**7/7/24**

**Hearts and Lives are Changed Forever**

**Mark 6:1-13**

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 1:2, NRSV) (2) **Amen.**

I want to put a little disclaimer in here and inform you that we are not going to do things the so-called normal or usual way. We are going to take a little different approach to our Gospel Reading by diving into things and working on understanding them together by breaking them down and even deconstructing them a little bit. That is because even though I read through several various different translations of this Gospel Reading I was still left shaking my head just like Jesus was oh so many years ago. Then, just then, I realized that Jesus quit trying to go at things on his own, and I could no longer do that with our Gospel Reading either. So, I admit that I need your help, just as Jesus admitted that he needed the help of the twelve disciples. So, let’s forge forward through our faith and with our conviction. Let’s shake the sand off of our sandals when the going gets tough just like the disciples were instructed to by Jesus. In this very process together we will ensure that hearts and lives are changed forever through the power of ministry when we go and share our faith two by two.

Now, you may be sitting there thinking that I have lost it today after being out on the beach and spending so much time with Heather’s family this past week. You may be asking yourself how and why we are exactly going to do this thing together. You may even be saying to yourself that I am the one up here with the microphone, and that I am the one that is supposed to have the answers after several hours of reading and research. However, that is not the case, nor will it ever be. We talk about how being the church is not just inside these walls or inside this building, and for that very fact being the church is not just from the sole efforts of one or two people. The power does not solely rest in me, nor does it rest in just any one of you particular folks. It rests in all of us. We are a community, and we are a congregation. That is why I thank you each and every week for your continued commitment to call in on the conference call or show up here. Together we all come to the very realization that we are equipped and more ready and able than we realize sometimes. All we need to do is let things start from the heart and allow them to continue to come from the heart as well. Oh, and that two by two thing I was talking about before is in our very introduction that was read at the start of our worship service which reminds us that “The Spirit always operates in the “between”: between Jesus and his Abba, between Jesus and us, between you and me, between us and those to whom we are sent.” (1) We are and never will be alone.

So, we kick off our breakdown by looking at something that was very front and center in our Gospel Reading. Something that honestly shocked me no matter how many times or different translations I read it over and through. The very fact that those that know Jesus doubt him. Yes, I just said doubt! Now, it of course is a little different type of doubt than we typically remember from that Thomas experience. However, it indeed is a doubt we need to deal with and explore. I know for certain that if you did hear it or pick up on it then it might not have fit the very expectation that you may have come to. I mean one would assume that when someone is in their home, or around the people they love and care about, that things should be pretty laid back and calm. That they should be respected, loved, or even admired. However, that was not the case here. Jesus had grown and changed into someone and something they did not expect. Jesus was no longer that little boy that they put diapers on and had to feed. Jesus was no longer that young person trying to figure his life out playing with toys and tools around the house and Joseph’s workshop. Jesus was no longer the man that worked alongside of them on various projects in the carpentry shop and out in the community. Jesus was no longer just simply the son and product of the people and the community that he was born into. Jesus was the Son and product of the great God above, but he always was that wasn’t he? (pause) The thing that people who were close to him failed to see was that Jesus was always changing and was always growing deeper in the knowledge and understanding of the scriptures, and for that fact the knowledge and understanding of who he was and called to be. Jesus realized he was a child of God, and not just of the family and friends around him. However, the very people he grew up with did not expect or even seem to feel comfortable with or support that. Jesus was growing and becoming what and who he was destined to be long before he was even born in that manger if you really think about it. It was just showing up on the outside more and more frequently. Now, the people that were supposed to be the closest to him were actually the people that were the furthest apart. The only natural reaction they seemed to be able to muster up was that of doubt. They doubted who he became, and who he was continuing to become. They doubted that Jesus was the very same person that they grew up with. They doubted he could learn all these things, speak out and teach, or even have a band of followers with him willing to do work as well. Their very discomfort led to that which Jesus said in verse 4… and if you honestly ask me… this comment or statement hits extremely hard. So, let me remind you of it… “Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.”” (2)

Does verse 4 sound familiar in context of your very own life at times? Does that statement make you come to realize at times that those that know us doubt us too? Sometimes we experience that very same doubt from the people and places that we think know us best. We grow and change every day, and sometimes we need to remind people of that. We no longer are even the same person that we were yesterday. Doubt creeps in all too often because it is a comfort response folks! I am quite sure you know who or what else manages to creep in with that doubt as well. Just as it is our very job to grow and change through the Word, and through our faith and belief each day, it is also our very job to not allow that doubt to get in the way and to allow others to be left behind. Our very presence is vital to making sure that all hearts and lives are changed forever. Now, we may have all read the word repent in verse 12, but that is the very power and blessing of being able to read other translations. Repent is often a straight forward word most times, and sometimes the context and variation of it can be missed. That is where I am thankful that the Common English Bible changes it out to “change their hearts and lives.” It is that very explanation that helped me understand things a bit more. It also showed the very offloading of doubt and so many more things that allows for continual growth and for us to be able to carry on just as Jesus has commissioned us. We can shake the sand off of our sandals and continue to move on without that extra baggage and burden if someone does not hear or welcome us. However, that does not mean we will forget them or lose sight of our mission and purpose. We will just leave them alone for the here and now and revisit things later. Shaking the sand off our sandals is a mindset and a reset we all need to experience more often or not in order to not be discouraged even if it is in our very own towns or homes.

Our Gospel Reading also informs us that the disciples’ hearts and lives were changed forever because Christ entrusted them with his very mission and ministry. Jesus may have led by example for some time, and he may have called them to come and follow. However, he just did not want them following along like blind puppy dogs. These fishermen, tax collectors, and other unlikely fellows were being shaped and molded into who they were truly to become. Jesus was no longer going to keep doing the heavy lifting for them either. We hear the commission and trust today when Jesus tells them to go out two by two and promote people to repent. Of course there goes that word repent again. Jesus commissions them in their ministry to go out and have people turn back to God. To have people realize that there is more to life than that which is directly in front of them. There is an entire kingdom right at their fingertips to be received at their baptisms. The disciples are to tell people that now is the time to get water washed and cleansed of their sins to be able to be go out there and even share it with others too. Jesus may have hit a proverbial wall in his hometown, but that was also God telling him to set his disciples free and do the work he had be showing them how to do all this time. The disciples’ hearts and lives were changed forever because Christ entrusted them with his very mission and ministry.

For that very fact our hearts and lives have been changed forever because Christ entrusts us with his very mission and ministry too! We have been provided with the strength and the blessing to go out two by two like those very disciples back then and share the good news. We may seem like we are by ourselves at times, but I assure you that we are not. We have even learned this through several other Gospel Readings and Sermons from week’s past that the advocate is alongside of us. The Holy Spirit is always with us just as the Holy Spirit was with Jesus and the disciples back then.

The hardest part of this calling and ministry is what I am going to leave you with to chew on here and process further. We are called to be vulnerable. Yes, I just said vulnerable. We heard about it in our Gospel Reading today. We cannot share from the complete depth of our entire heart unless we are indeed vulnerable. Through that very vulnerability people will see that you truly care and love them just as Jesus showed he loved his disciples and everyone around. Of course there will be disagreements and a few slip-ups, and Jesus even showed us he could be human too. Sometimes we may not feel like being open or vulnerable, but that is what we are called to, and we know it is right as well. Thank God that we have the benefit of knowing the entire story, and we realize that the discomfort of being vulnerable is only temporary. We know that he has vanquished every and all doubt once and for all. We can and do trust in ourselves because our Eternal Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit trusts in us. Through our very faith and love we will change hearts and lives forever.

Amen.

**References & Study Points**

(1) Sundays and Seasons

 Preaching

 Year B 2024

 July 7th, 2024

 7th Sunday After Pentecost

(2) Bible.com

(3) The Four Pages of The Sermon

 Revised and Updated

 A Guide to Biblical Preaching

 Paul Scott Wilson

 Copyright 2018

 Abingdon Press

(4) WorkingPreacher.org

 Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

 A community authorized by Jesus to speak and act on his behalf

 July 7, 2024

 Commentary on Mark 6:1-13

 Matt Skinner

(5) WorkingPreacher.org

 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

 This is one of those instances where the lectionary disturbs the narrative flow of

 Mark’s gospel.

 July 5, 2009

 Commentary on Mark 6:1-13

 Mark G. Vitalis Hoffman

(6) WorkingPreacher.org

 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

 This Sunday’s pairing of Mark 6:1-6 and 6:7-13 kindles the preacher’s imagination.

 July 5, 2015

 Commentary on Mark 6:1-13

 C. Clifton Black

(7) WorkingPreacher.org

 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

 By referring to himself as a prophet, Jesus associated himself with a long line of

 countercultural figures within Israel.

 July 4, 2021

 Commentary on Mark 6:1-13

 Emerson Powery

(8) SermonCentral.com

 My Grace Is Sufficient

 Contributed by Tim Zingale on Jul 22, 2003

 Scripture: Mark 6:1-13

 Denomination: Lutheran

(9) SermonCentral.com

 Paradox

 Contributed by Tim Zingale on Jul 3, 2006

 Scripture: Mark 6:1-13

 Denomination: Lutheran

**Introduction**

 Jesus does great deeds of power and gives his disciples authority over demons.

 Yet none of this power is unilateral; it all must be received by faith. Jesus asks his

 disciples to go out without money or supplies, so that they will be dependent on

 how others receive them. When we are sent from the assembly to witness and to

 heal, we are asked to be vulnerable, to be dependent on the reception of others.

 The Spirit always operates in the “between”: between Jesus and his Abba,

 between Jesus and us, between you and me, between us and those to whom we

 are sent.

**Mark 6:1-13 (NRSV)**

 At home and abroad, Jesus and his disciples encounter resistance as they seek

 to proclaim God’s word and relieve affliction.

 1 [Jesus] came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.2 On the sabbath

 he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded.

 They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been

 given to him? What deeds of power are being 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 Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor, except in their

 hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.” 5 And he could do

 no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and

 cured them. 6 And he was amazed at their unbelief.

 Then he went about among the villages teaching. 7 He called the twelve and

 began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean

 spirits. 8 He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no

 bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on

 two tunics. 10 He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you

 leave the place. 11 If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you,

 as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.”

 12 So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. 13 They cast out many

 demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

**Mark 6:1-13 (CEB)**

Jesus left that place and came to his hometown. His disciples followed him.

On the Sabbath, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were surprised. “Where did this man get all this? What’s this wisdom he’s been given? What about the powerful acts accomplished through him?

Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t he Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” They were repulsed by him and fell into sin.

Jesus said to them, “Prophets are honored everywhere except in their own hometowns, among their relatives, and in their own households.”

He was unable to do any miracles there, except that he placed his hands on a few sick people and healed them.

He was appalled by their disbelief. Then Jesus traveled through the surrounding villages teaching.

He called for the Twelve and sent them out in pairs. He gave them authority over unclean spirits.

He instructed them to take nothing for the journey except a walking stick—no bread, no bags, and no money in their belts.

He told them to wear sandals but not to put on two shirts.

He said, “Whatever house you enter, remain there until you leave that place.

If a place doesn’t welcome you or listen to you, as you leave, shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them.”

So, they went out and proclaimed that people should change their hearts and lives.

They cast out many demons, and they anointed many sick people with olive oil and healed them.

**Mark 6:1-13 (NASB2020)**

Jesus went out from there and \*came into His hometown; and His disciples \*followed Him.

And when the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, “Where did this Man learn these things, and what is this wisdom that has been given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands?

Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are His sisters not here with us?” And they took offense at Him.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not dishonored except in his hometown and among his own relatives, and in his own household.”

And He could not do any miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.

And He was amazed at their unbelief. And He was going around the villages, teaching.

And He \*summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;

and He instructed them that they were to take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belt—

but to wear sandals; and He added, “Do not wear two tunics.”

And He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town.

Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet as a testimony against them.”

And they went out and preached that people are to repent.

And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.

**Mark 6:1-13 (NLT)**

Jesus left that part of the country and returned with his disciples to Nazareth, his hometown.

The next Sabbath he began teaching in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. They asked, “Where did he get all this wisdom and the power to perform such miracles?”

Then they scoffed, “He’s just a carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. And his sisters live right here among us.” They were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.

Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family.”

And because of their unbelief, he couldn’t do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.

And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then Jesus went from village to village, teaching the people.

And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits.

He told them to take nothing for their journey except a walking stick—no food, no traveler’s bag, no money.

He allowed them to wear sandals but not to take a change of clothes.

“Wherever you go,” he said, “stay in the same house until you leave town.

But if any place refuses to welcome you or listen to you, shake its dust from your feet as you leave to show that you have abandoned those people to their fate.”

So the disciples went out, telling everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God.

And they cast out many demons and healed many sick people, anointing them with olive oil.

**Theme Statement: What is God doing in or behind this text?**

**(Active verb, saving or empowering action, complete thought, and a simple short sentence)**

Hearts and lives are changed forever.

**Four Page Method**

**Page One (Trouble in the Text) (Characters Only)**

Those that know Jesus doubt him.

**Page Two (Trouble in the World) (Us Only)**

Those that know us doubt us.

**Page Three (Grace in the Text) (God & Characters)**

The disciples’ hearts and lives were changed forever because Christ entrusted them with his very mission and ministry.

**Page Four (Grace in the World) (God & Us)**

Our hearts and lives have been changed forever because Christ entrusts us with his very mission and ministry.

**Sermon Unity Elements: The Tiny Dog Now Is Mine**

**Text (41-42):** Mark 6:1-13

**Theme (42-48):** Presence

**Doctrine (48-50):** Faith

**Need (50-52):** Change of Hearts and Lives

**Image (52-56):** Two by Two

**Mission (56-57):** Go and Share