

Matthew 13:53-58: And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there,⁵⁴ & coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, & said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? & are not his brothers James & Joseph & Simon & Judas?⁵⁶ & are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"⁵⁷ & they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown & in his own household."⁵⁸ & he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

Intro: Lord willing, we finish Matthew 13 today! We've been meditating on the parables Jesus told about the kingdom of heaven. Last week we were reminded in the parable of the dragnet that God will judge! (& God saves!) Jesus also encouraged His disciples to teach others what they had learned: the old & the new! This week we see Jesus continues to teach & amaze those He teaches, yet they reject Him because of a kind of familiarity & unbelief.

1. Jesus Taught In His Hometown

Matthew 13:53-54: And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there,⁵⁴ & coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue

a. Jesus came to preach and to teach God's Word: Matt 4:17: From that time Jesus began to preach
Matt 4:23: he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues & proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom
Matt 5:2: he opened his mouth and taught them
Matt 9:35: Jesus went throughout all the cities & villages, teaching . . . & proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom
Matt 11:1: Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach & preach
Matt 21:23: when he entered the temple . . . he was teaching
Matt 22:33: when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.
Matt 26:55: Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me.
Matt 28:19-20: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Mark Dever: Of the 1,800 editions of Martin Luther's printed works before 1526, 40% were published sermons
Heinrich Bullinger: Preached 6 times each week; In his 44 year ministry, he preached over 7,000 sermons/all books
J. Calvin: Preached twice on Sunday & some on weekdays; 286 sermons a year; Around 4,000 sermons in his life
- This is why we put so much emphasis on reading, studying, teaching, & preaching the Word of God! Jesus did!

b. Jesus' hometown was Nazareth: Matthew 2:23: he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

2. Jesus Taught In Such A Way That The People In His Hometown Were Astonished

Matthew 13:54: & coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished

a. Jesus was always astonishing everyone: 1) At His birth: Luke 2:9-11: an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people.¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

2) As a child: Luke 2:41-42, 46-47: Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.
⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom . . . ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

3) As a man: Matthew 7:28: when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching

- **John 7:46:** The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!"

- **Mark 2:12:** he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

3. The People Were Offended By Jesus

Matthew 13:54-57: they were astonished, & said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? & are not his brothers James & Joseph & Simon & Judas? & are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" & they took offense at him.

a. Familiarity with Jesus leads to the belittling of Jesus: Who does this man think He is? He's one of us! We know this man, we grew up with Him! We know His dad – the carpenter! We know His mom and brothers and sisters! How special can He be? He's one of us! We grew up with Him! "Familiarity breeds contempt"

b. They took offense at him: D. A. Carson: Every time anyone takes offense in the N.T., it's in response to Jesus.

Luke 4:14-30: And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³ And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself.' What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well." ²⁴ And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, he went away.

c. Some people will not believe in Jesus Christ no matter what evidence you show them: Luke 16:19-31:

"There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' ²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' ²⁷ And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house - ²⁸ for I have five brothers - so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' ²⁹ But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' ³⁰ And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹ He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

J. C. Ryle: Do we fancy that if we had only seen and heard Jesus Christ that we would have been His faithful disciples. If we do, let us think not so. Let us observe the people of Nazareth and learn wisdom. They saw Jesus' miracles, they heard Him preach and they rejected Him.

Ligon Duncan: You see, the problem with our own belief today is not that we have to depend upon the testimony of the apostles and if we'd have seen it with our own eyes we would believe it. The problem with unbelief is not a lack of truth, a lack of proof, a lack of evidence. The problem of unbelief is moral and spiritual. It is the heart that rejects the truth. It is not a lack of evidence which makes us insecure about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ.

People reject the truth because they are wicked, sinful people, and dead spiritually. **GOSPEL!**

4. Jesus' Response To The People In His Hometown

Matthew 13:57-58: But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown & in his own household." ⁵⁸ & he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

a. Verse 57: A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown & in his own household: Jesus was a prophet! He is the greatest prophet! He spoke God's Word, interpreted God's Word, trusted God's Word, obeyed God's Word – He was and is God's Word! - **Hebrews 1:1-3:** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

Jesus speaks a proverb about familiarity leading to dishonor. They knew Him too well to honor Him (they thought)

b. Verse 58: he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief: 1) What was the nature of their unbelief? They believed Jesus could do miracles – they had seen them! **Verse 54:** they were astonished, & said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and **these mighty works?**"

These people did not have unbelief in Jesus' ability to do mighty works & miracles & healings! They had seen Him do them! Their problem was that they did not believe He was the Messiah, the God-Man, the Savior of the world! And since they did not believe in Jesus Christ as the God-Man Messiah, Jesus could not and would not do many mighty works for them because He was judging them! "I can't help you!" not in the sense that "I'm not able to heal you" or "I don't have the power to heal you," but in the sense that "I refuse to heal you because you only view me as a miracle worker who can fix all your personal problems and give you your earthly desires and not as the Messiah, the God-Man Who is Savior of the world & worthy of all your worship, trust, love, and obedience!"

Ligon Duncan: Now it's very interesting, if you'll turn with me briefly to Mark 6:5, Mark puts this even more straight-forwardly, and says, "Jesus could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands upon a few sick people and healed them." Matthew, of course, tells us that He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief. Now that phrase, "Jesus was not able to do a miracle there" or "Jesus could do no miracle there" has been very frequently appealed to by faith healers. You know, someone goes up to a faith healer and the faith healer says, "I'm going to heal you of your cancer and three weeks later the doctor checks and the cancer is twice as large as it was before. And you go back to the faith healer and say, "Well, I thought you were going to heal me," and what does the faith healer say? Well, it's the great fall-back of all time. "You didn't have enough faith. You see, your faith or your lack of faith prevented me from healing you." So they will often appeal to these passages as proof of that position. That's wrong! That's dead wrong! We need to understand that the people of Nazareth were not doubting that Jesus could do miracles. They believed that He could do miracles. They were doubting that He was the Messiah. Faith is not faith that Jesus can do 'hocus pocus.' Faith is not faith that Jesus can do miraculous and supernatural things in Your life. Faith is that you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of sinners and you receive and trust in Him alone for Your salvation as He is offered in the gospel. That's the kind of faith that's being spoken of here and it is that kind of unbelief, that kind of lack of that kind of faith which causes Jesus not to do miracles in their midst. People came to Christ all the time who were trembling and wondering whether He could do amazing things in their life, but the key was they trusted in Him as Lord and Savior. And great things were done. You see, this is not an excuse as if the unbelief of these people was thwarting the power

and the purpose of God. The point is, the hardness of the hearts of these people kept them from going to Christ for healing and caused Christ to judge them by not doing great signs and wonders except.

2) Jesus does miracles when people don't have faith: Feeding of the five thousand, calming the storm, healing the Gerasene demoniac, healing the lame man in John 5 (he didn't even know who Jesus was!), raising the woman of Nain's son from the dead, the resurrection, the great miracle of conversion – the Apostle Paul!

D. A. Carson: The "could not" is related to Jesus' mission: just as Jesus could not turn stones to bread without violating his mission, so he could not do miracles indiscriminately without turning his mission into a sideshow.

Someone: You don't see faith healers working in hospitals for the same reason you don't see psychics winning the lottery.

3) Faith is still vital & important: We must still have faith, but not the kind of faith of the prosperity gospel false teachers (if I just believe enough that Jesus will give me what I want, then I'll get what I want for me to make me happy the way I want to be happy – with a focus on healing, wealth, and material prosperity!). We must have faith that Jesus is the God-Man, the Messiah, the Savior of the world Who died and rose again from the dead to save us from our sins. And we must have faith that Jesus can do whatever He wants: He can heal! He can raise the dead! He can do the impossible! And we must have faith that Jesus knows best, and He may not choose to heal or stop death or raise the dead! We must have faith that says whatever He does is good and right! "Your will be done!"

- **Matthew 8:10:** When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith.

- **Matthew 9:2:** some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven."

- **Matthew 9:28-29:** When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." ²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you."

- **Hebrews 11:6:** And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

c. May we honor Jesus Christ! Jesus wasn't honored in His hometown, but now He is honored all over the world – the U.S.; China; Kenya; Iran; Iraq; South America; the Middle East; Everywhere! May we honor Him by trust Him, loving Him, delighting in Him, obeying Him, joyfully submitting to His will, & being willing to suffer for Him! Because He suffered for you! Life, death, resurrection!

And we honor Christ by having faith in Him!

- **Romans 4:20-21:** No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

- **Hebrews 3:12:** Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

Christ Jesus Astonished All Who Heard
His Wisdom's Great, Their Hearts Were Stirred
His Mighty Works Confirm The Word
Offense They Took, Their Hearts Absurd
His Father Gave These Things Transferred
For He Himself Is God The Word
No Honor From His Home Conferred
A Killer To His Life Preferred

He Suffered All God's Wrath Unheard
He Died And Then Rose Up The Third
Now Rules And Reigns O'er All Occurred
By Faith Alone No Wrath's Incurred
So We Are Free And Undeterred
To Trust, Obey His Every Word
For Our Whole Life He'll Undergird
And Be Our Joy Never Deferred!