

Date : 7/12/2025
Theme : Servanthood in Mark's Gospel
Topic : Handling fears of preaching the gospel.
Passage : Mark 6:1-6
Key verse: Mark 6:6 (NIV) - *He was amazed at their lack of faith. Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.*

Introduction

Last week, we've learnt that Jesus commissioned His disciples to go and preach the gospel to the world despite the fact that they failed to believe in the testimonies of those who saw the risen Jesus, even though Jesus Himself had told them 3 times that He would die and rise again. To believe is a choice, and the disciples chose from that point on to believe in Jesus' commission. It was these 11 who made a world impact - preaching the gospel and making disciples who would continue even to this day and beyond.

However, preaching the gospel is not without challenges. Jesus Himself faced rejection from His own hometown. How would we have responded if we were in Jesus' shoes?

Jesus also didn't feel good about their responses either but He did not let their responses define Him nor His purpose. Instead, He continued preaching in other villages.

We shall explore the 5 challenges and fears that we face in preaching the gospel and learn how Jesus, our Servant King, handled these issues, so that we too may preach the gospel as He intended.

1. Fear of Rejection

We don't want to face rejection because it is a terrible feeling.

- a. **Jesus' example:** Jesus also faced rejection from those to whom He preached.
 - Jesus was rejected in His own hometown. In fact, He was there twice, and He was rejected both times. (Mark 6:6, Luke 4:29)
 - Jesus was also rejected many times by the religious leaders, who even wanted to kill Him. Yet Jesus continued to preach to them. (Mark 3:6, 11:18, 14:1)
- b. **Our wrong mindset:** "Don't preach to people who would reject the gospel."
- c. **The correct mindset:** Even those who reject the gospel need to hear the gospel.
 - Jesus' parable of the sower shows that the Word of God is given to all 4 types of hearers, including those who do not retain the Word, allowing Satan to take it away.
 - God desires no one should perish (2 Peter 3:9) and gives everyone a fighting chance to be saved.
- d. **Application:** We are to preach the gospel even to those who reject it.

2. Fear of offending others.

We don't want to offend people and risk sour the relationship.

- a. **Jesus' example:** Jesus offended even those closest to Him.
 - The people in His hometown were offended by Him. (Mark 6:3)
 - Even Jesus' own mother and brothers disapproved of Him and wanted to stop Him from preaching. (Mark 3:21)
- b. **Our wrong mindset:** "It is wrong of us to preach the gospel because we may offend people."
 - This is Satan's accusation - that we are doing the wrong thing by preaching the gospel. If we agreed with it, we would fall into Satan's deception and stop preaching the gospel.

- The gospel is God's message of hope and love for all people, desiring that none should perish. How can the gospel be a bad thing?
 - Why would some people be offended when we preach the gospel? Some may think that it is arrogant or intolerant for us to say that the Jesus is the only way and truth, to the exclusion of all others. But if it is the truth, isn't the gospel truly the good news? Is it really arrogant to say that God loves them and gave Jesus on the cross for them? Behind all these is Satan's work of blinding and deceiving people so that they don't believe and be saved. (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- c. **The correct mindset:** Our intention in preaching is not to offend people.
- Rather, we preach out of good intent, so that non-believers would not suffer eternally. This is God's heart and flows out of love, not hatred.
 - Which is better?
 - Preach and possibly offend people, but some get saved; or
 - Not preach, cause no offence, but people suffer eternal fire.
 - If a fireman offended his wife and one day she was trapped in a building on fire, would he say "My wife is offended, so I will not go in to save her"? No - he would do whatever it takes, to save her, even if she were offended by his rescue attempt.
- d. **Application:** We are to preach even if we may offend people, so that we may save some.

3. Fear of not getting results.

We feel discouraged when we do not see results and we think we are not good at preaching the gospel.

- a. **Jesus' example:** Even Jesus saw very little result at His hometown.
- At His first preaching in His hometown, Jesus had zero results. The people chased Him out and even wanted to throw Him off the cliff. (Luke 10:29)
 - Jesus returned to His hometown to preach again and His preaching even amazed the people, demonstrating wisdom, authority and power. Yet most didn't believe him and only a few sick people were healed. (Mark 6:1-6)
 - Jesus' responses impressed all the Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees and Scribes, yet none believed. (Mark 12:17, 28, 34)
- b. **Our wrong mindset:** "Preaching is only for those who are good or gifted. If I were not getting results, I shouldn't preach."
- Jesus showed us that preaching the gospel is not dependent on how good one is or whether one gets results.
- c. **Correct mindset:** We preach not because we are good or we get good results.
- We preach because it is our mission. The gospel is our message and preaching it is our life's purpose. The results will come from the Lord in due time if we do not give up sowing the gospel. (Galatians 6:9)
 - At Peter's first preaching, 3,000 were saved. (Acts 2:41). This was not because Peter was great, but he obeyed to preach, and God brought the harvest.
 - Stephen preached before the whole Sanhedrin but none believed (Acts 7:54). But Stephen's seed sowed into Saul, who later repented, committed his life to preach the gospel and many were saved. God is the One who causes the seed to grow even when we don't realize it. (Mark 4:27, 1 Corinthians 3:6)
- d. **Application:** We are to preach even when we do not see results, because preaching is our part, and the results are the Lord's part.

4. **Fear of hindering people from believing if we say the wrong thing.**

- a. **Jesus' example:** Jesus said many things that we might consider inappropriate, and as a result, some people did not believe.
 - In Jesus' first preaching in His hometown, He spoke against them for not believing Him. This triggered a negative reaction from the people. (Luke 4:28)
 - The rich young man was very sincere and in asking Jesus how to receive eternal life. Jesus gave a seemingly hard offer – to give away all his wealth and follow Him - and promised that he would receive eternal life. The man left away sad. (Mark 4:22)
- b. **Our wrong mindset:** "If we mess up, we will ruin their soul."
 - Jesus is never wrong. He speaks the truth, and those who believe will be saved.
 - Jesus' gospel is the truth, and those who believe will be saved. But the gospel can also be seen as foolishness to those who do not believe. (1 Corinthians 1:18)
 - Jesus offers eternal life, but it is a person's free will and choice whether to believe or not. (Revelations 3:20)
- c. **The correct mindset:** When we preach the gospel, Jesus has promised to be with us and work with me. (Mark 16:20)
 - God can still work even if we make mistakes. Those who reject the gospel at first may believe later. E.g. Jesus' own mother and brothers.
 - The gospel is simple and not complex doctrine. Anyone can learn to present the gospel and to do so with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15)
 - We share only what we know. What we don't know, we can find out from our cell groups, and return with an answer another time.
- d. **Application:** When I present the gospel, Jesus has promised to be with me and work with me. (Mark 16:20)

5. **Fear of not knowing who is a "man of peace" to preach to.**

We are concerned about who is a "man of peace" and thus hesitate to initiate a spiritual conversation.

- a. **Jesus' example:** Jesus knew who was not a "man of peace", yet He preached to them regardless.
 - Even after Jesus was rejected the first time in His hometown, He still returned to preach. Not even signs and wonders could cause most of them to believe. (Mark 6:2)
 - But this time, there were a few who believed and were healed. (Mark 6:5)
- b. **Our wrong mindset:** "I don't know who is a 'man of peace' to preach to."
 - Jesus sent His disciples out in pairs to look for the "man of peace" (Luke 10:6 NASB) – one who would welcome them. They were to first initiate the conversation and then see if people welcome them, not wait for others to initiate before responding.
- c. **The correct mindset:** I will initiate the conversation first, then I know if the person is a "man of peace"
 - "Looking for the man of peace" does not mean that we only preach after we know someone is such an one.
 - "Looking for the man of peace" means that God has prepared people who are opened to the gospel. We preach to whoever is willing to listen. If someone rejects hearing, we are not obligated to continue with that person. (Mark 6:11)

- d. **Application:** We are not guessing who is a “man of peace” before we preach. We initiate conversation first, and then we know if the person is a “man of peace”.

Application

1. What are the fears that I face about sharing the gospel?

- a. How can I overcome them? What mindset change is required?

2. Leverage this Christmas season to share the gospel.

a. Pray daily:

- **For myself**
 - Renew my life purpose to preach the gospel.
 - Ask for God's grace that I may overcome the fear and preach the gospel.
- **For others.**
 - Name list of 3 names in the 4 areas of influence.
 - Family and loved ones.
 - Neighbors
 - Workplace / School
 - Friends
 - Bind and cast out the spirit of blindness, deception and unbelief.
 - Pray for open doors and open hearts.

b. Initiate conversation for the gospel

- Qn: “Christmas is coming. How do you celebrate Christmas?”
- Qn: “Do you know the significance of Christmas?”
 - Ans: “It is the birth of Jesus 2025 years ago. But He has existed from eternity”
- Qn: “Do you know why Jesus is God's gift to the world?”
 - Ans: “Because God so loved the world.”
- “Let me share with you who is Jesus.” Share the gospel. (Use the Gospel Bridge)
- Share my testimony – how and why I became a Christian.

c. Invite

- For Christmas Service 21st Dec 2025.
- For Cell / Net Christmas party.