

SLIDE 1

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# THE HARDEST PART OF HARVESTING: REJECTION

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Mark 6:1-13  
David J Dahms

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## INTRODUCTION

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Don't you just hate it when you have really labored to make something special, or give something special, and the reaction of the recipient is much less receptive than you expected?

What happens when you love and love and love, and are rejected? Like a loving parent of a wayward child, or a dedicated coach who sees his athlete reject team rules and miss a key game, or a dedicated teacher who sees a student reject their teaching and squander their talent.

Or a loving wife or husband, who sees their spouse reject their love going instead into the arms of a stranger?

If you are someone that has or is experiencing deep rejection, then today's message, the Hardest Part of Harvesting—Part 2 is for you. We will be looking at a time when God himself, trying to do good, was rejected.

So turn with me to Mark 6, where we see Jesus being rejected by his home town.

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## JESUS REJECTION AT NAZARETH

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SLIDE 2

### REJECTION AT NAZARETH (6:1–6a)

**<sup>1</sup>Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. <sup>2</sup>When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.**

**“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles!**

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**<sup>3</sup>Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.**

**<sup>4</sup>Jesus said to them, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.” <sup>5</sup>He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. <sup>6</sup>And he was amazed at their lack of faith.<sup>1</sup>**

Jesus has previously experienced even more severe rejection by the folks of his hometown, in the gospel of Luke we read that they literally tried to hurl him over a cliff the first time he spoke in the synagogue of his hometown of Nazareth.

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**Luke 4:21–30 (NIV)**

**21 and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” 22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked. 23 Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’ ” 24 “I tell you the truth,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.**

#### **SLIDE 5**

**25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”**

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**28 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. 30 But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.**

Why is this account in Scripture?

I think God wants us to know that even Jesus Christ was rejected so that we know that he knows exactly what that experience is like.

And why did God want us to know his Son was even rejected by the folks in his own home town?

I think God wants us to know that some of the most difficult people that we are called to live out our faith before is our closest family. And because they “knew us when” it might be very difficult

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<sup>1</sup> Black, A. (1995). *Mark*. The College Press NIV commentary (Mk 5:43). Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub. Co.

or impossible for them to reconcile the truth you have discovered, the grace in Christ you have found, and the change that has taken place in you.

Know that you are in good company. Jesus himself, the son of God, experienced the same thing with his own family.

Do you remember several weeks ago when we read that after he had healed the sick, raised the dead, and driven out demons that his own family came to collect him and take him to an insane asylum because they thought he was out of his mind?

## **SLIDE 7**

### **Mark 3:20–21 (NIV)**

**20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. 21 When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”**

Are you ready, as a Christian to be misunderstood and rejected by the people you care about being accepted by most because of your faith in Christ?

Because that may be just what is in store for us.

Peter reminds us not to be surprised when we rejected because now we have new life in Christ.

### **1 Peter 4:2–5 (GNT)**

**2 From now on, then, you must live the rest of your earthly lives controlled by God’s will and not by human desires.3 You have spent enough time in the past doing what the heathen like to do. Your lives were spent in indecency, lust, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and the disgusting worship of idols.4 And now the heathen are surprised when you do not join them in the same wild and reckless living, and so they insult you.5 But they will have to give an account of themselves to God, who is ready to judge the living and the dead.**

Here is what this account of Jesus rejection teaches us:

Just because your heart has been opened to the grace of God, just because you have trusted Christ, just because you have come to understand that we are dead in our sin and destined to a future in Hell unless and until we put our trust in Christ—do not expect that the message of Christ will be welcomed and heard from you by those you are most desperate to know the good news.

They will likely quote: I knew you when, and if you are now saved, well, then anybody is.

This is what they said to Jesus, even insulting him in a way a Jew would never do, calling him the son of Mary—implying that he did not have a father and was illegitimate.

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## **KEY POINT**

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*This can be the hardest part of harvesting—witnessing your faith to your closest friends and family.*

Could it be that God preserved this story of his own son's rejection to give us strength, grace and love today to persevere when those we love most don't understand or share or welcome our faith in Jesus Christ?

When Laurie and I were youth workers at the church we grew up in, Contemporary Christian Music was in its infancy.

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### KEITH GREEN – ONE OF THE FIRST CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN ARTISTS

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And one of its first artists was Keith Green—a minister, song writer, and musician who cofounded with his wife Melody, Last Days Ministries. He was unique in that behind each verse of his first album “So you want to back to Egypt” he put the Scripture reference. But even though Keith Green was a Christian song writer and musician, his own parents did not have faith and trust in Jesus. So he wrote this song, “Song for my parents” which expresses his longing and frustration at their rejection of the Gospel. Read the words as he sings these first stanza's.

## SLIDE 10

### Keith Green Song To My Parents (I Only Want To See You There)

I need to say these things cause I love you so  
And I'm sorry you get angry when I say that you just don't know  
But there's a Heaven waiting for you and me  
I know it seems every time we talk I'm only trying to just make you see  
And it's only that I care  
I really only want just to see you there

## SLIDE 11

Please try and overlook my human side  
I know I'm such a bad example and you know I'm so full of pride  
But Jesus isn't like that, now He's perfect all the way  
I guess that's why we need him, cause by ourselves, there's just no way  
And it's only that I care  
I really, really only just want to see you there  
To see you there

God gives us this Scripture to remind us to take heart, even Jesus was rejected. And to prepare his own disciples for the mission he has for them.

Just as in Jesus day...

**Their physical knowledge of Jesus prevented them from having a spiritual knowledge of him.<sup>2</sup>**

So in our day, our friends, our family members knowledge of us, may prevent them from welcoming spiritual knowledge of Christ. But even so, we continue to love remembering this. It was no surprise to God that our friends and family would reject us. They rejected his own son. So we must be prepared when our day comes.

Let's read on. Because after himself being rejected, he sends out his disciples, two by two, and warns them they may be rejected also.

## **SLIDE 12**

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### JESUS SENDS OUT THE TWELVE DISCIPLES

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#### **THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE (6:6b-13)**

**Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.<sup>7</sup> Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits.**

**<sup>8</sup>These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. <sup>9</sup>Wear sandals but not an extra tunic.**

## **SLIDE 13**

**<sup>10</sup>Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. <sup>11</sup>And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them."**

**<sup>12</sup>They went out and preached that people should repent. <sup>13</sup>They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.<sup>3</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> Brooks, J. A. (2001). *Vol. 23: Mark* (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (98). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

<sup>3</sup> Black, A. (1995). *Mark*. The College Press NIV commentary (Mk 6:5). Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub. Co.