

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

This Is Jesus

PART

16

TITLE

Ordinary Offense

SCRIPTURE

Mark 6:1-13



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Providence. Family, it's so good to see you. Hope you've had a good week. And if you're a guest with us, welcome. You've heard that several times, but we really are glad you're here.

If you have a Bible with you, if you would turn with me to mark chapter six. And in a moment, I want to pray. I always pray before we walk into God's word, for really two reasons in particular this morning. One is because we need his help. Without God's spirit opening our eyes to help us to understand, we're going to be.

We're going to walk out of here unchanged. We're going to walk out just as we walked in. And that would be a tragedy for us to stand in front of the word of almighty God and come out unscathed. We should be changed. And then the second reason, though, and it's in particularly true today, is that there are a lot of passages in the Bible where we choose.

We've already seen one. There was one last week, which is just a beautiful passage where at the end, all of the principal characters like it all ends with a lot of good news. And today it just doesn't end that way. There's some soft passages and then there's some really prickly passages. And this is not one of those that's soft.

And so we need his help to be able to absorb, I believe, what he wants us to see and to know. So would you pray with me, Father in heaven, as we open your word? I pray that the words of my mouth and the meditations of our heart would be pleasing to you. We thank you for this passage. Thank you for helping Peter to remember it, for him telling Mark to write it, and then for it to be preserved in its credible form all the way down to this time and this day that we can learn.

And I pray, Father, that you would remove the offense from our heart. When we look at Jesus and hear Jesus and as what we hear and what we see perhaps offends who we think we want him to be, would you please help us to quickly repent? Would you help us to absorb and to receive things that perhaps will be hard to hear today? And I pray that as we hear them and as you help us to absorb them, that we would be changed and that our offense would melt just like the ice. And so we look to you, and we need your help, and we pray this in Jesus name.

Amen. So in mark, chapter six, there's a challenge, and it happens to be a challenge that we still face today. You see, on one hand, God has called each and every one of us who know Jesus as our savior and lord to make disciples. He tells us how to do it. He says, I want you to go.

I want you to make disciples. I want you to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. And then he says something really interesting. I want you to teach them everything I commanded you.

And everything that he commanded has offended some of us or all of us in some way or another. There is something that he has commanded, he has taught that has been difficult initially to receive. If you've never been offended by anything Jesus has said, you probably need to read a little bit more about what he said. He

challenges us to the core. He challenges our heart, our motives, our intentions, our words, our actions, our relationships.

He challenges everything about us because he cares so deeply about us. He wants us to speak. And as a result of that, we have a calling to speak things that were, even some of them initially, hard for us to hear the first time. Which means that he's called us to speak about his life, his death, his resurrection, to speak about repentance and belief, to speak about the fact that he is the only way, he's the only truth, the only life. He's the only savior that brings people to heaven.

He tells us to speak about heaven and hell, and he tells us to speak about how to live life in his world. Well, just. That is a challenge. It's hard to say. Some of those things.

Add to that the other side of the coin that intensifies the challenge, and that is that we all live in a culture of offense, where people divide into camps around their own personal identity, and then they adopt a set of words to fly is the banner that represents their identity, and then they measure our words against their banner and grow offended by any perceived discrepancies. And what I want you to see is that this is a challenge that Jesus faced, and he promised that we as his followers would also face. As we've been walking through the gospel of Mark, we've been looking at who Jesus really is, an accurate picture of who he is and what he said and what he did and what he means and what it really means, what he really expects of his followers. And it's interesting. Every single one of us have arrived to this place with preconceived notions of who he is and what he does and what he says, what he endorses and what it means to follow him.

And sometimes there is a discrepancy between our preconceived ideas and what we see within the pages of scripture. And that's what this series is all about, going verse by verse, saying, this is who Jesus is, in the hope that if there is anything in us that isn't accurate, it is affecting us to the core, and that we would leave those things and adopt exactly who he has revealed himself to be. This message is called ordinary offense. Ordinary offense. And the fact is, if we fail to understand the ordinary offense that Jesus evoked in people, we will fail to understand a significant part of who he is and a significant part of what it means to follow him.

So let's read it together. Starting in verse one, he went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. And on the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue. And many who heard him were astonished, saying, where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him?

How were such mighty works done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, a prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.

And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them.

And he marveled because of their unbelief. He went about among the villages teaching, and he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff, no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. He said to them, whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there.

And if any place will not receive you, and they will not listen to you when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them. So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent, and they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them well. Friends, this is who Jesus really is. And what I want to ask you to do with me is to consider a few big truths, and hopefully you can consider them a little bit more this week. The first is that Jesus is offensive to all kinds of people.

You can go today to traditional societies and progressive societies and find people who have adopted parts of those societies who were deeply offended, who Jesus is and what he said. He offends all kinds of people. Now let's get our bearings. Jesus had been for most of the last year in a town called Capernaum, which was on the coast of the sea of Galilee. 40 miles from there is another town called Nazareth, his hometown.

For most of his year, he's been literally teaching and ministering up in that part. But in verse one, it says that he went away from there and came to his hometown, Nazareth, a little town. Most people believed on the basis of archaeology that the entire town was roughly 60 square acres. There's about 500 people, people estimate today lived at that time. There's certainly more now.

But back then, it was a very small town. Rural countryside, rocky hillside. Small, insignificant. So insignificant the Old Testament never even references the town, never says Nazareth. And when one person, his own disciple in the New Testament, hears about Nazareth, he says, can anything good come from there?

I mean, he's just like, there's scorn towards Nazareth. And this is the second time that he's been in Nazareth. The first time that he was in Nazareth. About a year before this, he gets to town. He goes to the synagogue on the Sabbath, and because he's a traveling rabbi, they give him the opportunity to open up the scroll and to read a part of the Old Testament, the Bible, and then to share a few words about them.

He stands up and he opens up the scroll, Isaiah. And he turns to chapter 61, and he begins reading a passage about how the Christ was going to come to set people free. He rolled the scroll back up, set it down, went and sat down. Everyone's looking at him. And he says, today this has been fulfilled in your hearing, the Christ is here in your presence, the promised one, the one who's going to set you free.

He's here. He's me.

And it says that some of them spoke well of them, but others, they rocked back on their heels in unbelief.

And seeing their unbelief, Jesus tells two stories, two stories from the Old Testament, not about Jewish heroes, but about two Gentiles who, because of their faith in God's promise, received a healing. And it says that the people of Nazareth were so upset that their wrath was so enraged that they tried unsuccessfully to throw him off of a cliff.

Mark Six is the second time that he's visited hometown Nazareth, just about a year later. And he does the same thing in verse two. He began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. Literally, the word means to strike the senses. Like if your sense of smell could be struck to where it's woken up, it's like a smelling salt.

He spoke with such authority as though he had jurisdiction over everything in the world, as though he had insight over every single topic and subject that you could possibly think about or talk about. He just, he astonished all of them. And yet, when they began to contemplate his humble origins, his family, his stock, they said, man, this is crazy. In verse three, says that they grew offended at him. The word offended, it's the word scandal on.

It's where we get the word scandalize, where when somebody, their behavior or their actions or their words cross our sense of self, our identity, so much so that we become outraged, offended, and we become quick to reject them.

So before we consider why Jesus is offensive to all kinds of people around the world, let me encourage us to consider how this offense crosses cultural lines. It's important because once you understand that his offense crosses cultural lines, you'll understand that his offense crossed the line that runs through your heart.

Already. In the book of Mark, we have seen Jesus offend, or people expressing offense at Jesus, who live in big cities and in small country towns, men and women, Jews and Gentiles, religious and irreligious Pharisees and Herodians. So who are those people? Pharisees were not only a religious elite group, they were the political right. They were the traditionalist.

Let's go back. Let's go back to the good old days, when we had morality and ethics and a strong society and moral roots. The Herodians were the political left, the progressives, the ones that says, we now know more than what we used to know. And so there's different ways to live, then simply going back, we can move forward. What I hope you can see is that Jesus, his life, he has now offended.

Like, if you look at anything that has a spectrum, whether it's gender, male and female, whether it's politics, whether it's religion, whether it's ethnicity, I'm like, he just touches them all up. I mean, every one of them. There's something about him that finds a way to touch every one of us. Jesus said, if the world hates you, know, that it has hated me before. It hated you.

What that means is this, is that Jesus offends absolutely everyone initially, including ourselves, because we all identify with and we all love a part of the world that is at odds with Jesus.

One of the things that you have to do to become a follower of Jesus Christ is you have to die to the part of your heart that identifies with or loves a part of the world that hates him.

And this is why there is not a single people group in all of the world that is more naturally displayed or more naturally friendly to the gospel initially. You can go today to the Middle east. You can go to India. You can go to Durham. You can go to anywhere in the entire world, your neighborhood, different sides of the street.

And you can find people who are offended at Jesus because there's something about the world that they identify with or love.

And even though everybody is offended at something a little bit different about Jesus, everyone, something about Jesus that is grand enough, that is mighty enough that he can offend everybody in every pod of the world that makes their love something that opposes and hates the creator. And so he's offensive to all kinds of people. The question is, well, why, but why is he like this? Why does this happen in the world? The second thing I want you to consider with me is that Jesus offends because he often rebukes what we want in a savior.

Every single person in the world, including myself, we come to Jesus to consider who he is. We look at him and we all come with preconceived ideas of who he's going to be and what he's going to be like. And sometimes there's the discrepancy. Every one of us, we come to listen to Jesus, and we all come to listen to Jesus with preconceived notions of what he's going to say. And if he doesn't say what we expect him to say, it causes offense.

This happens to me. I mean, I'm just Brian. I have no authority in anything. We just read the Bible and talk about it. He has all authority.

I have none. And yet, even in this message, and in particular, the closer we get to November, many of you are going to sit there and say, just say it. I need you to say it. Endorse this, condemn that. And when we don't hear what we want our savior to say, it causes offense.

And so notice verse two. Jesus, he's teaching, and the people, they respond, where did this man get these things? What things are they talking about? What they're talking about is wisdom. And they're talking about his might.

You see what they're saying? They're saying his wisdom, this wisdom and this might clearly didn't come as a product of Nazareth High School, right? Like, there's people who are there probably Sunday school teachers

and English and greek teachers and hebrew teachers and philosophy teachers. And like, I didn't give him that. I don't know where he found all these things.

Verse three goes on, is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary. And he says, and he's just a sibling of all these people that we already know. They're among our little people here. They're so unimpressed. So here's what I want to do.

I want to ask a question. What do we want in a savior? What does our flesh want? What do people around the world want? We may not want all four of these, but every one of us wants at least one of them.

And Jesus, he rebukes each one of these with his life and with his words.

It's four of them first. We all want a savior who looks heroic.

No one watches Superman hoping to watch Clark do newspaper work.

You go to a movie, Superman. And he never changes clothes and flies and does cool things. He just files newspapers. You're really disappointed. Why?

Because we all want the extraordinary, not the ordinary. And if we're going to have a savior, we need a savior that does amazing things, extraordinary things. And what Jesus has done is he has lived almost 30 years of his life before he began his public ministry living in Nazareth. And during those 30 years, he laid aside his divine abilities. They all had Daniel, chapter seven.

They all knew that the Christ was going to be a cloud rider. He was going to have authority and power and do all these extraordinary things. And they're looking at Jesus, and it says in Isaiah of him during this season of his life, he had no majesty, that we should look at him. They all looked and are like Jesus. At Jesus.

They're looking at him like, you were in the nursery. I changed your diaper.

You know, we have people here at Providence. They're just awesome people. They serve with kids, and they've served with kids for so long that they have now served kids and changed diapers to people who are now adults. They were kids, and now they're adults, and they will go up to them and be like, hey, did you know I ever changed your diaper? And just imagine one of these kids grew up and says, don't know if you know, but I'm the Christ.

You'd be like, I've seen parts of you that prove you're not. You know, he was in the nursery. He had siblings, real siblings. He used a hammer to make furniture. All ordinary.

Oh, he obviously did incredible miracles. But what they saw for so long was just so not heroic.

The second thing we want in a savior is someone who endorses our way. Many people, they come and they say, okay, tell me about Jesus. We tell them about Jesus and they say, okay, if I trust him. Can I keep doing?

Is he gonna endorse what I want to do, how I want to live, who I want to be? Or is he going to have the ability to say no to me? We aren't sure in mark six what he taught. We're not told in verse two what he taught, but his message everywhere has been the same. We found it in mark one.

The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel. Now, a lot of people around the world, maybe even in this room, find offense at Jesus when he looks at our life and he says, stop it.

That's killing you. It's stealing your joy. It's stealing your hope. It's stealing your life, your vitality. You got to stop.

I love you too much. This is why I'm telling you, you got to stop. Got to repent. People don't like to hear repent. Third, we all want to save you.

Who frees us from the ordinary? Who frees us from the ordinary? Every religion in the world outside of the gospel of Jesus Christ promises to release us from the ordinary into the transcendent, to leave common things and move to things that are uncommon, the physical to the spiritual. We're going to leave the ordinary to the extraordinary, the natural to the supernatural. The GoSpel of Jesus ChrIst does not promise to release us from the ordinary.

The GoSpel of Jesus Christ promises to transform the ordinary. He creates a new heaven and a new earth. And you go today to places not only then in the Near east, you go today to the Middle east. And what you'll find is this absolute opposition and offense to the idea that God, who is transcendent, would become a man who is ordinary, who would take on flesh, because every religion promises to take that which is ordinary and take it to that which is transcendent. And so Christ is a savior.

That's utterly different than everything that humans have ever invented.

The supernatural coming down to the natural God becoming a man, and that is exactly what he did. You can read about the new heavens and the new earth and how many ordinary things are there that have been transformed in these passages. But think about what Jesus did. Jesus comes to the earth, and he comes in an ordinary body. You could touch him.

It had skin. He sweat. He needed showers, just like you. He got dirty. Not only that, he did ordinary things.

Really ordinary things like. What are you talking about? Well, I'm talking about things like the creator of a day paid attention to daylight. He said, guys, it's getting kind of late. We should probably knock off for the evening.

God that's ordinary. He slept. He thought about meal preparation. How do we clean our clothes? I want to get to that side of the lake.

How are we going to get there? We're going to need a boat. That's ordinary. He had to walk almost 40 miles or he had to get almost 40 miles from. To Nazareth, from Capernaum.

How did he get there? He could have said, everyone get on my back, I'm going to levitate and just fly over there. No. What'd they do? They walked utterly ordinary.

Then he dies on a cross. He rises from the dead. And what does he do when he rises from the dead? To prove that he was really a man. He eats a fish.

That's ordinary. What does that prove? It proves that in the new heavens and the new earth, in our resurrected body, we're going to eat things like fish. That's ordinary. You read these passages and you find rivers and mountains and wind and stream.

You find singing and loving and working. But all these ordinary things will be utterly transformed and removed from all things that are broken and sinful. The fourth is we want a savior who needs our contribution or at very least wants it. This is one of the hardest things for us because our flesh wants to earn it. God says, you just can't.

I told you the first time that Jesus went into Nazareth, he told two stories about gentiles who had faith. And one of them was a man named. You can read his story in two kings, chapter five. Naaman was a syrian general, a commander. This is a really accomplished, really probably amazing person.

Really amazing person. And Naaman had leprosy.

The Bible talks about leprosy in two different ways. One, it's a real physical disease and he was really physically a leper. The Bible also talks about leprosy as a metaphor for our own sinfulness, that it starts really small and then it grows and takes over the whole and that it numbs until it kills the hole. And Naaman was a real leper. But he hears that the God of Israel can heal.

And so he goes and he travels to Israel with everything he thinks he's going to need, just in case salvation requires it of him. So he goes with a lot of money, just in case payment is needed. He goes with letters of recommendation, just in case a reference is needed, just in case a resume is needed. He goes with a sword, just in case an act of valor is needed. God sends his prophet and the prophet sends his messenger.

Elisha sends a messenger to him and he says, you want to be healed. This is what you have to do, you have to go to the Jordan. You have to wash seven times. And Naaman is offended. He's really offended.

And what he's offended at is the ordinariness of God's prescription for salvation. He says to Jordan, are you kidding me? We got cleaner everything in Syria than the Jordan. Jordan. He says, I'm not looking for charity.

I'm looking for a chance to prove what I have.

It's really interesting that his friends, his servants say to him, they say, Naaman, don't forget Naaman was commended for his faith. You're like, well, where's his faith? Well, his friend said to him, look, Naaman, if he asks you to do something absolutely amazing and great, wouldn't you do it? Wouldn't you try? He's only asking you to get into the water seven times.

Why don't we try that? And the Bible calls his agreeability faith.

You say, well, what does that have to do with us and the rest of the world? Well, what it has to do with us and the rest of the world is we all come to God infected and we all want a salvation that fits our ego. We all know or we assume, that if we get to contribute to our salvation, then we have rights. And with those rights we can help determine the course of the rest of our life. If you come to Christ and he is the one who saves you exclusively, then one corinthians, this is absolutely true.

You have been purchased with the blood of Christ and you are not your own. But if we contribute to that salvation, well, then he gets a say in my life and I get a say in my life.

And so Jesus looks at this and he says, prophets not welcome in his own hometown. Interestingly, his miracles slowed down. He chose, you see, Jesus did miracles in John, he tells us, in order to build faith, in order to create faith. But here in Nazareth, his hometown, he chose to limit his healing ministry rather than lay miracle upon miracle upon an unbelieving people who would receive increased judgment on the judgment day for what they received and still rejected. Verse six says he marveled because of their unbelief.

There's only two times in the whole Bible where it says Jesus marveled at something. One was at a centurion for his faith, the other is his hometown for their lack of faith. So two applications here for us before we move on. First, let me urge us to dig into our offense until we see our unbelief. Some of us are simply too lazy with

our sin and our offense at Jesus to really ask deeper, more probing, helpful questions.

We just say, I'm offended. And if I'm offended, I've offended my emotions, my sense of self. And that's the most important thing. It's not the most important thing about you, because we've all been wrong about our sense of self. At some point in our life, we've all changed who we thought that we were.

So clearly, that's not the authority of your life.

What? Instead, if we looked at our sin and we said, if I really want to get out of this sin, maybe I need to dig down into the soil and actually see where the roots are in unbelief. Same with our offense. I don't know if you know this, but every time there's a rebellion, or at least nearly every time that there's a rebellion in the Old Testament, God actually reveals the source of that rebellion. You remember, and they just give you two examples.

One time, all the people of Israel, they're about to go into the promised land. They're too fearful. They don't want to go in, so they refuse to go in. And God, instead of rebuking their fear, he says to them, how long will they not believe?

Moses is told to go speak to the rock to produce water. God's going to do a miracle instead. And his anger, he goes and he strikes the rock, and God doesn't rebuke him for his anger. Instead, God says, because you did not believe, friends, every sin in your life and mine and every opposition we have towards Jesus has roots that, that swim in the soil of unbelief. Every time there's a visible sin, a visible, felt, visceral emotion that is against Jesus, there is roots that go down, and those roots are drinking something that you're not believing that is true about Jesus.

If you dig deep enough into your worry, what you'll find is an unbelief in God's faithfulness. Tomorrow, if you dig into your unforgiving spirit, you'll find an unbelief in the amount of sin and the quantity of it that he has already forgiven you. And if, like the people of Nazareth, you dig into your rejection of Christ, you will find unbelief that obscures the obvious. They all knew that Jesus was doing amazing things. Jesus said in John five about these amazing things, these very works I'm doing, they bear witness about me, that the Father has sent me, I came from heaven.

They prove that I'm God. Nobody can do the things that I'm doing that you're seeing, that I'm doing. But instead of faith, they ask sidestepping questions. Some of us are somebody who does this or knows someone who does this. You have shared the gospel with somebody.

It is credible, it is honest, it is in front of them. And instead of believing, they keep asking questions that don't matter as much. See, here's the thing. If Jesus rose from the dead, you have to lay aside your offense.

He conquered the grave. If he did it, he conquered the grave. And if he conquered the grave, you have to lay aside your offense and stop asking questions. They're looking at him and they're like, how are these things done? Isn't it more important that they're being done?

The second thing is this is once you dig into that soil and you find that unbelief, let me urge you to repent. If you're a believer in Jesus, to repent of that unbelief so that you can continue to walk in belief. If you're an unbeliever, to repent and then put your trust in Jesus for the very first time. Matthew chapter eleven says, blessed is the one who is not offended by me. What you find is when you put your trust in Jesus Christ, defense begins to melt.

Just like this ice cube. Every one of us have some measure of icy unbelief within us about something that God has said. And what you find is that if you put your trust in Jesus and you begin to see what he does, suddenly that ice begins to melt. I don't know about you, but for me today, I'm not nearly as offended as I once was. In fact, now I'm no longer offended when he tells me to repent, because no one has ever proven himself more committed to my good.

And I'm not offended today that heaven will feature ordinary things because I've never enjoyed the ordinary with uncorrupted senses. And I'm not offended that I can't add to my salvation because I've never proven faithful. With however many chances that I get, I need someone else to do it for me. And he did. And I'm not offended that Jesus is the one and only way to heaven, because he's the one and only atonement for my sin.

You see, Jesus Christ, he looks down upon us and God says, every one of us have sinned and fallen short of his glory. Every one of us has created a debt that we don't have the moral capital to pay. But God almighty sent his son to the earth. He lived without any sin, so he had the moral capital to pay and he did so by giving his own life on the cross. He went to the cross.

He died on the cross for you and for me. He was buried in a grave. And on the third day he rose from the dead. And if you put your faith and trust in him and in him alone, he forgives you of all of your sin, and he gives you his righteousness, you're saved forevermore. Would you trust in him today?

The last thing I need to tell you is that. Which adds a little bit more challenge to the sermon, and that is that everyone who actually does repent and put their trust in him, Jesus followers will offend other people if we imitate Jesus. Up until now, Jesus has been doing all the ministry, but now it's time to send his own disciples on a mission trip. It says in verse seven, he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority. He also gave them instructions.

There were at least three kinds of instructions. One, he says, don't go with so much money that you can live

or stay on the outskirts of where the people that you're seeking to reach. You need to actually become dependent enough that you have to be humble enough in your interaction with those people to tell them the good news. Second, he says, I want you to live among the people and be among the people. Live in their homes.

Invite them into your homes. And third, he says, I want you to meet people's physical, emotional, social needs as deeply as you preach repentance. And then he gave a warning. He says, in spite of the way that you do this, no matter how much love that you exercise towards people, the truth that you offer, and that is that I'm the only way they cannot contribute to their salvation is going to offend, and you're going to have to shake the dust off your feet. Now that was a metaphor that basically said, I've told you the truth and you've rejected, and so I am going to leave, and you are responsible for what I told you.

It's important to notice that there are some differences between us and the apostles. These twelve apostles were given unique authority, okay? Like, they cast out demons, they healed people. It's probably not wise to go. Let's go do that this afternoon, okay?

You are not the twelve and neither am I. God gave them unique authority for a period of time to do these amazing things in order to authenticate the gospel that they would write and that they would speak. We're not the twelve. What does that mean? It means if you go home and write something down, it doesn't become the 28th book of the New Testament.

Okay? These notes, my notes, I wrote, right? This is not Bible, okay? This is the Bible. However, we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's the same Holy Spirit who has all the power that the apostles had. And what that means is that when we go out proclaiming good news and when we go out praying in the name of Jesus, and when we go out loving people, the Holy Spirit has the power not only then, but also today, to illuminate people's hearts and minds, to heal people physically of their sickness, to answer prayers, to set people free. He has the exact same power that he always has and always will. And so let's be faithful to Jesus whether we attract or offend Jesus. He spoke exclusive words, and those exclusive words like, I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the father except through me will offend.

But he also loved inclusively, which means that it didn't matter what category of people, what identity, group, doesn't matter old, young, male, female, skin color, doesn't matter where you come from. He loved everyone. And he calls us to imitate the same.

And as we love and as we speak, some will be attracted and some will be offended if we never offend, it is likely that we are not echoing Jesus truth. And if we constantly offend, we are likely not imitating Jesus love.

Now, where are we going to get the power to do all these things? Before we take the Lord's supper, let me remind you and show you one thing that I skipped over, and that is what I believe a tremendous insult in middle eastern culture. Still to this day, people are referenced as a child of a father. There's a society in the home where the father is leader. You look through the whole testament, it's always son of Abraham, son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of a man, son of Joseph.

What do they say? Isn't this the son of Mary? Even if Joseph was dead at this point in time, it still would have shown respect to Jesus by saying he still was the son of Joseph. And yet this was a small town. And in small towns you don't hide or forget when somebody gets married in one month and has a baby a month or two later.

That mattered back then. So when the people of Nazareth were saying, isn't this the son of Mary? They were saying, Jesus, you think you're so important, but we don't even know who your daddy is.

And Jesus received and lived with all of this shame, undeserved shame. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit through a virgin Mary. The people didn't know or believe that.

How unfair. And yet, nine chapters later, Jesus is going to be holding our sin as he goes to a cross. And what is he going to say? Father, why have you forsaken me? For a period of time, Jesus felt fatherless, and he endured all of that isolation and shame on that cross so that we could be accepted by it.

And to the degree that we, as believers in Jesus Christ, love what he's done for us, to that degree, we will be faithful to speak the truth and love in a broken, oppositional world. And he gives us, as followers of Christ, a way to remember these things. It's the Lord's supper, and we're going to do that now. So if he came in and you received a cup, in that cup there's some juice, and there's also a piece of bread. These are symbolic of Jesus body and blood.

And it's important that I would tell you that God almighty made sure that we know that this is a very serious thing that we're about to do and that it's possible to do it in a way that eats and drinks judgment upon ourselves. And we definitely want to avoid that. These are not the body and blood of Jesus. These are symbols. If you have not trusted Christ, I urge you to trust Christ now.

Repent of your sin, put your faith and trust in him, and then we urge you, invite you to take it. But if you're not quite ready to make that decision of faith, the Bible tells me, for your own good and protection, to urge you not to take it. For to take it is to tell other people that you treasure the realities behind these symbols. And second, he tells those of us who do know him never to take it until we first examined our heart. So what we're going to do right now is, before we give you an opportunity where you can just pray, we're going to sing a real short part of a short song that speaks about our sin is deep and his grace is even deeper.

So as we sing these as a church family, let me encourage you to think about them deeply, and then we'll have an opportunity for us to individually pray and confess our sins. Okay, let's sing.



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