

“Jesus left that part of the country and returned with his disciples to Nazareth, his hometown. The next Sabbath he began teaching in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. They asked, “Where did he get all this wisdom and the power to perform such miracles?” Mark 6:1-2 NLT

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Family, home-cooked meals, friends you grew up with and local neighborhood stories that only people that grew up there remember. Jesus goes home. Mark gives us such a stark contrast here. He has built a solid case of eye-witness accounts of Jesus being more powerful than... EVERYTHING and ANYTHING, but something very strange happens when he goes home. Oh, no one can deny his wisdom and even power to perform - but back there, hidden in their memories is a little boy from the hood. The leaders know TOO much commonness of Jesus and his history. His earthly father, who has died, his mother, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and the list goes on. So much historical bias that they (the leaders) scoffed... SCOFFED and said, he's just a.... This really bugs me because, as humans, we just have a horrible time letting others grow OUT OF their childhood, their past, their whatever. How often do dismiss the gifts that grow up right among us because we keep them locked in a prison of the PAST. Jesus is God and yet can't force his faith past their biases! He's the creator and is clearly more powerful than sickness, seas, demons and death itself and yet he will not force their faith to see beyond the stories and memories of their past. After so many high points and climatic crescendos of Mark's writing about Jesus, he writes a very sad reality here, “And because of their unbelief, he couldn't do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.” And Jesus was amazed at their UNBELIEF. Yuk. So, you mean to tell me that God won't force his grace, his love or his miracles on us if we clearly don't want it or believe it? I'll let you answer that for yourself.

Dad,

I see that even in all the love, mercy, grace and power you have, you will not use force to MAKE me believe, make me receive. That really makes me sad to think about all the expectations I have of you over-riding my stupid decisions or my sin, and i'm beginning to understand why. You let me have a choice. You allow me to choose your love, your forgiveness, even healing. Thank you, but I now know I really need to let go of my own historical biases to see you.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root