

Mark 6:1-6
The Cancer of Unbelief

6 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.

PRAYER:

When cancer is discovered in our bodies we go to our doctor and seek to have him remove it from our bodies.

The last few weeks we have seen examples of people with extraordinary faith:

Demoniac

Woman with hemorrhage

Jairus

Now we will see examples of those who lacked faith, instead of believing in Jesus and placing his faith in him, they were disbelievers, unbelievers in Jesus. We need to be part of the first group, not the second group.

Structure of Text

The townspeople's recognition/acknowledgement
of Christ's wisdom and works

The townspeople's rejection of Christ and his ministry

They refused to accept and believe the plain evidence

This is true of all humanity as they reject God's evidence of his existence
in General Revelation

The townspeople's unbelief of Christ

Doctrinal Themes

Jesus' Absolute Humanity is Manifested in townspeople's rejection

He's just one of our "homeboys"

The cancer of unbelief

Unbelief hinders God's working about people

REVIEW THE TEXT

Spurgeon:

... yet they overlooked the over-whelming evidence of His divine works, attested as they were by His disciples, and even acknowledged by themselves! They virtually asked, “How can this be the Christ of God, seeing He is one of our countrymen, and His mother, and His brothers and sisters are all with us?”—a reason which was, indeed, no reason, but a disgrace to themselves, and an ignominious witness to their own infamy!

They were in the right place to find evidence if they had cared for it, but no, with the candle before them, they shut their eyes or, rather, in broad noonday they groped for the wall like blind men, because they were resolved not to see.

NBC

“the essence of unbelief is the stubborn refusal to accept the evidence and admit the presence and power of God; and nothing so inhibits the power of God.” p. 864 Graham Swift

Scriptures re: unbelief:

Mark 16:14 -

⁴ Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

Mark 16:16

¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Heb. 3:12-15 - ¹² Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from ^(N)the living God. ¹³ But ^(Q)exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by ^(P)the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have come to share in Christ, ^(Q)if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.¹⁵ As it is said,

^(R)“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

Rom. 1:18 -21

⁸ For ^(AJ)the wrath of God ^(AK)is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be ^(AL)known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, ^(AM)have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world,^[a] in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they ^(AN)became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Scriptures about being offended by Christ/ashamed of Christ:

Matt. 11:4-6 - "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers^[a] are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

Matt. 15:11-12 - ¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person." ¹² Then the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?"

Mark 8:38 -

For whoever is **ashamed** of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be **ashamed** when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Rom. 1:16 - For I am not **ashamed** of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek

Phil. 1:20 -

...as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all **ashamed**, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

2 Tim. 1: 8 -

Therefore do not be **ashamed** of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,

2 Tim. 1:12 -

which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not **ashamed**, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

1 Pet. 4:16 -

Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be **ashamed**, but let him glorify God in that name.

Charles Spurgeon: in a Sunday morning sermon on Mark 6:6,"the Sad Wonder"

Ah, my brothers and sisters see the importance of faith; never place that precious grace in a secondary position that can make Jesus marvel! That which seems to Him to be both in its presence, and in its absence, a thing to be marveled at, ought to be a very great point of consideration with us; it should be frequently thought upon, and always estimated at the highest rate. Have you believed? No man ever asked you a weightier question. Are you still in unbelief? No tongue can ever suggest a more solemn inquiry.

Do you believe on the Son of God, or are you yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity, wrapped up in your unbelief?

Jesus was amazed not only at unbelief but at belief:

Ex: Matt. 8:8-10 - ⁸ But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but ^(L)only say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, ^(Q)'Do this,' and he does it." ¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, ^(J)he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with ^(K)no one in Israel^(d) have I found such faith.

Examples of where belief brings blessing in NT:

Mk. 1:14-15 - ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; ^(E)repent and believe in the gospel."

Acceptance of the arrival of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Mark 5:35-37 – ³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing ^(A) what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." ³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. **Release from fear.**

Mark 9:22-25 - ²² And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." ²³ And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." ²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out ^(A) and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" **Strengthening of faith that is faltering/ weak**

Mark 11:24

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Mark 16:14 -

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, **believe** that you have received it, and it will be yours. **Confidence in prayer.**

Rom. 3:21-22 - ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **Righteousness from God.**

Rom. 4:3 -

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham **believed** God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

John 3:16 - ¹⁶ “For ^(A)God so loved ^(B)the world, ^[a] ^(C)that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not ^(D)perish but have eternal life.

Belief that God sent his Son to rescue his people brings eternal life.

Belief that God sent his Son to rescue his people assures believers of deliverance from hell.

Rom. 6:6-11 - . ⁶ We know that ^(K)our old self^[a] ^(L)was crucified with him in order that ^(M)the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For ^(N)one who has died ^(O)has been set free^[b] from sin. ⁸ Now ^(P)if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that ^(Q)Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; ^(R)death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, ^(S)once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves ^(T)dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. **Belief in Word of God engenders sanctifying power in the life of the believer.**

Heb 13:5 – ⁵ Keep your life ^(A)free from love of money, and ^(B)be content with what you have, for he has said, ^(C)“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Belief in Word of God brings assurance of salvation and contentment in life.

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Strong faith in Jesus causes even him to be amazed.

Acts 3:16 - ⁶ And ^(A)his name—by ^(B)faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is ^(C)through Jesus^[a] has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. **Faith in Jesus can bring bodily healing.**

“Faith” in Mark 5 times:

:2 When Jesus saw their faith

John 20:28-29 - ⁸ Thomas answered him, ^(AP)“My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? ^(AQ)Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Belief in Christ’s resurrection from the dead brings blessing.

Romans 10:9-19 - ⁹ ... if ^(A)you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and ^(B)believe in your heart ^(C)that God raised him from the dead, you will be

saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Belief in the heart and confession with the mouth that God raised his Son from the dead brings salvation to a lost sinner.

(B)T

Phil. 4:6 - the Lord is at hand; ⁶ (C)do not be anxious about anything, (D)but in everything by prayer and supplication (E)with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Belief in Paul's command brings relief from anxiety and worry.

Belief becomes reality when the scriptures are obeyed. There is a vital connection between belief and obedience.

Rom. 6: 11- ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves (I)dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Do you believe you are dead to sin? The scriptures say you are. Do you believe that? Believe it and reckon or consider or count your old sinful habits as deflated as a balloon is popped with a straight pin. If your old man, your old sinful nature died with Christ on the cross, and if you are risen with him to walk in newness of life, then believe it and do it. You have the power by the grace of God to kill remaining sin in your life. You have power to mortify it.

You have power to walk in the holiness of Jesus Christ himself. When that sinful temptation raises it's ugly head and beckons you and allures you to follow it – say "no." Say it immediately. So don't let it get a foothold. Flee from it. Consider it dead. Kick it in the face. Crucify it; kill it. Walk in the resurrection power Jesus Christ. You are a new man, a new woman in Christ. You are not the same. You've been born again by the Spirit of God. You have a new power living in your breast that is working mightily within you. It is not of yourselves; it is of God almighty.

You are not alone in this struggle with sin. The great resurrected, ascended high priest is pleading his blood before the throne of God to wash away your sins. He is praying for you.

Heb. 7:25 -

Consequently, he is able **to save to the uttermost** those who draw near **to** God through him, since he always lives **to make intercession** for them.

Do you believe this? Do you believe the Word of the living God? Some still languish in sinful unbelief.

The scripture says God is saving you to the uttermost. You can't be any more saved than you are. You can't have any more spiritual advantages and blessings than have already been provided you in Christ's great person and redemptive,

saving, sanctifying work. You are a new creature in Christ Jesus. Do you believe that?

2 Cor. 5:17 says, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new** creation. The old has passed away; behold, the **new** has come.

Do you believe this? Do you believe the Word of God. God has done a new creation in you if you are a sincere believer in Jesus Christ. The old way of life, the old sinful habits, the old sinful thinking – all this has been dealt a death blow.

Like the two atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki spelled the defeat of Japan in WWII. So Jesus' death and resurrection spelled the death sentence on your and my sin.

God has done and is doing something new and radical in your life. You will never be the same. Paul said in Phil 1:6:

⁶And I am sure of this, that he who began ^(A)a good work in you ^(B)will bring it to completion at ^(C)the day of Jesus Christ.

Paul, who was a called and anointed apostle of Jesus Christ, said of these believers in the Greek city of Philippi:

There's one thing I'm absolutely convinced of, there is not a shadow of doubt in my mind, that God has begun a work in your lives that he is going to carry out to full completion. You and I are in the process of being fully and completely sanctified, made holy like Christ is holy, separated from worldly thinking and behavior and ungodliness, and separated out to God's exclusive use and God's exclusive purpose and God's exclusive glory, and God's special and beloved people.

You are no longer citizens of this world but citizens of heaven itself. Your feet are on earth but you belong to another city, a heavenly one.

Col 3:1-3:

^(A)If then you have been raised with Christ, seek ^(B)the things that are above, where Christ is, ^(C)seated at the right hand of God. ²^(D)Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For ^(E)you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Do you believe this? Do you believe that Christ is seated at the right hand of God? Do you believe you've been raised with Christ? If you've repented of your sins and place your faith in him, you have been raised.

It's like there's an invisible link, a chain, a spiritual chain, in which Christ has you connected. He is the forerunner - he went to heaven in anticipation that he would bring us with him.

Since we are joined to Christ, the Scripture says, we should "set our minds on things that are above because we have died, our old sinful nature has died, and our life is hidden with Christ in God. It's like it's stashed away for safe keeping.

Do you believe all this? Are you a believer? Do you believe God has done this mighty work through his Son to rescue you from your sins and bring you into his eternal kingdom. If you believe this please say, **“I believe!”**

If you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died on the cross to save sinners from hell, say **“I believe!”**

If you believe Jesus is in heaven as your great High Priest and is praying for you and is preparing to come again to receive you unto himself, say **“I believe!”**

If you believe what the scriptures say, that there is a great Judgment Day coming and all those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will perish forever in a terrible place of suffering called hell, say **“I believe!”**

If you believe that when Jesus returns at the end of the Age, he will resurrect his people from the grave and clothe them with resurrection bodies like unto his own glorious body, say **“I believe!”**

If you believe that Jesus will be the centerpiece of the New Jerusalem that comes down from heaven, that he will be the focus of worship of the multitudes from every nation, tribe, and tongue, say **“I believe!”**

If you believe the Word of God, the Holy Bible, is inspired by the Holy Spirit and is true and authoritative and all that it says will happen, will indeed happen, say **“I believe!”**

If you believe that God our heavenly Father is faithful and true and full of lovingkindness and will keep all his people safe in his everlasting arms for this life and the eternal life to come, say, **“I believe!”**

If you're not sure, please see me or Wayne after the service and by God's grace we will help you come to faith in Jesus.

What is it about ourselves that amazes Jesus? our unbelief or our belief?

Let us believe the Word of God. Let us believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of all who come in repentance and faith to him.

In believing all our hopes realized and we shall be given a welcome entrance into his eternal kingdom.

-by Jeff Gregory, pastor
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-meeting in east Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.