

Title: PROPHETS WITHOUT HONOR, MARK 6:1-13
(Chatham, NJ; 07/05/15, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: Though his hometown gives Jesus no honor, prophets generally don't receive honor anywhere they preach contrary to the sinful ways of society.

Purpose: To build up our resolve to maintain the church's message that people must repent.

Introduction:

1. Jesus' hometown refused to accept that he was anything extraordinary.
2. When he had first come home in Luke 4, the visit became a confrontation followed by an angry reaction.
3. I wonder if they were still angry over his original statements: Elisha was not well received by the people of Israel; instead, he healed Naaman, a foreigner.

I. Prophets without Honor, Mark 6:1-6

A. Key responses to Jesus

1. "Astonished" (2): his wisdom and mighty works
2. "Offended" (3): familiar with his family; even they were skeptical, John 7:5.
3. "Unbelief" (6): makes Jesus marvel (perplexed?)
4. Hence, "a prophet without honor" statement
5. "At the speaking of the Word of Christ there is sometimes offense and unbelief. Even good news may be received and treated as bad news, and perhaps by those who would be expected to be more receptive." (Lectionary, 336)

B. Rejection: the lot of most prophets

1. Jeremiah 18:18 & 20:10 – both passages indicate the strain and persecution Jeremiah was under as a result of his preaching
2. Ezekiel 2:5 – the people will ultimately recognize the prophetic voice; however, they will hear him as nothing more than entertaining, Ez. 33:30-33
3. Amos 7:10ff. - Amos threatened by the priest to stop preaching
4. Micah 7:5 experienced enemies even within his own household
5. Elijah and Elisha prophesied during some of the most evil times in Israel's history
6. Naaman's healing by Elisha is the one referred to by Jesus in Luke 4: he was sent to a foreigner to give healing because Israel had rejected God
7. They demanded that people repent and turn to God's laws

II. The Prophetic Message of Repentance Handed Down to the Apostles, Mark 6:7-13

A. From the Prophets to John to Jesus

1. John, the Baptist stands squarely in the prophetic tradition of Elijah
2. Luke 1:16-17 demonstrates his message of turning away from sin
3. His "good news" (Luke 3:18) first demanded repentance (3-14)
4. For Jesus the proclamation of the gospel of God (Mark 1:14-15) proclaimed also the command to repent (turn away from evil)

B. And to the apostles

1. They proclaimed that "people should repent" (12)
2. The other instructions are beside the main point of the message
3. However, Jesus assumes some will not listen; hence, they shake of the dust as a testimony to their rejection of God's message
4. The reaction of the demons highlights the validity of the message of repentance

III. The Church: called (7), sent (7), and often rejected (11)

- A. Repentance: good news and way of life
 - 1. Good news of the Gospel must be preceded by the bad news of judgment
 - 2. Jesus didn't come to judge the world (John 3:17) because the world was already under the judgment of God: their deeds are evil, 19
 - 3. The good news is that of God offering us an opportunity: freedom to escape – the Bill of Rights does not guarantee happiness but rather the pursuit of it: we take charge of our destiny
 - 4. In the Gospel we must choose to repent and turn our lives over to God, Acts 2:40, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."
 - 5. The Gospel is not blanket coverage for us to sin: we must repent
 - 6. For those who have made that decision, repentance becomes a way of life not merely a one-time event
 - 7. We must no longer walk as others do, Ephesians 4:17 – note examples: 25, 26, 28, 31

- B. Aroma or odor, sweet smell or rotten stench (2 Corinthians 2:14-17)
 - 1. The message of the cross and repentance wrecks of the odor of death to many
 - 2. It is a sweet aroma of life to those who find hope in it
 - 3. A reality that the church must face
 - 4. We must not change the apostles' message of repentance into one of acceptance of sin; that is a betrayal of what they fought and died for

Conclusions:

- 1. The prophets have always been excluded from polite society for demanding a change and for telling the people the truth about their sin.
- 2. They confronted sin and demanded changed lives.
- 3. People in the grip of evil have always resisted this.
- 4. Come what may, the Good News must be accompanied by the call to repent.
- 5. We rejoice in the opportunity to do that and encourage you to come out of a corrupt generation in order to live a life that leads to eternity.