

1. "Oh, you're just **biased**." Bias - "a particular tendency or inclination which prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question." **Prejudice** - "an unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason." **Prejudge** - "to pass judgment upon prematurely or in advance of due investigation of the truth." What word would you use to describe the reaction of Nazareth to its "favorite son?" How do I know that what I "know" is really true? Because I "know" something else beforehand. But...?

How does Jesus employ this "power" that He was invested with after His temptation? He "taught" in the synagogues of His nation. Entirely appropriate. Behavior starts in the mind.

Note carefully the passage Jesus chooses to read in His home congregation. He does not shy away from telling them directly who He is.

What kind of person did Isaiah say would be the object of the Messiah's preaching good news? The afflicted, the captive, the blind, the crushed ones. Do these Nazareth citizens fit that description?

"No prophet is acceptable (same word as in vs. 19) in his own country (hometown)."

2. **This story provides a fascinating look at human psychology.** It shows how difficult it is for people to get past their prejudices, how blind they can be to "true truth," and how quickly they will turn on one they previously applauded when their sense of peace and security is threatened.

"I know that this man came here as a little boy with his family from Egypt. He went to our synagogue school, played in our streets, worked in his father's carpenter shop. We know his brothers and his sisters. There is absolutely no possibility that he is the Son of God because He is the son of Joseph." Did you ask his mother? How do you explain the 'signs' that he is doing?

Have you ever tried to teach your parents or brothers or sisters something, especially concerning your "change" since becoming a Christian? It is too threatening if you HAVE changed and they have NOT. You might not be the subject of an attempted murder, but you might be heartily rejected.

3. **Would God pass by some and visit others?** Why would He do that? Jesus reminds His townsfolk that it has happened in the past. Of all the doctrines of the Bible, none is so hated by the carnal mind (Rom. 8:7) as the doctrine of God's sovereignty. That God would be sovereign in the salvation of men's souls wounds our pride and self-sufficiency. When told that "it is not of him that wills or of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy," we rise up in hatred (Rom. 9:16).

"How dare you! We're not that bad, that impotent. We know ourselves, and we know you. We, bow to You?" Some of the best moments of life can come after being offended by the truth. It is very normal for sinful people to be closed to the truth. Ahab did not like Micaiah who "never says anything good about me" (1 Kings 22:1ff)

#### 4. Some lessons:

- **See the terribleness of the sin of unbelief.** Why does God not do here what He did there? "He could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5, 6). The most damaging prejudice, "I'm a good person." The second damaging prejudice, "I need more righteousness than that which comes from Christ alone at the moment that I am justified by faith."
- **Be teachable, but not gullible.** Believe the truth, not just the popular opinion that sweeps others away. Search for truth as for hidden treasure. "But there are so many differing interpretations. It is obvious that truth cannot be known." "Oh, really. Have you come to that conclusion because you have really, honestly, studied the Scriptures? Or are you just being lazy?"
- **Realize that eliminating prejudices will not eliminate conflict.** If your major motivation is to avoid conflict, you will never be capable of living the Christian life. **Keep at your assignment even when facing adversity. "The very discouragements we meet with enable us to show the world that there are such things as faith and patience."** Here is where the world's definition of foolishness is refuted.

If you are "in Christ," **Trust** that God will protect you in your life's calling even as He protected Christ Jesus, and so **live fearlessly**.