here in Nazareth.

He's one of our main tourist attractions. Bring anybody you've got and he'll heal them. They want to judge him by what he does.

They want to measure him according to their standard instead of being measured by his standard. His standard is Isaiah 61. His standard is the word of truth.

And he says, look, you are poor. You are blind. You are naked.

You need what God is offering. They refuse to be measured by that standard. Instead, they want to measure him by their standard.

Well, we've heard you can do some pretty hot miracles. Let's see them. We'll decide if they're good or not.

Jesus reminds them of another truth. The power of God benefited even the Gentiles when they exercised faith. And Israel without faith isn't benefited by God.

God doesn't bless them. God doesn't visit them with deliverance and with power. And oh, they don't like to hear that.

What do you mean God isn't pleased with me? God isn't going to bless me. God isn't going to approve of me. Especially compared to a Gentile.

And so, they do not honor him. And in both places, the first time and the second time, what does Jesus say? He says, a prophet is not without honor except in his own country, amongst his own kin folks, and in his own household. Among other things, Jesus is saying here that he is a prophet.

He is prophet, priest, and king. And fulfilling his role as prophet, what does a prophet do? He communicates the revealed word of truth. That's what Jesus is doing.

And they're rejecting it. They don't honor the prophet and they don't honor his message. So, he can do no mighty work there.

He is not able. It's interesting because the noun here for mighty work is from Dunamis, and when it says he's not able, that's also from Dunamis. It's the word we get dynamite from.

It talks about ability and power to accomplish something. And it says he wasn't able to have the ability. He wasn't empowered to express power.

Both of those words are related. The mighty work is Dunamis. His ability to do it is Dunamis.

He was unable to do a mighty work there because they lacked faith. Didn't mean that his ability had diminished, but they had disqualified themselves to receive it. So, what do we say in conclusion? On the Nazarene side, we get an application for ourselves.

We don't want to be Nazarenes. We don't want to decide that we don't need what God provides, that we don't need the instruction of his word, that we don't need the empowering and enabling that it brings us, that we are not poor and blind and naked. We have to do like the Laodicean church and recognize that, turn and repent.

Recognize that we need the Lord every hour. We need the instruction of his word. We need to assemble.

We need to hear the teaching of the word. We need to get it on a daily basis. Proverbs chapter 2, watching daily at the gates of wisdom is the responsibility of a believer.

If it is a minor priority in our life, deliverance and provision are going to be a minor priority in God's plan because we have disqualified ourselves just like the Nazarenes. Secondly, we look at it from Jesus' side. What does Jesus do in the face of rejection? Jesus has a message to proclaim.

Jesus has a calling from God and he's rejected. His message is scorned. His person is reviled.

They get angry at him. They want to throw him off the cliff. What is Jesus' response? Jesus goes two times.

Remember over in Titus? Reject a man after the first and second admonition? Jesus goes two times and presents them with the word of truth. It's rejected two times. Jesus doesn't persist.

Jesus doesn't say, wait a minute, let me prove myself. Here, bring me a sick person and I'll heal them. Let me justify myself.

Let me prove to you who I am. Jesus' mission was to present the truth, not to present miracles. And in the face of rejection, Jesus didn't do miracles.

He didn't throw continued effort into the face of rejection. He didn't cast his pearls before swine. And we are called upon to do the same.

Our responsibility is to present the truth. And it is the truth of the word of God that challenges people to faith, that challenges them to repentance. If someone will not respond to the truth of the word of God, what do you think you can offer that will convince them? What do you think any human being can offer that is better than the word of God to challenge someone to faith, to challenge them to repentance? Have we got something better? Do we have a technique? Can we

love them into the kingdom? Can we pray them into the kingdom? Can we do anything that has more power than the word of God? We cannot.

What did Jesus do? He came to these people once and was rejected. He came to them again and he was rejected. And he left.

And he went to the surrounding villages. For this reason, I came forth to preach. It's the word that has the power.

It's the word that issues the challenge. This is not an issue between us and unbelievers. This is not an issue between faithful believers and unfaithful believers.

This is an issue between each person and the Lord. We may be a different world. We be different world.

The rich man is down in torment and he says, send Lazarus back, bring him back to life and send him to my brothers so they won't come to this terrible place. And what does Abraham say? If they did not believe Moses and the prophets, they will not believe even if one should rise from the dead. You could have a resurrection directly in front of people who have rejected the truth and it won't change their mind.

So we can't waste our time. We've got to concentrate on bearing that fruit in our own lives, being sure that we are not Nazarenes and that God's word accomplishes its purpose in our souls. That's the challenge.

That's the Communicate the truth and let it be a challenge in the lives of others. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for the example of Jesus Christ.

We thank you for the truth that is contained in your word and for its life-changing power. We thank you for the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit that makes these things real to us. We thank you for his enablement, his comfort, his encouragement.

We pray that our lives will reflect your glory, that we will respond to the message contained in your word, that we will be soft-hearted and malleable and susceptible to change. We pray that in everything our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified for we ask it in his name. Amen.