

“MARY’S BOY”

MARK 6:1-13

July 8, 2018

Holiday Island Presbyterian Church

6 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ²When 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? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? ³Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, ^[a]Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

⁴Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” ⁵He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶He was amazed at their lack of faith.

INTRODUCTION:

**Growing up in a small oilfield town,
the son of the only doctor in town,
I was known as Doc Miller’s boy.**

**Oh, I had a name.
One the teachers called a little too often.**

**But to most of the adults in town,
I was simply “Doc Miller’s boy.”**

That title opened a few doors for me.

**For instance, I was welcome – and had friends - in Humble Camp;
a small village reserved for employees of Humble Oil Co.**

who were transferred to the area.

**Apparently, the executives at Humble thought our area was so poor
and so devoid of anything resembling a social life
they had to build a “camp”
for their employees and family.**

**I could also hunt a few places in Sugar Hill,
which had more moonshine stills than anyone could count.
Strangers – which were any outsiders -
- were never welcome there.**

**It was pretty much like the backwoods of Appalachia.
The people were very clannish.
If you weren't from there – you weren't welcome there.**

**If I identified myself as “Doc Miller’s boy”
I was usually allowed to hunt there –
- but with strict instructions which areas to avoid.**

But, being known as “Doc Miller’s boy” also closed some doors.

**At school, when it came to team sports,
the Humble Camp boys picked their own first,
as did the Sugar Hill bunch
and the sons of the roughnecks.**

**Since I was not “officially” part of either of those groups,
I didn't get picked very high on anyone's list –
- regardless of my abilities or lack thereof.**

**Although I was not truly “rejected”
I was not “included” either.**

Most of the time,

I was simply known as “Doc Miller’s boy.”
Identified by whose I was
rather than who I was.

REJECTION:

When Jesus returned to His hometown
He didn’t come home as a reunion
or to visit His family.

He came as a rabbi with His disciples
and began teaching in the synagogue,
as was the custom for visiting rabbis.

Since this was probably the first time
Jesus had taught His fellow townspeople,
what He had to say to them came as a shock and surprise.

They had never heard teaching like this.
Parables about *SAMARITANS*?!!?
Love your enemies?

This was new – and upsetting – stuff for them to hear.
The people couldn’t help but ask:
“Isn’t this Mary’s boy?”

We knew Him back when he hung around his father’s shop.
Never seemed to amount to much . . . sort of quiet.

Where did He get all these strange ideas?
And what is the source of this wisdom?
By what authority does He teach these things?

And healing the sick? Raising the dead?
Seriously?
How does the son of a carpenter get to do that?

“Isn’t this Mary’s boy?”

The phrase just drips with rejection.

And, indeed, Jesus was rejected.

Unfortunately,

**the people could not see beyond their own prejudices –
their self-created stereotypes –
- to see who Jesus actually was.**

To them, He was just the son of a carpenter.

Nothing more, nothing less.

And because of those prejudices - that rejection –

**- their lack of faith prevented them from receiving the love
and blessings that could have been theirs.**

**While the Godly side of Jesus probably expected to be rejected,
the human side had to hurt a bit.**

**You see, one of the greatest desires any of us have
is the need to be loved, accepted and needed.**

That need is part of our DNA

**because we were created in love,
to be loved and to share love.**

**Our Heavenly Father, the Good God of Creation,
created us out of love**

**to be loved by God and to share that love with God,
with ourselves, with other humans
and with all of creation.**

Therefore, one of the greatest fears – and deepest hurts –

**- any of us can experience or face
is the fear of rejection.**

It is the exact opposite of being loved, received and accepted.

**None of us like the feeling we experience
when we realize that we are simply not wanted.**

**We don't want to be left out,
we don't want to be picked last,
we want to be affirmed; to have value;
to be somebody.**

Sadly, part of the human experience is that we are at times rejected.

**Most of the folks I grew up with
simply categorized me as "Doc Miller's boy"
and nothing I did or accomplished
would ever let me out of that box.**

**Even when I had earned a doctorate of my own,
and returned home to officiate at my father's funeral,
I was still Doc Miller's boy.**

Jesus found himself in that same little box.

**He had come home to preach the gospel,
to heal the sick,
to offer forgiveness of sins and salvation.**

**But . . .
. . . since He was "Mary's boy"
none of that could happen.**

Mark, throughout his gospel,

**goes to great lengths to show
that Jesus performed miracles in response to faith.**

And the people lacked the faith.

**Isn't he the carpenter's boy?
Mary's son?**

Yes, and He is also the Son of God.

“REJECTING” JESUS:

**I don't think there is a person in this room
who would come right out and say he/she rejects Jesus.**

We have heard countless times:

**“In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God
and the Word was God; and the world came to be through Him.”**

Intellectually, we *know* that Jesus and God are one.

We know it in our heads –

- but . . . do we *know* it in our hearts?

All the things that are written about Jesus –

- His ability to heal and raise the dead**
- the hard sermons he preached**
- the boundless love He promised God has for each of us**

We've read those things

and we've heard sermon after sermon about them.

We may believe some or all of them.

But those were things for someone else,

all that happened a long time ago,

that has little to do with me or my situation.

**On and on we rationalize
and it isn't much different than saying:
"Isn't that Mary's boy?"**

**We *hear* that Jesus ate with outcasts and sinners and prostitutes,
but do we *really* believe we are included
in that forgiveness and boundless love?**

**We *hear* that Jesus was able to work miracles in the lives of others
but do we really expect that to happen in our lives?**

**We are guilty of making the same mistake
the people of Nazareth made:
we identify Jesus as one of us –
- rather than trying our best to be like Jesus.**

**We are guilty of reducing Jesus to a good friend,
a wise buddy,
a sage old teacher.**

**Although Jesus took upon Himself the robe of flesh,
and lived among us – as one of us –
- it amounts to rejection to see Him like us!**

**Our goal in life is not to make Jesus one of us!
The goal is to become more like Him!**

CONCLUSION:

**The disciples had difficulty in understanding who Jesus was.
Even though they had spent lots of time with Him.**

**At one point,
when Jesus had been telling them
that He and the Father were one and the same,
Phillip asked:**

“Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.” John 14:9-11

It is a tragic mistake for us to reduce Jesus to anything less than the Son of God; God’s own self in human form.

**When we reduce Jesus,
we also reduce the boundless love Jesus showed us,
we negate the power of forgiveness,
we miss the whole point.**

**You see,
we are never rejected by Jesus!
NEVER!**

**Jesus’ love for us is not predicated on who we are –
it is predicated on whose we are!
And if we have place our faith in Him,
we are His!**

**Oh, the world may still pick us last,
we may still be stuck in some small stereotypical box,
we may be judged by our accent
where we are from**

or the color of our skin.

But to God, we are absolutely precious!

In God's eyes, we are heroes on the way to glory!

We are absolutely unique.

We are loved beyond measure.

To the people of Nazareth, Jesus was "Mary's boy."

The question of the day is:

Who do you say He is?

PRAYER:

God of grace and boundless love, at time Your words and deeds were ignored, rejected, belittled, and unwelcome. Yet you continued to love us, forgive us, choose us. Remind us - often – of Your Good News, fill us with Your Spirit, and support us by Your gentle hands, that we may persevere in speaking Your word and living our faith.

Amen.