

# Recognition and Rejection

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Prayer. Let's pray. Lord, we come before you once more this day and we humble ourselves down before you.
- We come today confessing that we often come to a place of worship and come to this time of worship with so many things assailing us, with so many things distracting us.
- We come at this time especially to this place and at this time and we ask you to remove from us all the various many burdens that we bring to this place. The many things which wear us down, which stress and de-stress us, Lord, that bring us to our knees.
- We come to this place just now with worries and concerns of health, worries and concerns of family, perhaps financial worries, perhaps job worries, personal worries, which number into the tens or hundreds.
- Lord, you know all the concerns, all the things which we bring to this place. We take all these concerns, all these anxieties, all the stresses and strains of living and seeking to serve in this world and we bring them to the cross just now.
- [ 1 : 1 5 ]     As we see in that cross our Saviour crucified for us, as we see him arisen again, as we see him removed from the cross, we see an empty cross where our Saviour took on the full wrath for all the sins of all his people.
- We see a Saviour who became just like us in all ways apart from sin. And it's to that Saviour we come and we bring our woes and our worries, our stresses and our pains.
- It's to that living Saviour, fully man and fully God we come today. And we cry out for his help. We cry out for his peace.
- As we heard, reminded to the boys and the girls just now, we come to a Saviour who knows his people. A Saviour who remembers night and day all about us.
- But we're not forgotten to you. Even though the dark days of life, the hard days of life, even when we feel forgotten by friends, family, the world, we're not forgotten by him.
- [ 2 : 1 5 ]     Lord, help that to be a reality for us this day. Help us not just to come to this place out of ritual or out of routine, but help us to come to this place with a mind and a heart ready to serve you, ready to worship you, ready to praise our risen Saviour today.
- We thank you for this gathering. We ask for this short time together. You'd help us to listen carefully to your word, to concentrate what it is you're saying to us through it.
- We pray just now for this gathering. We pray first and foremost for your people here today. We thank you once more for this opportunity to gather together, to gather together as a worshipping people, as a people under your word.
- As we come just now to sing your praises from your word, to lift up our voices from your word, to read from your word, to hear from your word. We are reminded we are people of the word.
- People reminded that we are shaped and transformed by that living word. We pray just now for our friends here today who are gathering, and often have gathered with us week after week.

[ 3 : 23 ] We thank you for them. We thank you for their presence. We ask you bless them today and be with them today. We pray, Lord, for those, many who are absent today. We pray just now for those who are away on holiday and times of rest.

Lord, we ask you bless them and be with them and give them rest and give them peace just now. We pray just now for those who are away for other various reasons. Lord, you alone know the details.

Those who cannot be here just now, but who wish to be here and who long to be here, but who for this day or for this week or for this month cannot gather to this place.

Lord, we miss them, but we know that you have them, that you keep them. They are not missing to you. They are not lost by you. We pray just now, Lord, for those who are burdened in heart and mind, those who we know and who we care for, who are going through situations and troubles and pains and trials.

Lord, we ask you to be close to them and support them, that you be near to them, that they would know what it is to be known and kept by a living God who knows them, who cares for them, who sees and who understands all that they are and all that they do.

[ 4 : 37 ] We pray just now, Lord, for those who are not here, who have no word of ever coming near this building, our friends, our family members, those we think about and those we pray for daily, those who are so heavy on our minds, but who as of yet show no gospel care, who as of yet show no concern for their souls.

We ask, Lord, you would bring them to a saving knowledge of yourself. Use us, we ask, as witnesses to them, that in our words and our actions, that we would glorify your name.

Help us to be good witnesses, we ask. We confess we're often poor witnesses in our conduct and our words. In all we think, we say, and all that we do, we often find ourselves being such bad examples of the Savior who has saved us.

Forgive us, Lord, for that. We ask for gospel opportunities in this village and in this area. Lord, we ask for gospel wisdom. We ask for days of gospel interest.

We pray just now for, as of where, the quiet work that is going on of establishing your kingdom in this place, that you are building your kingdom, as of where, underground, below the surface level, that the seeds have been sown and that you are bringing them to be watered and to grow in your time.

[ 6 : 00 ] We trust and we leave that work with you. Help us to be encouraged in a day of small things, to see and to await days of great blessing, days of great gospel blessing in this area and in this congregation.

That we leave these things with you, understanding we can do nothing, but all power and all glory and all praise and honour belongs to you and to you alone. Remember just now, as always, our brothers and sisters next door, pray for their time of worship today, that you would encourage them and be with them.

Lord, we ask once more for something that is beyond our understanding and something that's beyond our ability. But we ask, Lord, if it's your will, that we would, in future days, see days of unity, days of togetherness, days of gospel partnership.

Lord, we cannot bring these things about as far as we can, but you can. You can bring together, Lord, those things which are ununited, you can bring to unity.

Those things which are disconnected, Lord, you can bring together and connect once more. Lord, we leave that in your hands. We leave that in your power. We leave that in your eternal will.

[ 7 : 10 ] Lord, we do ask for days of revival for this area, for this district, for those who at this moment who know about Jesus, but who reject him, who know about him, but have no time for him, that they would come and meet with him truly.

Pray just now for those in this area who have no knowledge of who Jesus is, who have no knowledge of the gospel. Lord, you would use us as witnesses, as ambassadors, to share that life-giving gospel, that life-giving good news, that there is hope, that there is help, that there is peace to be found in Christ and him alone, there is eternal life, there is forgiveness of sins and him alone.

Lord, that that would be a reality for those who are our neighbours and our friends in this community. Remember just now, Lord, our own nation. We bring it before you. Remember those in government over us, locally and nationally.

Those in government in the council. Those in government in our, Lord, in Holyrood and in Westminster, we pray for the first minister, we pray for the prime minister. We pray also for the king, as your word instructs us to do, to pray for all those in government over us.

We pray for their forgiveness, we pray for their salvation, we pray for their knowledge of Jesus as personal saviour for themselves. We pray they would lead well and they would lead our nations well.

[ 8 : 30 ] Lord, as we ask for prosperity for our nations, we ask also, Lord, for real, lasting prosperity to be found only in the gospel of our saviour, that that gospel be known across our islands, across our nation, and indeed across this world.

As we gather as a small gathering, praying for the wider world, we feel so small. We give you praise that the world and all that it contains belong fully and totally to you.

We pray just now for our brothers and sisters who are praying for us across this world. Lord, we remember just now those who are suffering and those who are in great pain. We pray for our brothers and sisters just now and parts of this world who are going through great trials and great troubles.

Lord, you alone know the details, the specific details. We remember just now our brothers and sisters in East Asia, in various situations and various countries we've heard this past week of great trouble in that part of this world.

Lord, we ask you to bless your people there. Bless the gospel cause. Give us peace and give us wisdom to pray for them and to remember them. Brothers and sisters who are willing to lay even their lives on the line for the sake of the gospel.

[ 9 : 39 ] Help us, Lord, to be suitably humbled by their sacrifice and to look to our own lives, our own service individually and see how we could serve you in our world, in our context, in our island, in our homes, in our village.

Lord, with that shameless gospel presentation, that there is only one way to the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, the only way of salvation, the only way to glory, the only one who gives hope and peace and life.

It's in his name and it's for his sake. We ask all these things, asking forgiveness of sin as we feel it, as we know it, but cling on to his finished work as he holds on to us.

For his name and for his sake. Amen. Let's read in God's word. Carrying on to the series we have in the gospel of Mark.

We're now in Mark chapter 6. Mark chapter 6. We'll, God willing, get to the end of this chapter and have another short break.

[ 10 : 45 ] Mark chapter 6. We can read from verses 1 down to verse 29. Mark 6 verses 1, 29.

Let's hear the word of God. He went away from there and came to his hometown and the disciples followed him. 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? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon are not his sisters here with us?

And we took offence at him. And Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honour except in his hometown and among his relatives and his own household.

And 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.

[ 11 : 51 ] And he went about the villages teaching. And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two. And he gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff, no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics.

And he said to them, Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you and will not listen to you when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.

So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them. King Herod heard of it for Jesus' name had become known.

Some said, John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him. But ever said, he is Elijah. And ever said, he is a prophet.

[ 12 : 57 ] Like one of the prophets of old. But when Herod heard of it, he said, John, whom I beheaded, has been raised. For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her.

For John had been saying to Herod, it is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife. And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death but she could not.

For Herod feared John knowing that he was a righteous and holy man and he kept him safe. When he heard him he was greatly perplexed and yet he heard him gladly.

But an opportunity came when Herod and his birth to give a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. For when Herodias' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests.

And the king said to the girl, Ask me for whatever you wish and I will give it to you. And he vowed to her, Whatever you ask me I will give you up to half my kingdom.

[ 14 : 06 ] And she went out and said to her mother, For what should I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

And the king was exceedingly sorry but because of his oaths and his guests he didn't want to break his word to her. And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head.

He went and beheaded him in prison and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl and the girl gave it to her mother. When the disciples heard of it they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Amen. I give praise to God for his holy and his perfect word. Again, singing from Sing Psalms. Sing Psalms.

This time singing from Psalm 14. Sing Psalms Psalm 14. The whole psalm to God's praise.

[ 15 : 43 ] The full speaks in this heart there is no God he says in our God after teach a life the walk in God he is.

The Lord who looks out from heaven upon the human race to see in any understand in any God's God's face.

They all have turned aside God that they have become not one of them does any good know of him and do know like and he to see love him as atpected Let they never seek the Lord.

Stuck down they are with bread. For God is with the just.

You evil do, shame the cruel. But in the Lord they trust.

[ 18 : 07 ] May help from Zion come. The Lord is captive, clean.

And let Jacob's stripes rejoice. Let his world gladly sing.

Amen. Let's, for a short time, turn back to the chapter we had. Mark chapter 6. Mark chapter 6.

Focusing today mostly on verses 1 down to verse 6. We take verse 6 of our text.

And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching. And so we're carrying on, of course, our series, our long-running series of the book of Mark.

[ 19 : 14 ] And we find, for the first time, we could say almost a personal touch to the journey of Jesus. We've been following him going to all the various places he's gone.

But now, for the first time, we had this wee added detail given to us. He's come now to his hometown. And note that it's not the location that's given here.

It's written in a way that's written personally. His hometown. They could give him geography, location. We know that. We all know where it is. But it doesn't say that.

It doesn't say he came to Nazareth. No, it says he came to his hometown. Jesus is coming home. He's coming home to his family. And we'll see that more in a second. As we spend just a short time looking at these verses today of Jesus coming home, and as we see the reception he received at his hometown, just a few questions for us.

First of all, for the Christians here, brothers and sisters, as we look at this situation as Jesus comes home, we are to be reminded, as we go out of the gospel, we will face rejection.

[ 20 : 33 ] We will face ridicule. We will face folks who have nothing and want nothing to do with the gospel. And the question is, how do we then respond to that?

And for those here today who, as of yet, you can't say that you know, or you can't yet say that you love Jesus, the truth is that there are some big and some perhaps difficult questions that this passage gives us that we have to ask.

There's questions that can't be avoided as we look at this passage. Now, friends, the truth is, and I hope you know this, but just to remind us all, the truth is, I can't preach you into the kingdom.

I can't scare you into the kingdom. I can't shame you into the kingdom. I can't guilt you, perhaps, into the kingdom. I can only bring, and whoever stands here, I can only bring you back to Christ again and again.

And it's him who asks the questions, not myself. It's Christ who asks the questions that we see in this section today. And quite simply, just let's get to the end before we start.

[ 21 : 47 ] So if nothing else, just listen to the question we're going to look at later on. The question is, the core question is, today, will you listen to him? Will you believe in him?

Will you follow him? Or like those in his hometown, will you reject him? Will you reject the one who has come to you with the offer of healing, the offer of forgiveness, the offer of eternal life, the offer of peace with God?

Will you listen to him? Or will you reject him? Just four points to help us break down these verses. First of all, we see the return of Christ in verse 1.

Then we see the recognition he receives. Then we see repugnance. We'll touch on it later on. But repugnance. There's a reason for us using that word.

And then finally we see rejection. So the return to his hometown, the recognition of those in the hometown, the repugnance that they have towards him, and then the rejection.

[ 22 : 55 ] First of all, his return. The return of Jesus to his hometown. Now the return of Jesus, first and foremost, and it sounds kind of obvious here, but it's quite beautiful, that he has and he had a hometown.

He has somewhere to go, where there's friends there, we presume, where there's family members, where there's brothers, where there's sisters, where Jesus had his earthly family present.

And here we touch on, and it's not the point of the passage, but just we can't avoid it, we can't go past it. Here we're reminded as to the full humanity of our Savior.

He was a man who, humanly speaking, had family. He had a mother. There's a father who has called him and who has raised him as his own.

There are parents, there are siblings, there are wider family members and cousins than the rest of it. Nazareth, again, small town, a close-knit town, a far out there, useless wee village no one cared about, no one thought about, quite closely connected, much like today, much like ourselves, not that long ago.

[ 24 : 13 ] Our family members would all live in the same area as ourselves, most of us living in the same village or the same district, at least, for most of our lives. Jesus had his, humanly speaking, he had his connections in this place.

We have a Savior, and we worship a Savior this day who had family connections, who lived a real human life, who had a hometown to go to.

As Jesus goes, as he returns home, you'd expect, of course, a warm welcome, would you not? This is a man who, at the very least, supposing you didn't believe he was the Son of God, supposing you didn't believe he was the Messiah, at the very least, this is someone from your village who has done amazing things.

This is someone from your village who has healed people. Now, we might not believe it today, but as someone from Tolstah who was known for doing something great across the world, when that person came home, you'd at least give them some measure of respect, supposing you risked everything they did, perhaps, or everything they thought about or they believed.

If there was someone from Tolstah who, we'll take an example, was a great surgeon and performed some amazing surgeries around the world, supposing you didn't like them personally, you would still be proud, perhaps, that they've come from Tolstah.

[ 25 : 40 ] To expect Jesus to have some sort of warm homecoming as he comes home, for the first time in quite some time, it seems. But we see that is not the case.

We'll see that in a second. Jesus in Nazareth has real connections to his real family members. But he is coming home not just to take a holiday.

He is coming home to advance the kingdom of God. He is here for a purpose. He is there for a reason. As he comes home once more to Nazareth, he is there to bring to them, to his own hometown, the gospel, the life-giving good news that in him and his work alone there is salvation, that he alone is the way to the Father, that he alone is the saviour come to save his people.

Jesus would have been well known in Nazareth, a small town, a small village. There's a theme in this reading today and the theme is familiarity.

It's a word I often find hard to say, but you're going to hear it a lot today. That we are so familiar, perhaps, as a village, so familiar as a culture of Jesus.

[ 27 : 05 ] And we see that in those in Nazareth. They were so familiar with him. We'll touch that more in a second. But to make the contrast, it's not just in Nazareth Jesus, as a word, has his people.

Truth is, he has his people, does he not? Also, in Tolstah at this very moment. Jesus has in Tolstah his people here.

Jesus has here his brothers and his sisters. We can call ourselves, we know ourselves as brothers and sisters, those who know Christ and love Christ.

And in Tolstah, Jesus has a good many of his brothers and sisters. In Tolstah, Jesus has many people who have known him for many years.

In Tolstah, Jesus has many people who love him, who care for him. Many people who are glad to welcome him, as it were, back to our village, to welcome him into our lives, to welcome him into our homes.

[ 28 : 10 ] Brothers and sisters, we are here today as evidence of that, that Jesus has his people here, that Jesus is welcome to our village, Jesus is welcome to our families.

There are many in Tolstah who know him. There are also many in Tolstah, like in Nazareth, who know about him. We'll get to that in a second, but just to say that we know there's a difference.

There's a massive difference between knowing someone and knowing about someone. Often we have the example that we all know of a king, but we don't actually know him. But on a local level, let's take a right down, and it's not often you can be careful putting yourself into the pulpit and your own experience into the sermons, but just as a passing experience, I've been amazed, even the first few weeks when I moved here first, people I met, with no church connection, but they knew I was the minister.

I was in the village, I was in my shorts and my hoodie at about, I don't know, half eight at night, walking, just doing the loop. Headphones in, not a thought in the world, just doing whatever, getting my miles in.

And someone, I won't say who, stops me and talks to me and says, oh, Holly, you're the new minister. I've been here three weeks. This person, no church connection, they hadn't been to the ordination, they hadn't been to any of the services, they've been to this building maybe once since they came here, yet they knew who I was.

[ 29 : 36 ] So they can say, yes, I've met the minister, but they don't know me. They don't know my life, they don't know what it is to actually get to know me. We can have a superficial knowledge of many people and we can have a superficial knowledge of Christ himself.

Superficial, not in a sense we don't know much about him, but there's no depth to that knowledge. We'll get that in a second. But brothers and sisters, just for ourselves, briefly, there are many in Tolstah, like in Nazareth, who don't know anything about Jesus.

And we think of those who are our neighbours, those in our villages, those around us, those living in every part of this village, every part of this district. How many homes, just now, if you stop and think, how many people do you know who probably know, if anything, they know almost nothing about who Jesus is.

And we find ourselves Christians saying, well, no one comes to church anymore. No one is, they're all avoiding church. They won't come near this place. Brothers and sisters, the question we have to ask ourselves is, are they avoiding coming here?

Are they avoiding getting to know Jesus? or have they just never had an introduction in the first place? We assume far too much knowledge.

[ 31 : 09 ] We assume far too much gospel knowledge for those around us. Because we know our stuff, because we know what it is to know Jesus, we assume and we expect that everyone in our village knows something about Jesus.

You'd be surprised, perhaps not surprised, just how little knowledge there is. in the six or so months, seven months almost I've been here, the conversations I've had have shocked me with those in the village who have no understanding.

Not a single clue what church is, who Jesus is, what the gospel is. They know nothing. Now that's not putting down over ignorance. These are smart people, many of them, I'm sure, but they just have never had an introduction to Jesus.

They've never been invited to church, they've never been told that Jesus is someone they should get to know or they can get to know. Let's not make a mistake, just because they aren't coming to Christ, it does not mean they are avoiding him.

For many, like in Nazareth, they just haven't met him yet. Jesus returns home, he returns home to a warm homecoming? No. He returns home to a small homecoming, I'm sure he's welcomed in by his family, the village, the area, the rest of the town, they have little time for him in many senses, in many ways.

[ 32 : 34 ] We see that, we see they recognize him in verses 2 to the first half of verse 3. So on Sabbath, on a Saturday, he goes and he preaches in the synagogue. And this isn't too unusual.

Whenever you'd have a traveling rabbi, it was custom, it was good manners, the traveling rabbi, if he comes to your village, that he would be given the place in synagogue to preach, to teach.

So according to the custom, they know Jesus is at least a traveling teacher of some sorts, so they allow him or they ask him, we don't know, but either way, he has access in the synagogue to preach on his first Saturday home, his first Sabbath home, and he begins to teach in the synagogue.

But of course, this is no normal teacher. He now teaches in a way they have never heard before. He is opening up, you can imagine, and we know from elsewhere in Scripture, opening up the Old Testament.

Of course, the Old Scriptures they have, opening up the Old Testament. As he opens up that scroll and he goes through the scroll, he teaches them in a way they have never heard taught before. As he expounds to them, opens up his own word to his hearers.

[ 33 : 45 ] Think of the best sermon you've ever heard, the most eloquent ministry you've ever heard, and think what it is to hear a sermon, to hear teaching from the one who is teaching his own very eternal words.

He teaches them. And you can see the reaction from the crowd. Verse 2, 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? They can't quite understand just how incredible his teaching, his preaching is.

We can see here the exact wording of it. They were astonished. Literally, they marveled. They marveled at him saying, Look what they marvel at, those who are listening.

They marvel at the power of his preaching. They marvel at the power, the content of his message.

[ 34 : 53 ] They marvel, we see, the fact he has done miracles, however such mighty works done by his hands. They marveled at all these things. But yet, in a second, we'll see, they have no time for him.

They love the preaching, they love the teaching, they love the sound of preaching, they love the power of the preaching. But they have no time for what he's actually saying to them.

Friends, perhaps you are maybe guilty of this. You've heard preachers and they'll come and they'll give every ounce of their energy into this sermon.



They'll raise and lower their voices at the best time. It's not on purpose, they do it passionately, they do it meaningfully. They'll come up here and they will tug at every heartstring you have.

They will give you and expound the gospel to you with all their effort and all their energy. They will peace and sweat and cry and they mean it all. And you leave a place saying, but yet there's nothing.

[ 36 : 05 ] It's good, it's interesting, that was amazing, I enjoyed that, but yet there's no gospel change in your lives. Thinking of the words, how to describe this emotion, how to describe this reality, what came was the verse of that wonderful hymn that, of course, Mac Shane put together, Jehovah said, Ken you?

I'll read that verse where he speaks about this. Speaking of his own conversion experience. I oft read with pleasure to soothe or engage Isaiah's wild measure and John's simple page, but when they pictured the blood-sprinkled tree, Jehovah said, Ken you?

Seemed nothing to me. All the preaching, all the exasperation, all the study, all the, as it were, hard work, it's all worth it from the preacher's point of view and more than worth it.

But to be marvelling at the preaching, to be marvelling at the message, to be marvelling even at the presentation of a message, it does not save anyone.

It does not save anyone. They acknowledge his power, they acknowledge his teaching, they acknowledge his miracles and yet his power, his preaching, his teaching, his miracles, it does not transform them, it does not change them because they think they know him already.

[ 37 : 41 ] You see that, don't you? Look at what happens here. The appraised preaching, the appraised teaching in verse 2 and then in verse 3, is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon are not his sisters here with us?

They are so familiar with him, they know all about Jesus, they've heard all about him, they know his family, there's no so much about him, they aren't actually listening to what he is saying to them.

As much as they enjoy his miracles, enjoy his teaching and enjoy his preaching, they aren't actually listening. The heartbreaking thing here is they are letting their familiarity with him blind them from the reality of what he is saying to them.

They know all about him, therefore they've stopped listening. You've heard the gospel so many times, you've heard the good news so many times, you know all about Jesus, you've heard countless sermons about him, you can see as it were a full image of him, all that he is and all that he's done.

And yet, you haven't listened to a word he's actually said to you in all these years. Friends, you know your stuff, you know your scripture, you know your theology perhaps, you can understand who Jesus is, you understand that, you know all about Jesus, you're familiar with his family, you know who he is, who his people are here and yet, you let that familiarity you have with him blind you to the reality that you have to listen to him, you have to listen to him.

[ 39 : 33 ] The truth is, you know all about him, all the facts and figures, all the Bible verses, but you don't actually know him.

And knowing about Jesus profits nothing. Knowing about Jesus is interesting, it's good, it's essential to get to know him, but knowing about him and not going past that of actually getting to know him knowing about him, all the theology around who he is, all the truth about who he is, it does not save you unless you actually come to know him.

There has to be that recognition not of who he is, but of who he is to you. Otherwise, time is wasted.

His village knew all about him. They marveled even at him. But what takes place? They have no love for him. In fact, quite the opposite.

Look what happens. They hear the preaching, they suss out who he is, they say, we know about him, we know his family. And just a quick note here, look how they describe him, the son of Mary.

[ 40 : 45 ] Now, we don't think perhaps much about that, but that's a dig. That's a real dig we're going for there. you're always described by your paternal lineage in this culture.

Mark, so and so, never the son of your mother. Now, as wrong as that might be for us and as much we might disagree with that in terms of our understanding of how unfair that is, we're saying in the culture the reality was at that time you were named according to your father's lineage.

So by naming him according to his mother they're having a dig there. They're going back to the fact that they're doubting and throwing great aspersions onto where Jesus came from.

We know that as a problem he has faced again and again throughout his ministry that no one believes or very few believe the account we have about Jesus' birth. They assume that's all lies and the truth is it's not much a change over the years.

Many days they'll assume it's all lies. But they enjoy his preaching they enjoy and they engage in his miracles they can't deny the miracles taking place but look what it all leads to.

[ 41 : 58 ] Because they don't actually get to know him because they don't actually listen to what he's saying to them they took offence at him.

End of verse 3 and they took offence at him. They let their as it were familiarity with him blind them.

And look what it leads to him. Now we say take offence here I've called this repugnance because literally that is the word used here. They took offence at him they felt repugnance towards him.

If we break that down even more the word repugnance would break down to a sense a desire to fight a desire to attack. they wanted to fight or they wanted to push him away on hearing the gospel on being told to respond to that gospel on seeing and hearing who Jesus really is rather than listen they turn in their minds at least they turn violent.

They want to push him away they want nothing to do with him they are repugnant towards him he is repugnant to them he is distasteful to them he is horrifying to them and that word means all these things and many more it's a very broad word used in the Greek it's real horror real offence real disgust they face towards Jesus and friends you know the question has to be asked when we are presented presenting once more the gospel when you sit once more and hear the gospel the simple question is what is your response to Jesus when you hear the gospel when you hear again the message that in Christ alone you find salvation outside Christ there is no hope but with Christ there is eternal hope outside Christ there is no life with Christ there is eternal life when you hear that gospel message what is the reaction of your heart as you hear once more another sermon hitting your ears where does your heart go where does your mind go where does your soul go just now are you reacting just now in your mind in your heart like the crowd here you're happy to sit and listen you're happy to hear all about

[ 44 : 32 ] Jesus but in your heart of hearts you want nothing to do with him because you know when you come to him he will transform your life he will change your life and you say not for me at least not for now not yet it's a terrifying question to ask and it's it's one that you know when I say I can't answer it for you I really can't you know the many lessons we have in the church college and many experiences we can't read minds you know I don't know where you stand all I can do is ask the question and let your heart answer when you hear the gospel just now do you react like this crowd when you hear that you must come to Christ to be saved do you fight against that in your heart and your mind do you say no I'll come this far and no further I'll believe in who he is the son of God I'll believe he is

God I believe that much I'll believe he does miracles I'll believe I have to know him as saviour I'll believe that he can save everyone who comes to him and anyone who comes to him I'll believe he gives eternal life freely to all come I believe all that but I stop at belief and I take a little fence in my heart when you tell me I have to actually come to him knowing about him is fine knowing about him is good but you have to actually know him the truth is it's not an easy truth it's not a pleasant truth the truth is every time the gospel goes out from a pulpit from God's word from conversations with friends who are Christians every time the gospel goes out every time you understand and listen and hear the gospel message and then do nothing about it you are pushing him away simple as that you're pushing him away again and again you're fighting against the one who made you and who sustains you what briefly we come to conclusion what was

Christ's response what was his reaction to the repugnance the repulsion the offence of these people we see it is rejection verses four down to verse six and verse four Jesus uses what we know was a phrase a quote from a well known phrase from the time from the area and Jesus said the wording tells us it's a phrase that was used a common phrase that was used he's using their own poetry their own language their own idioms their own quotes to condemn them you won't listen to me then fine then fine how does Jesus react to the rejection of his own people his own town people his own villages rejection of the gospel well quite solemnly and in my own opinion quite horrifyingly

Jesus does nothing he does nothing took offence at him 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 unbelief and he went about among the villages teaching scripture interprets scripture we'll see that in two weeks time in our prayer meeting going through the confession of faith again prayer meeting is for everyone and everyone not just for those who are Christians or those who want to be Christians the prayer meeting is a time of prayer and time of prayer is good for everyone so open to everyone who wants to come along to it looking at scripture interprets scripture now some would say even some commentaries they'll say somehow Jesus couldn't do work here in verse 5 that's limiting the work of our saviour and it's very unwise to do that to say that

Jesus couldn't do something he's God he's free to do as he wishes when he wishes but really the sense he's somehow bound by not doing anything but there's no work to be done the people have rejected him they've rejected him the gospel has gone out no one has come to him for salvation no one has come to him asking for forgiveness there's no work to be done he doesn't push them he doesn't prod them he has given the gospel to them we reject him he goes away what a solemn terrifying reality that is yes he is graceful yes he is good yes he is kind yes our saviour is long suffering but let's never presume his grace let's never presume on that love you've heard the gospel time and time and time again my friends the last six months you've heard it the 20 odd so years before you heard it the years back to the mid 1940s 1950s you've heard it it's been preached in this building all these years and

[ 50 : 29 ] Christ is long suffering Jesus is long suffering time and time and time again you can come and hear the gospel but the truth is let's not presume the gospel's grace let's not presume upon God's mercy they took offense at him and he leaves them to it he goes away to the other villages the other areas teaching there instead no one thing he does do though he does lay his hands on a few sick and healed them Jesus is still the kind loving saviour presumably these are the sick who have come to him or they've been brought to him or he's been made aware that they're wanting him so he's gone to those who want him he's gone to those who need him he has healed those who have somehow called out to him he's healed the sick but the majority of the town want nothing to do with him so he lets them have exactly what they want the most horrifying reality of hell is not that

God gives us what we don't deserve it's that God gives us exactly what we want if we want nothing to do with him now then why would God somehow force us to spend eternity with him if we want nothing to do with him now then God will give us that now and for all eternity if we don't come to Christ it's a solemn truth it's a hard truth but it's biblical truth it must therefore be shared my friends please again I can't beg you into the kingdom but it has to be said please don't let this be said about any here verse 6 when Jesus speaks or thinks about you that he marvels because of your unbelief it is a terrifying thing for that to be said about you the creator of heavens and earth the sustainer of all things second person of the godhead very god and his essence his being and his power already is he is god and he is marveling he is astounded by the unbelief of these people don't let your unbelief don't let your unwillingness to come to

Christ be something that he marvels at be something that he is astounded at instead come and know him as saviour come and follow him don't follow the example of his townspeople don't follow the example of those in his village don't just come and marvel at the preaching if you do don't just come and marvel at the gospel don't just come and marvel at the miracles come and know him for yourself come and love him for yourself come and be known by him come and be loved by him held and kept and known for all eternity come and worship him as king be like those in Nazareth who reject him and he gives them what they want and he goes away do not presume his patience do not presume his goodness today is the day of salvation harden not your hearts come to him and trust in him

Lord we thank you once more for the gift of your word we come and shall Lord to having heard these difficult and at times solemn realities we bring before you now our dear friends who we love and who we care for greatly our dear friends who support this congregation who come out to this congregation our dear friends who have such great interest in you and in your word but who as of yet haven't made us aware of that final move towards Jesus as Savior Lord we ask that for your word today you would bring them to a saving knowledge of yourself they no longer rely on themselves but find them relying fully on you on your finished work on the sending of your son on his coming on his completing that perfect life of obedience of him being killed on behalf of his beloved people and forgiveness of sins he took on to himself and all the wrath he faced the risen saviour the ascended saviour the exalted saviour it's in his name and for his sake that we come we ask forgiveness for all our sins we ask for mercy for our friends here that you come and change their lives help us the rest of this day to have our hearts and our minds focused on our risen saviour in his name and for his sake we ask these many things amen we bring our time to a conclusion by singing to

God's praise in the Psalter and Psalm 80 it's called Psalm 80 Psalm 80 we can sing verses 15 down to verse 19 that's on page 334 page 334 of course Psalm 80 is a psalm of God's rescue of God's forgiveness of God's love of God's keeping based on the one he has sent based on the saviour Psalm 80 verses 15 to verse 19 this vineyard which thine own right hand have planted us among and that same branch which for thyself thou hast made to be strong burnt up it is with flaming fire it also is cut down they utterly are perished when as thy face doth frown Psalm 80 verses 15 to 19 to God's praise onto forgive means for thine  $\mu$  shake for thine

[ 57 : 15 ] Christ's end, thou hast made to be strong. But thou hast been flaming fire, it also is the time.

The utterly apparition, when hast thy face uprown.

O let thy hand be still upon the man of thy right hand.

Thou, Salomon, who for thyself, thou makest strong to stand.

So henceforth we will not go back, nor turn from thee at all.

[ 58 : 46 ] O do thou quicken us and weep upon thy King will call.

Tardas, again, Lord, Lord of hosts, and upon us first day.

To make my covenant to shine, and so it shall be seen.

In the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, for you now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.