

## ITINERANT JESUS

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### Mark 6:1-6

"Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. 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?" So they were offended at Him.

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." 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."

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Our passage of Scripture in **Mark 6:1-6**, ends saying that Jesus went about the villages in a circuit. It could then be said that Jesus was the first itinerant preacher. Itinerant means, "One who travels from place to place, particularly a preacher; one who is unsettled." Clearly, by Jesus' own words he was unsettled. Jesus said, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." (**Matthew 8:20**) Can you relate to that? Do you feel like a stranger in a strange land? Just imagine, God coming down to this earth, as Paul stated, "in the likeness of sinful flesh", and although He was without sin, He many times, more times than not perhaps, was received with a less than enthusiastic response. When Jesus was questioned as to why He hung out with sinners, what was His response? **"I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."** (**Matthew 9:13**) By the mercy of God, He sent His Son Jesus to this earth, even knowing our sinful ways, to call us back to Himself, to believe on Jesus as the perfect sacrifice from God for the taking away of our sins so that we can be forgiven of our sins and be reconciled to God and then have a personal relationship with Him. Most of the people of the time of Jesus, and even today, miss the overall message of what Jesus' mission was all about. The Apostle John stated his overall purpose of writing, what we now call, the book of John. "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." (**John 20:31**) Believing on Jesus as being the Christ, the Son of God then means to us that we can have life in Him!

What is especially worth noting, is that the ones who fought against Jesus the most, were the Jewish leaders: the Pharisees, the scribes, and the Sadducees. Why is that? They already had what they wanted. They had their nice little ministries, and place of authority, and a certain honor from other men and women. What more could they possibly want? In their perspective they had it all. As long as they didn't cause trouble with the Roman authorities who ruled over them, they had a nice little life. The same though could be said of the common folk. In our Scripture in Mark 6, the people who KNEW Jesus were being offended by, and rejecting Jesus. This leads us to ask ourselves, do I know of Jesus, or do I know Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, as Peter professed? Have you accepted Jesus into your life and heart? **John 1:11-13** says, "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The Spirit of Christ is calling each of us today to receive Christ, that is, to be born again, by believing that Jesus died on a cross for our sins and then raised from the dead on the third day so that we can have forgiveness of sins, live a victorious life over sin, in this present time, and inherit eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Along comes Jesus. He had been saving, delivering, and healing people as He made His way around the sea of Galilee. He came to his home town of Nazareth. First thought, from us, could be, "He's going to the town with His friends and family, those who know Him and love Him. Even if He was a bit peculiar, certainly they would receive Him. The Prince of Peace was among them. Surely He would experience that oneness that He would pray for later, just before His crucifixion. Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father, "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me." (**John 17:21**) Surely, His friends and family, those who knew Him from the time He was a child, would notice the power and presence of the Spirit of God coming from Him. You know, the same faith that the woman with the infirmity had, who just wanted to touch the hem of His garment, so that she could be healed.

Sadly, the Scripture says, "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." The Jews had been prepared to receive the Christ, the Son of God, from the preaching of John the Baptist. **Matthew 3:2-3**, says John the Baptist was preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.'" Jesus also preached the same message. "Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

(**Matthew 4:17**) That word repent has been so misunderstood at times. Strong's Concordance says the root of the word metanoete, that was used in that Scripture, is "metanoéo" (met-an-o-eh'-o). Strong's concordance says the definition of that word is "to change one's mind or purpose" and the usage would be: "I repent, change my mind, particularly with reference to acceptance of the will of God. John the Baptist was preparing the way for people to have a change of mind, to begin having an attitude and lifestyle of looking for the Messiah, the Savior. It is that same change of mind that is for us to embrace and live with, to where we continue "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Hebrews 12:2**) He's not finished with us yet. He is getting us showroom new. Meanwhile, as He is working on us, we are called to continue to share and show the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Great Commandment & second like it)

That attitude of repentance is us saying to God, "I am a sinner in need of a Savior! Save me Lord!" The Jews knew from the Scriptures that none are righteous in the eyes of God. The prophet Isaiah stated, "But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (**Isaiah 64:6**) In the New Testament we should all know **Romans 3:23** (which is part of what is called the Romans Road of redemption), "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".

That is not the good news! As the saying goes, "do you want the good news first or the bad news?" We could start with the good news in what we can refer to as "the Romans road". All of the Scriptures in the Romans road are from the book of Romans, that the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans. It is a wonderful tool for us, as Christians, to share the faith that we have in Christ. That is, the gospel of Jesus Christ, or the good news of Jesus Christ. Nobody likes to hear bad news, right? Here's some good news, well actually, extremely great news! The Apostle Paul says in **Romans 1:16-17** says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." There it is, the sharing and the showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ! Jesus explained in His teachings that even if an evil desire is in one's heart, that is sin. Whether that desire is to kill someone, lust or envy after someone or something, or just wish evil on someone. The problem for us is that we were born into a sinful nature, thanks to Adam and Eve. It has been said that we were therefore set up to fail. "How fair is that?", one may ask. Yet, while God gave the choice to Adam and Eve, and the repercussions of their bad choice has affected us all, God has not set us up to fail.

He set it up so that we would look to Him, our Creator and Sustainer of our lives. He had to pay an incredible price for His love for us. Our lives are in His hands. As the saying goes, if Adam and Eve hadn't have sinned, it would have been someone else, like you or me. But really, God knew that if He were to give man a free will then it was inevitable that man would want to be "like God" as Satan claimed would happen if Adam and Eve were to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Be like God, you say? He's pretty awesome, ok I'll try that! God spoke through Isaiah, the prophet saying, "For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'" (**Isaiah 46:10-11**)

The bad news then, as Isaiah mentioned our righteousness as being incomparable to God's, that is, our rightness, compared to the perfect character of God, is not worth a hill of beans, or a hill of poo. We have all sinned against God and fall short of His glory. That means that we've all lied, stolen from someone, or been less than kind to others at times. God cannot and will not allow anything less than perfection into His kingdom in heaven. It is for that very reason that Satan and his minions were cast out of heaven. God is not going to tolerate or allow unruly and evil neighbors to reside in His neighborhood. For anyone who has ever had some bad neighbors, that is something to look forward to. The bad news is that none of us are worthy to be in His glorious and perfect kingdom. The even worse news for some, is that the next passage of Scripture on the Romans road is **Romans 6:23**. Anyone know that one? "for the wages of sin is death". That means to be eternally separated from God as a final judgment of God, against those of us who are sinners. That's right, all of us are only worthy of that sentence. Yet, with Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23, Paul gives the bad news first but follows it up with the good news.

**Romans 3:23-26:** "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate **His righteousness**, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time **His righteousness**, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

To drive the point home, Paul mentions twice, that it is by His Righteousness that we are forgiven of our sins and deemed worthy of forgiveness and eternal life. Likewise, in **Romans 6:23**, Paul states, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Both of those Scriptures speak of our righteousness coming from His righteousness, in Christ Jesus. According to the perfectness of God's justice we were sentenced to

eternal death and separation from God. That leads us to our next Scripture in Romans. **Romans 5:8** says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." The Apostle Peter tells us of God's great love for us, that He "is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (**2 Peter 3:9**)

That leads us back to repentance. If we continue to choose loving the world, the pleasures of the world, and what would be sin against God, over looking to Jesus for His Righteousness and Salvation what is that saying about us? I'm not talking about living perfect lives to please God so that we will be saved. We've already established, or really it has already been explained to us in the Scriptures that none of us can do what God requires of us. Paul asks, "do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (**Romans 2:4**) Our salvation is truly a gift from God. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (**Ephesians 2:8-9**) The only credit we can take is that, as God revealed to us His plan of salvation through Christ Jesus, we believed Him. It's kind of like a parent taking a child to a candy store (if any even exist anymore), and saying to the child, "pick out any candy you want." The parent chose to get the child, drive the child to the store, show the child the candy, and say pick one. The child just has to choose to accept the free gift and then to partake in its tastiness. That's it for us. God leads us to believe on Christ, to receive Christ, it is up to us to partake in His glorious gift of salvation and new life in Christ. The next verse, **Ephesians 2:10** says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Yet even in that, Paul asks, "do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (**Romans 2:4**) What does that mean for us as we who have believed on Christ for our salvation? We are saying we want His Righteousness to reign in us and that we don't want to live in sin anymore. Salvation and eternal life in Christ are the promise of God to all who are **in Christ**. But, our life in Christ begins when we first believe on Him. Then God gives of His Holy Spirit to dwell in His children to lead us **IN** His Righteousness. Nevertheless, as many of us have proven, the choice is still ours. To live according to His Righteousness or to forsake Him and live for the flesh.

**Romans 8:1-10**, which isn't usually attributed to the sharing of the gospel in the "Romans road", nevertheless, explains to us how we are expected to live after we first believe on Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from

the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.**"

What that says to us is, we either believe on Christ or we don't. "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (**John 3:36**) Likewise, we either have Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior or we don't. "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." (**John 5:12**) What that also says is that we become a living testimony unto Christ and His saving grace. **Romans 10:9-10** says, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." That is another passage of Scripture that one can use in sharing the gospel through the Romans Road to salvation in Christ Jesus.

Hopefully that says to us more than that we are just looking forward to eternal life in heaven to where we can prance around in His fields of glory and swim in the crystal sea. Our eternal life in Him is now, right now. When Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me", (**John 14:6**) He wasn't just pointing them to paradise in heaven. When Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would lead them into all truth, He was certainly speaking of what truth God deemed necessary for us to know. God apparently doesn't think it is important for us to know what type of fruit was on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Maybe it was an apple, maybe not. There are an innumerable amount of books out there on the internet that purports to reveal deep secrets of life and history and such. You can be absolutely certain of one thing. If it isn't in the Word of God, it isn't important enough for us to consider beyond just musing about it as being interesting.

Paul in speaking of the Word of God to His spiritual son Timothy, he said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly

equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17) For all of God's intents and purposes, His Word will thoroughly equip us for every good work. The same can be said about our salvation in Christ. Jesus is all we need! Right? It is in Christ, we have His Wisdom, His Righteousness, His Sanctification, and His Redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30) Therefore if any glories, glory in the Lord! (verse 31)

For our passage of Scripture today, it reveals to us that there are many who will not believe. Jesus was there in the flesh, healing people, delivering people from demons, and even raising some from the dead and there were still those who chose not to believe. When Jesus is in the room, for some it becomes a joyous celebration. For others, He is just cramping their style, so to speak. So it is with us. Not everyone will receive us and some will literally hate us, because of Jesus within us, who is working in us the fruit of the Spirit of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23) Sometimes, the most resistant to our faith in Christ and our new life in Christ is with old friends or family. Jesus is the itinerant preacher. He is calling to everyone who will listen, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." (Revelation 3:20) That is where the love of God in Christ Jesus is calling us, showing us, and leading us. To have continual fellowship and communion with Him and in Him. It should lead us to consider as Paul did, "to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21) Our relationship with Jesus is leading us to love God to where we want to bear much fruit for His glory. (John 15:8) It should lead us to long for Jesus in ways that we want more of Him, not only for ourselves but for others. That is what takes place as God is working "in us to will and to do for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13) He is also teaching us to trust in Him unconditionally. Many times He will lead us to do things that don't make sense. We are to, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6) You can't trust someone you don't know. You can't trust someone who hasn't show you in times past that they are trustworthy.

For us today, we don't want Jesus to just pass through and then to just marvel at our unbelief. Our lives testify to our belief in Christ. May today be your day of turning to God, through Christ, for forgiveness of your sins, and that you may live in the newness of life in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:4) Amen.

# ROMANS ROAD

## **Romans 1:16-17**

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

## **Romans 2:4**

"Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

## **Romans 3:23-24**

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

## **Romans 5:8**

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

## **Romans 6:4**

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

## **Romans 8:1**

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

## **Romans 10:9-10**

"That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

## **Romans 12:1-2**

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."