

**SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST JEDBURGH**  
**SUNG EUCHARIST PENTECOST 6**  
**SUNDAY 5TH JULY 2015 10.30**  
**Mark 6:1-13**

In Acts 24, Paul was in prison, charged with being a troublemaker and stirring up the people. Paul was appearing before the governor, Felix. Felix heard the charges, heard Paul's defence, and didn't want to make a decision. In deciding Paul's fate, the governor would be making a decision about Jesus, and Scripture says, "Then Felix, **who was well acquainted with the Way**, adjourned the proceedings..." He didn't make a decision, but rather left Paul in prison for two years, until eventually he left office and another governor came in. He was well acquainted with the Way, the Way was Jesus. While Felix was well acquainted with Jesus, perhaps too acquainted with Jesus, He never made a decision about Him.

We can know people too well. And we can certainly know all about someone. Parents know their children pretty well. Children know their parents pretty well.

Our Gospel reading today tells us that Jesus was in his own country. And Jesus could do no mighty work there. Some scholars have argued that Jesus *could* really means *would*, so that it should read, "Jesus *would* do no mighty work there." But the New Interpreter's commentary says it really is best translated as it reads, "...could do no mighty work there." And the explanation is because it took faith on their

part to receive the mighty works. They were so familiar with Jesus, too familiar with Jesus, to have faith that He could do a mighty work there.

I feel this is Scripture that supports the idea that “Jesus can’t save You.” It’s our choice whether to be saved. Our choice is our own but the consequences of the choice have already been determined and made known even as we consider our choice! How many people does Jesus want to perish? Answer: John 3:16 says God sent Jesus so that *none should perish*. Will people perish? For the answer turn to John 3:3 where Jesus says, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” Romans 10:13 says, (we must) call upon the name of Jesus to be saved. Luke 9:23 says If you want to be Jesus’ disciple, “You must pick up your cross and follow Him.”

It’s a shame, people in Jesus’ own back yard could have been made well, but because of their lack of faith, because they were too familiar with Jesus, because they knew where He came from, who His parents were, because they knew his siblings, they knew Him too well; they could not find the faith within themselves to be healed.

The biggest argument I hear about Jesus being the only way to get to heaven is, “What about the people who have never heard?” I’ve said before and I’ll say again, God will sort that out.

The danger for us and for those in our country is that, like the people in the Scripture, we are all too familiar with Jesus. We’ve grown up hearing about Him. And we don’t take Him seriously. We’re too familiar with those who call themselves His followers and their poor representation of Him.

“And He marvelled because of their unbelief.” Just as He marvelled then, I can imagine how He must be marvelling today. People are dying without faith in Jesus, and are perishing. And Jesus must be marvelling. What a shame! The Saviour of the world, the Way of eternal life has been in their midst, and in a way, He’s helpless to save them because they’re too familiar with Him.

If we are not careful that could be us. We hear the Gospel, the Good News, and we are falling asleep in church, or we’re not even going to church. We haven’t picked up our cross. We’re not following. We are thinking, “I’m very familiar with all of this...heard it over and over.” I know all about Jesus. .

And with faith and attitudes like that, as it turns out, He can’t save us. And He marvels because of our unbelief.

You’ve heard about Jesus over and over. Perhaps today you realize you’ve been too familiar with Jesus. You’ve heard it so much that you’ve become immune. Whether you’ve said yes in the past, but become complacent: A “Jesus is my friend and that’s good enough for me” mentality. And today you realize you called upon His name, maybe a long time ago, but you haven’t had the faith to follow, to pick up your cross. He calls you to pick up your cross today, to have the faith to follow.

Or maybe today, finally you realize that you’ve heard it so much, you’re very familiar with the Way, Jesus, but like Felix, you’ve put off the decision. Will you decide to follow Him today? What does it take? Coming to Jesus is not coming to church. Coming to Jesus is not coming to communion. Coming to Jesus is being sorry for your

sin. Calling upon His name, and have the faith to follow. Then He can and certainly will save you.

A.W. Tozer says the Gospel message consists of 3 distinct elements – an announcement, a command, and a call. It announces the Good News of redemption. It commands all men everywhere to repent and it calls all men to surrender to the terms of grace by believing on Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Up to the point that you repent and have the faith to follow, Jesus keeps saying “come.” Come you who are unworthy. Come you who are weary. Come you who are thirsty.

Then, once we’ve come to Jesus, while we continue to follow, He adds another verb. Go.

The second part of this week’s Scripture says that Jesus sent the disciples. He sent them with Power and Authority. And likewise, He sends us. We who are His followers are His followers because the ones He sent went and told others who told others who told others who told us. And once we’ve been told, and once we’ve come, we must go tell others. We must go.

Go into the world. Go make disciples. Go feed the hungry, go clothe the naked, go visit the lonely. Go love the world. By this they will know you are my disciples...

In John 20:21 we read, “So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you; **as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.**’”

We'll know we've truly come to Jesus when we go. We come to Jesus and we go into the world. We come to Jesus and He equips us and sends us. I pray that some of you have said yes, and have come to Jesus today. After hearing about Him over and over, you've finally come today.

And I pray for some of you that have come to Jesus in the past – that you finally understand that He's telling you go. Go and offer the hope of Christ. Go until your work is done. Go until you can't go any more. Go until He calls you home. Go out into the world and proclaim the Gospel of salvation.

**Amen**