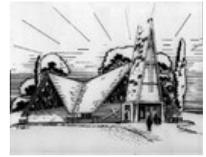




Free Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod  
in South Africa

## Sermon- 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 9B) 2018

*A prophet has no honour in his hometown,  
even if He is the Son of God!*



St. John's Lutheran Parish  
Shelly Beach

### • The Word of God for this Sermon is written in Mark 6, 1-13:

- Commentary CPH 6 1b And he goes into his home area, and his disciples follow him.
- 2 And when the Sabbath had come, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many, as they were listening, were amazed, saying, “From where (do) these things (come) to this man?” and “What (is) the wisdom that has been given to him?” and “The miracles—such sort occurring through his hands ...!”
- 3 “This is the carpenter, isn’t it, the son of Mary and the brother of Jacob and Joses and Judas and Simon? And his sisters are here by us, aren’t they?” And they *became scandalized* in his case.
- 4 And Jesus *proceeded to say* to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his home area and among his relatives and in his house.”
- 5 And he *was actually not able* to do any miracle there, except *by putting his hands* on a few weak people he healed (them).
- 6 And he marveled on account of their unbelief. And he *proceeded to go around* the villages in a circle, teaching.
- 7 And he summons the Twelve and began to send them out with a commission two by two, and he *proceeded to give* to them authority over the unclean spirits.
- 8 And he ordered them that **they take up nothing** for (the) way/road except a rod only—not bread, not a leather pouch, not copper money for the belt,
- 9 but (to be) shod with sandals and not to wear two undergarments.
- 10 And he *proceeded to say* to them, “Wherever you enter into a house, remain there until you go out from there.
- 11 And whatever place does not receive you or listen to you—as you go out from there, shake off the dust that is under your feet as a witness to them.”
- 12 And upon going out they preached that people **repent—now!** 13 And they *proceeded to throw out* many demons and *to anoint* with oil many sick people, and *to heal* (them).
- **Let us pray:** *Come Holy Spirit, teach us so that we will repent of our unbelief and grow in trusting Jesus, the true Christ! Amen.*

### • **Dear beloved of the Father!**

- A prophet has a hard time in his hometown, the saying goes. It still works like this in our times. Why? Well, if you know the person from next door since his birth, if you even know his parents, his brothers and sisters, if you have played

with him, if he has only made it into a local carpenter- if you know all of this, what can one expect of someone like this? Where does he now all of a sudden gets all this wisdom from, healing powers to drive out demons and heal the sick.

- It couldn't be that He is who He said He was. Consequently Jesus could not heal many, because not many asked Him, trusted in Him that He was able to heal them!

- All of this reveals human stubbornness and blindness to see God at work! On the other hand it also reveals how much Jesus was truly man. The people who knew Him from His childhood did not suspect Him to be anyone special or could see anything that different than being a normal Jewish boy. This is a real eye-opener for us. Jesus was not running around with a halo or anything similar that would have set Him apart from others in His early days. After His Baptism He might have worn a simple garment rabbi's wore, because people identified Him as rabbi, but nothing of the kind during His childhood. At least nothing extraordinary people of the village would have picked up.

- Human stubbornness in thought and mindset did not make way for the words of the prophets, John and Jesus. It was not easier to believe in Jesus then, than it is now for us. Remember, Jesus had not died yet, not been resurrected nor ascended. On the one hand He could throw out demons, but on the other hand, at that stage, He couldn't convince the people of His hometown. What a weak position He was getting Himself in!

- How wonderfully honest God's Word is. It does not hold back this disappointing truth, if you wanted to portray a strong hero type messiah!

- And then, just when one thinks, well what next, Jesus sends out His disciples and gave authority over the unclean spirits! First He is so weak, and then He reveals having nothing less than God's authority. Even more, He gave them authority. Only God Himself can give that authority. So, immediately after a clear revelation of His weakness, we have a clear revelation of Him being God!

- And then again, He sends out the Twelve, the new Israel, as a training session-

they will be doing exactly what He did. In fact, at that stage, they cast out more demons and healed more sick than He did in His home-town.

• Do you get the picture? Well, if you kind of don't, you are spot on, this time. Just when one thinks, now I understand who He is, He is weak, the next moment He turns out to be God Himself. When one thinks, OK, He is God, He knows everything, He is strongest of all, then all of a sudden He turns out to be exceptionally weak. What can we say? He is both God and man and yet He remains to be a mystery!

• So, analysing His person according to His heritage, His childhood, the normal things we normally use to analyse someone with will get us nowhere. There is only one thing we can do, we have to hear what He says. Any kind of speculation about Jesus is absolutely futile.

• And Jesus did speak clearly, namely 'repent and believe in the Gospel'. The time is fulfilled- the endtimes have come, the kingdom of God has arrived. That is, don't trust your own thoughts and speculations about Jesus. That is what it means to repent, namely to deny your own take on Jesus and realise that God's Kingdom has come in Him. Here is someone from whom healing powers flow through His garments to heal those trusting Him. He is the living temple of God, the place where God's grace is found and experienced.

• Furthermore, He is not stingy with His greatest gifts! He sends His disciples to spread His gifts, to enlarge the reign of God. Yet, true to His nature, not with superman- type- power, but in outer weakness, only via the proclaimed Gospel!

• And, let us be precise, the proclaimed Gospel has the power to drive out demons and heal all believers from all sickness. Yes, that means if you speak or sing the Gospel regularly in your homes all demons will leave! You don't need to be afraid of demons and satan anymore.

• Should we fall asleep before Jesus' second coming, as believers in Christ, the moment we do, all our suffering will end immediately and on the Day of Fulfilment we will resurrect with a perfectly healthy and even glorious body. Sin,

death and the devil, including all his hordes of demons, will never be able to tempt us again. Evil will be completely seperated from us.

- The Gospel reigns over all these forces, because in, with and under the Gospel, the ministry of Jesus, as both man and God, fills up the content, makes it true, fulfills it to the brim. Again, not in superman hero-power style, but in absolute utter weakness, being nailed to the Cross between two gangsters.
- And yet this utter weakness is at the same time God's utter power to save us, to extend His utter mercy to us! And therefore He sends us out to spread His power, in weakness, but also with joy and freely, without any fear! Without fear for all the people who know you so well! The Gospel empowers us to be free of fear, to not be ashamed of the power of God that not only saves us, but also those we know, who are still blind for the mysterious power of Christ working in, with and under His Gospelword.

- Glory be to the Father, Glory be to the Son and Glory be to the Holy Spirit!

**Amen.**

- *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. [NKJ 2 Cor3:14.]*