

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Mark 6:1-13 (Series B)
“Jesus, Cell Phones, and Home Delivery”
July 5, 2009

Sermon Outline:

- I. What was their problem in Nazareth?
 - A. Jesus came as someone familiar and ordinary.
 - B. He delivered His Greatness right to their homes.
 - C. He was loving them lavishly.
 - D. Yet, “they took offense at Him.”
- II. The Old Adam is always the problem.
 - A. **We want** a spectacular show for proof.
 - B. **We want** the Greatness in our time, our way, and for our glory.
 - C. **We want** control over our own problem.
 - D. Old Adam takes offense at Jesus Christ.
- III. Jesus is always the solution.
 - A. He comes and introduces Himself as often as we need Him.
 - B. He delivers Himself right to our homes.
 - C. He does it all with immeasurable joy.
 - D. He makes Himself who we do not want to live without.

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our Lord, even when we don't have time for Him. Amen.

Fourth of July is a great time of year isn't it? Like any other holiday it's great to spend it with those you feel at home with. Celebrating our nation's freedom, with ordinary folks, with family, those we're most familiar with.

We just sang “I Love To Tell the Story.” And, don't we love to tell the true story of the Greatest, most magnificent event in history, Jesus Christ in the flesh suffering and dying, and rising again, God's entire plan of salvation, so we could be redeemed and live forever in paradise?

I'll admit, it's often hard to do. What do I say? Where do I begin? Who do I tell and when is the right moment? Will it do any good anyway? Do I need to get to know the person better and build a trusting relationship first? Will I offend anyone? And, how will they react? Will they react to the message we give the same way many reacted to Jesus? Because, you know, that could be scary.

After reading through the Gospel for this Sunday I thought of what we just sang, “I Love To Tell the Story.” I thought of it not so much because we love to tell the story, we do, but because Jesus does. He always has, and always will.

It's amazing though, Jesus is God, He knows everything that happens before it happens. In this Gospel account it's difficult to miss the fact that those who heard Him were extremely offended by what He said, taught, and did. They were amazed, but offended. Scandalized is a good way to put it.

God knows everything that happens before it happens. He knows what is in the heart of every person that has lived, is living, and will live. He knew how those in His hometown, Nazareth, would react. So, why did He do it anyway? Simple, He loved them all, and so He loved to tell the story.

In verse 2 we read, “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?” And, at the end of verse 3, “they took offense at Him.”

So, what was their problem in Nazareth anyway? The teachings they heard were not coming from someone unfamiliar to them. He grew up in that town. They knew His family. Jesus was as ordinary of a man as a man can be. He had flesh and bones just like any of them had.

There He was, full of love, mercy, and grace, willing to be the sacrifice to save His enemies. And, there He was delivering His greatness right to their homes. They didn't have to go anywhere or pay admission. His presence was free. The gift of Himself was free. He couldn't have made it any more convenient or easier for them. Isn't that the way we like life to be?

Cell phones make life so much easier. I can't imagine getting along without one. Convenient and small enough to put in your pocket ready whenever you need it.

And, how we have become dependant upon home delivery. Our mail comes right to our homes. Emails come right to our computers. Any given day, or night, we can have food delivered right to our homes.

What did these people in Nazareth have to complain about? He was loving them lavishly in what He was doing. It was true love in Jesus' presence with them and what He was teaching them. It meant their eternal well-being. He was telling the true story of their sinfulness and the fulfillment of God's Promise to save them. They knew of this Promise. It wasn't something unfamiliar to them.

Yet, they were offended at Him? How can that be? In their minds they'd been scandalized. This is the response that led to Jesus' crucifixion. Was it just something in the water at Nazareth at the time?

Scripture tells us the problem. That problem is what we Lutherans call the Old Adam, or the old sinful nature. It is what we inherited from Adam, the first man. Ever since His fall into sin all who have been born have been born enemies of God. “Enemies,” is not a description to be taken lightly. It doesn't just mean a dislike of God, but much more than that. It means hatred for God because of what God stands for and what God does. This is how we are born into this world.

Romans 5:8 reads, “but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” God sent His Son into the flesh so that through His death and Resurrection He could save His enemies. Who dies for His enemies? To die for someone who loves you and respects you is one thing. To die for someone who does not love you and who makes Himself an enemy of yours by sinning against you, that's quite something. That's love. That's greatness.

Jesus was about to die to save His enemies and these people were enemies of the Lord's. Yes, they were of His hometown. They were familiar with Him. They knew who Jesus was but lacked the faith in Him as their Savior, as the One Promised by God to save them.

Still, Jesus loved them. Even after they rejected Him and took offense at Him, He still loved them.

Their offense at Jesus is what's to be expected from the Old Adam, the Old Sinful nature. This was their problem, and friends, this is our problem.

As sinners when we hear the Great story of salvation through Jesus Christ, it is our sinful nature to want spectacular proof of it. How often is it recorded that people wanted signs and miracles from Jesus to prove that He was who He claimed to be? Yet, without faith in His Word that it is true, what good will signs and miracles do?

According to the Old Adam we want Greatness, but we want it in our time, our way, and to our own glory. We want to rise to the top and to be the ones who accomplish the greatest deeds and victory. We want to take at least a little credit, if not a lot of credit.

We like to have control over our own dilemma and problem. To say we have no control over it sounds to us that we are weak and hopeless.

And, here comes Jesus to say it has nothing to do with what we can do, that we don't have to do anything at all, and that all is done for us. And, for it to be that easy, that convenient, and for Jesus to deliver it right to our home,...our old sinful nature takes offense at that.

Yet, the Lord knows this about us, but still loves us lavishly by doing exactly that for us.

Here is where the Greatness of the Lord comes in. He knows this is the problem we have. And, Jesus comes as the solution. He knows we want proof and He gives us something better, faith. He knows we want it in our way, in our time, and to our glory. Yet, He gives us desire for what He wants to give us and in the way He wants us to have it. He knows we want control over our own problem. Yet, He knows we cannot control it and frees us from the burden. He knows our sinful nature takes offense at Him, yet, He still comes to us in love.

As often as we need Him, He is there introducing Himself again and again as our Lord and Savior freeing us from our huge, dreadful, and deadly problem of sin. He comes to us in the most ordinary way, His Word and in His body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine. He gives ears to hear, renewed hearts and minds to receive. He gives us the faith to receive Him as the solution.

And, He does all this with immeasurable joy. Yes, all of it, from before Creation to the Promise made in the Garden of Eden, to the manger, to Nazareth where He was rejected, to the Cross. From the Cross to the grave. From the grave to the sky. From there to the Last Day when He will come again and give us the full consummation of life eternal in the paradise of Heaven.

Jesus is Greatness, He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end when it comes to the perfect solution to our greatest problem, sin and death, and our rejection of Him. And, through it all it couldn't be any easier for any of us. He took on the pain, the suffering, the rejection, and the condemnation. He delivers what He earned for us right to the home of our hearts. There is no admission, no charge, no travelling great distance to receive Him. How much more convenient, how much easier could it be for us?

We use cell phones because of the convenience and how much easier they make life. We like home delivery because we don't have to lift a finger. What cell phones and

home delivery provide us is temporary. Jesus as the solution to our eternal problem is the easiest thing ever known to man. The only thing that was ever difficult in accomplishing our salvation was that our Heavenly Father had to forsake His only Son and Jesus took on the wait of the world's sin. That's what was needed, and God did it all. Nothing left for us to do. That's relief. That's freedom. That's love!

By His love, by His accomplishment, Jesus makes Himself who we do not want to live without. Redeemed, forgiven, we still struggle with temptation and we slip, fall, and sin. Yet, just as easy as the Lord has made it all along, He comes to us, loves us, and declares forgiven again and gives us the gift of Himself as our Savior and Lord.

He loves to tell the story. And, He never stops doing so. And, so do we, my friends. And, we realize that telling the true story of salvation through Jesus Christ, we will be rejected. Others will take offense at us. What we proclaim to the world is not our story, but the Lord's. The world rejected Him and, yet, He continued on His path to save all in the world. When we consider those who might reject us when we deliver Christ and His Promise, we consider that we once rejected Him as well, and continue to do so, but we love to tell the Lord's true story of how He still came to us even though we were His enemies.

He brought Himself home to us. He made it the easiest thing for us. Now we, so thankful that He has done that and continues to do that, we take it home for others.

Cell phones, many use them on a daily basis. Everyone needs Jesus on a daily basis- perhaps an easy way for others to be reminded of the Lord's love? What love is shown for others when those who have been loved so greatly bring that same love to the home of others.

May we live in this joy- the One who we rejected is the solution to our problem caused by our rejection of Him. Amen.