

Rejection At Nazareth

Mark 6:1-6

MEMORY VERSE

ISAIAH 53:3

He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many pencils and sheets of paper as the number of children in your class (these will not be necessary for children too young to write).

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Getting to Know You

Give each child a pencil and paper (if they are too young to write, have them do this activity verbally). Have the children pair-up, and give them a couple of minutes to interview each other. Have them try to find out as much about each other as time allows. They can ask questions about favorite colors, birthdays, birthplaces, hobbies, etc.

When time is up, have the children introduce their partners to the class. See who remembers the most about their classmate. Ask the children if they think they got to know their partners thoroughly.

Explain to the class that there is so much more to people than we can find out in a five-minute interview. If we think we know all there is to know about a person, we may be missing the most interesting parts of their lives. We are going to learn about some people who thought they knew Jesus, but they really did not. And because they did not know who He really was, they rejected Him. One of the saddest things that can happen is to reject Jesus based on wrong information. Let's see what happens. **We need to come to Jesus with hearts of wonder and worship.**

LESSON TIME!

"The Creep"

Begin to tell the story of "The Creep." Explain to them that today they will be learning about something that can creep up on us without us realizing it. It is something so subtle and tricky, we do not even realize what is happening! It comes like a thief and snatches away a precious treasure.

Continue telling the children about the thing that creeps up on us without our knowing it. Make the story as interesting as you like, maybe even telling them a personal experience of something that crept up on you.

Have your aide or another helper sneak into the room with a bandanna around his or her face like a bandit. While you are telling the children your story, pretend like you do not see your helper "creeping up" on you.

Have your helper take your Bible out of your hand while you are still talking. But do not pay any attention to the warnings of the children; just continue to talk. When the helper has left the room with your Bible, pretend to start the lesson and feign that you have no idea what happened to your Bible. You then discover that your Bible is gone and act surprised. What happened? Use this as an illustration of what our lesson is talking about today.

Explain to the class that you are going to look in the Bible today at an example of an attitude creeping in on a group of people, just like your helper crept in and stole something very valuable away from you. The people in Jesus hometown refused to believe in Him because they thought they knew Him. But they were all wrong. We need to be careful of wrong attitudes about Jesus creeping into our minds and hearts. When we look at who Jesus is, we should always look at what the Bible says about Him and not trust what other

people say. We need to come to Jesus with hearts of wonder and worship.

MARK 6:1

Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him.

Jesus left the area of Galilee and went to Nazareth, His hometown. Nazareth was not a fancy town. In fact, it was not a very nice town. It had a reputation of producing troublemakers and rebels.

MARK 6:2-3

And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!

"Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him.

The people of Jesus' hometown came down to the synagogue and heard Jesus teach. They were astonished. In other words, they felt a sudden wonder and admiration for Jesus as He taught with God's authority. As He taught, He gave them undeniable testimony to the fact that He was the fulfillment of prophecy.

He was the Messiah. He was the promised Savior they were waiting for! How wonderful! They even recognized that He had wisdom from heaven when He spoke and that He had performed miracles with His own hands. Everywhere He went He left a trail of changed lives. Those who believed in Him were transformed people.

But there was a problem for the people of Nazareth. This was the town that Jesus had grown up in, and these people had difficulty putting their faith in the One who had lived side by side with them. They thought they knew Him and did not need to believe in Him. How sad it was to come so close to salvation, only to reject the One providing the answer to their sin. The people could not see past their own narrow memories and understanding. They did not understand how Jesus, whom they had known since He was a child, could be their promised Messiah.

Light and Power

Ask a volunteer to come up to the front of the class to answer a few questions.

Ask the volunteer if he is familiar with how a light switch works. If he says yes, continue your questions with what the light switch does. If he says that it turns the lights on and off, ask him to demonstrate. If he accomplishes this task, ask him if he is familiar with everything about electricity. If he says yes, have him explain everything that he knows about the subject (he will probably have very limited knowledge of electrical power).

Have your volunteer sit back down, and explain to the class that just because we are familiar with a subject does not mean that we know everything or even the most important things about that subject. We know how to turn the lights on and off with a switch, but we do not understand everything about how electricity works.

Jesus was too familiar to the people of Nazareth, or at least they thought He was. They thought they knew Him well enough. They knew His family and all about His childhood. They had known Him from the time He was a small child, when He followed His father around his carpenter shop. He was just Jesus, the quiet, gentle carpenter. That was all.

Wow! Were they ever wrong! He had grown up in Nazareth, but He was God wrapped up in human flesh. He was the Messiah, the promised One of God, who had fulfilled every promise written about Him in scripture. He was the Savior of the world who came to take away the sins of the world. He was the One who John tells us "...all things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made..."

Because they thought they knew Jesus already, they missed Him completely. They never really saw Him. They had lived around Jesus so long that they had become blind to who He really was. They did not see the awe, the wonder, and the majesty of Him. They were blinded because they were too familiar with Jesus.

This blindness can "creep up" on us too. That is the dangerous thing Jesus is trying to warn us about. It can creep up on those of us who come to Sunday School every week, who go to Vacation Bible School, who hear Jesus talked about every day at home. Those of us who have a Bible, know lots of Christian songs, and have Christian families and friends can be in danger of forgetting how awesome God is and how wonderful it is to know Him. We may start to think we know everything about God already. It can keep us from having a relationship with Him. We must not let that happen! We need to see who He really is, and **we need to come to Jesus with hearts of wonder and worship.**

MARK 6:4

But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."

What did Jesus mean? Often, it is the people that think they know a man the best, because they are familiar with Him, who do not know Him at all. The people of Nazareth should have been

stunned by Jesus; instead, they shunned Him. What a terrible mistake on their part! All of us **need to come to Jesus with hearts of wonder and worship.**

Lots of people in our world think, "Oh, I know all about Jesus," when they are really missing the wonder of Him altogether! They reject the love and humility of Jesus when they ought to be amazed; perhaps, they think Jesus is too common and too approachable. Perhaps, if Jesus had stayed far-off and had been more unloving, people would fall all over each other trying to get to Him. But He did not stay far-off. He came down and walked among us. He died for our sins, paid our debt in full, and freely saved us out of His huge love and endless grace. It is so silly for man to reject Him because of His nearness.

We need to make sure that we not only believe "in" Jesus but also have a relationship with Him. We can believe that Jesus existed 2000 years ago, that He was a good teacher, and that He helped people, but until we ask Him to come into our hearts, we do not have a relationship with Him. Do not confuse knowing "about" Jesus with "knowing" Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. That is the mistake that the people from Nazareth made.

We do not want to miss out on having a relationship with Jesus. We should be thankful that we have a God who loves us enough to come near to us and put on human flesh, who loved us enough to die on a common cross for our sins to offer us salvation. **We need to come to Jesus with hearts of wonder and worship.**

MARK 6:5-6

Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.

And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

Because of the people of Nazareth's lack of faith and their unbelief, Jesus could do no mighty work there. He did heal a few sick people. Often it is the sick, downtrodden life that realizes its need for Jesus and sees Him for who He really is. Jesus marveled at the unbelief of those who lived in Nazareth. If they had only looked past what they thought about Jesus and believed in Him, they would have realized, like so many others, that He was the Messiah.

They also had the Bible to be able to recognize Jesus. There are all kinds of things written about Jesus in the Old Testament. If only the people from Nazareth had looked in the scriptures they would have seen Jesus. We can look to the Bible to see who Jesus is and get to know Him better.

The Recognition Game

When the children first arrive, take note of one or two of them. Remember what they are wearing, the color and length of their hair, the color of their eyes and any other distinguishing characteristics.

Tell the class that you are going to describe a child in the class and if they think they know who the child is, they should raise their hands, and keep them up. Do not let the children say the name of the child until you call on them. Ask the child, who raised his hand first, who you are describing. If he answers incorrectly, continue asking until someone gets it right.

Explain to the class that the Bible described for God's people, through prophecy, exactly how Jesus would be, where He would come from, and where He would live. If the people had been looking for the characteristics described in scripture, they would have recognized Jesus.

Just because some of us go to church often and hear about Jesus, does not mean we know everything about Him. When we start to think we know everything, it is easy to forget to be awed by who He really is. And even worse, we might miss out on a wonderful relationship with Him. We cannot have a relationship with Jesus by simply knowing things about Him. We have to really know Him and allow Him to live inside of our heart. He will come in and change us like He did so many lives in the Bible. Never lose sight of the majesty of Jesus! For those of us who live under the shadow of the beauty of Jesus everyday, we need to beware lest we become unthankful and forgetful of His majesty. **We need to come to Jesus with hearts of wonder and worship.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer, asking that the Lord daily remind them of the wonder, beauty, and glory of knowing Him. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.