

“Known but Unknown”
Mark 6:14-15
(Preached at Trinity, December 1, 2010)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As **Chapter 6** opened we found Jesus returning to His hometown of Nazareth only to be rejected by those who knew Him best. We can see the danger of familiarity.
Mark 6:4 - "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his *own* relatives and in his *own* household."
2. This is a danger for us as we look upon our leaders; the danger of seeing them as mere men and despising their authority. There is a particular danger of an unholy familiarity as we approach God; to become so accustomed to His presence that we fail to tremble before His holiness.
3. His hometown rejected Jesus and He marveled at their unbelief.
Jesus then called His disciples to Him and sent them forth to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ. They were sent out two-by-two with no provision trusting in God to bless their travels.
4. Tonight I want to direct your attention to **Verses 14-15**. As the disciples went far and wide preaching the Gospel of Christ the fame of Jesus continued to spread. It even reached the ears of King Herod. Actually, Herod was the tetrarch but the title “King” was popular among the Galileans as well as in Rome and Herod gladly received it.
Mark 6:14 – “And King Herod heard *of it*, for His name had become well known”
5. The name Herod is very familiar to us but there were several Herods. Let me give you a brief rundown of the Herods of Scripture:
 - First, there was Herod the Great who reigned from 41 B.C. to 1 B.C. He was the Herod of Matthew 2 who met with the wise men and who sought to kill Jesus as a child. He was married 10 times and was the head of the Herod family.
 - Herod Philip the First – He was the first husband of Herodias who was responsible for the death of John the Baptist. He is mentioned by the name of Philip here and in **Matthew 14:3**. He held no official office.
 - Herod Antipas – the second husband of Herodias. He consented to the death of John the Baptist. He is the Herod here. He held the office of tetrarch, the ruler of a fourth part of a region. He was one of several sons of Herod the Great. When Herod the Great died, his kingdom was divided among three of his sons. Herod Atipas ruled over Galilee and Perea.
He was also the Herod to whom Pilate sent Jesus for trial.
 - Herod Philip the Second – He was the founder of Caesarea Philippi which was named after him. He was also called Philip in the Luke 3:1.
 - Herod the Great had another son, Aristobulus whom he murdered. Aristobulus, however, had a son, Herod Agrippa who is the Herod in **Acts 12** who is the Herod that God struck dead for failing to give Him glory.
 - We might also note that Herod Agrippa was the father of Agrippa the Second who examined Paul in **Acts 25 & 26**

- He was also the father of Drusilla who was the wife of Felix before whom Paul was tried in **Acts 24**

5. The fame of Jesus had reached the ears of Herod Antipas. By the word of Jesus sick people were being miraculously healed, lepers cleansed, storms calmed, demons cast out, and even the dead were brought back to life. His teaching was unlike anything anyone had ever heard before. Now, the name of Jesus was even known by Herod.
6. On one hand, we should rejoice. His name was filling the known world of that day. His fame was spreading like wildfire. Multitudes were flocking to Him. What could be better? Unfortunately, although multitudes knew *of* Him few actually *knew* Him. The same is true in our land. There is an infinite difference between knowing *about* Jesus and having a saving knowledge of Him. Jesus was known and at the same time He was unknown.
7. Tonight I want us to look at the difference between a mere intellectual knowledge of Jesus and a true saving knowledge of Christ.

I. The danger of a mere head knowledge

A. These Jewish people had much knowledge

1. I pointed out a few weeks ago in a message titled “The Tragedy of Unbelief” the rich blessings God bestowed upon these people. They had received the promises of God.
2. Jesus came to them. They had Jesus in their midst. They saw His miracles, heard His teaching. His fame had swept across the land.
Mark 6:14 – “for His name had become well known”
3. Those in His hometown knew Him particularly. They knew Him well. They knew Him, but they did not know Him.
Mark 6:6 – “And He wondered at their unbelief.”
4. They heard, but they did not hear.
Jesus continually ended His messages with,
“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”
5. Notice their complete misunderstanding of His true identity
Mark 6:14-15 – “and *people* were saying, “John the Baptist has risen from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in Him.” ¹⁵ But others were saying, “He is Elijah.” And others were saying, “*He is* a prophet, like one of the prophets of *old*.”
6. Remember, many of these people followed Jesus temporarily. Many believed in Him, temporarily
 - a. John records this
John 2:23-25 – “Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. ²⁴ But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.”

- b. Don't forget the Triumphal Entry
John 12:12-13 – “On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and *began* to cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel."
- c. We see it again in **John 6**
John 6:2 – “And a great multitude was following Him, because they were seeing the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.”
John 6:14-15 – “When therefore the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is of a truth the Prophet who is to come into the world. Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. "
(1) Then Jesus began to teach them the truth and they quickly began to turn on Him.
John 6:41-42 – “The Jews therefore were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven. And they were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven '?"
John 6:59-60 – “These things He said in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum. ⁶⁰ Many therefore of His disciples, when they heard *this* said, "This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?"
John 6:66 – “As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore.”
(2) They did not want the true Christ

- B. This is a terrible reality in our day
1. There are multitudes of mere religious people filling our churches. They have been taught to simply make a decision for Jesus and they are instantaneously saved
They have a form of religion but it is a Christless religion.
 2. They enjoy the music, the fellowship – the feeling of belonging. Because they are involved in religion their conscience is lulled to sleep
 3. But there is no evidence of spiritual life – no spiritual growth. Sound doctrine and Biblical preaching makes them uncomfortable. If a brother or sister speaks to them about holiness they are offended. If a pastor speaks to them he is despised.
 4. They know about Jesus, but they don't know Him personally and they don't know Him properly
 - a. Many see Jesus only as a Provider. He provides comfort and peace, He provides eternal life, He meets our felt needs.

- b. These things are true, but they are leaving out a key element. They don't see Jesus as Lord and King.
- C. The Jews believed many things about Jesus but none of them saw Him as their King – not in the true sense.
 - 1 A sign was placed above Jesus reading,
 - “JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”
 - a. But they didn't believe it
 - b. On the day of His crucifixion they declared their allegiance
 - John 19:15** – “So they cried out, “Away with *Him*, away with *Him*, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”
 - 2. Salvation demands bowing before Jesus as Lord.
 - Romans 10:9** – “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;”
 - 3. The problem with mere religious people today is they know about Jesus but they don't know Him properly and they do not know Him intimately. They do not know Jesus and He does not know them.
 - Matthew 7:21-23** - “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*.²² “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’²³ “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.”

II. What does genuine knowledge look like?

- A. It creates an intimacy with Jesus
 - 1. This is true knowledge
 - 2. Paul spoke of it
 - Philippians 3:10-11** – “that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;¹¹ in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”
 - 3. John spoke of it
 - 1 John 1:3** – “what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”
 - κοινωνία – fellowship, sharing, communion
- B. It creates a love for Jesus that results in faithfulness and obedience
 - 1 John 2:3-4** – “And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.⁴ The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;”
 - This love also results in a love for our brethren
 - 1 John 5:1** – “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him.”
 - 1 John 4:20-21** – “If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.²¹ And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.”

- C. Genuine knowledge creates growth
1. The mark of counterfeit religion is a lack of growth, no progress towards maturity.
 2. We can see this clearly taught in **Hebrews 5-6**
 - a. **Hebrews 5** speaks of the problem that some of the Jewish converts had not progressed in maturity
Hebrews 5:12-14 – “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.”
 - b. **Hebrews 6** opens with a context speaking to the Jews in particular As good Jews they would have believed everything in **Verses 1-3**
 - c. Again, we see the danger of knowing about Christ without knowing Him savingly
 3. **Hebrews 6:4-6** speak as a stern warning
 4. **Verses 7-9** remind us of the necessity of spiritual growth and bearing fruit – The things that accompany salvation.

Conclusion:

1. This passage stands as a warning to all – “His name had become well known”
2. Just knowing about Jesus is not salvation. True conversion presses on in the truth of the Gospel:
1 Corinthians 15:1-2 – “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.”