



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Matthew 1–13 Sermon Series

Supports Session 9: Loyalty Tested

Sermon Title: “Reception and Rejection” (Mark 6:1-29)

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### Connection to Session 9

In Session 9, the lesson explores how Jesus instructed His disciples to carry out their mission. Mark 6 provides a parallel account of the commissioning of the disciples, which is sandwiched between Jesus’s rejection at Nazareth and John the Baptist’s death. The implication is that the disciples should expect to face persecution and even death for following Jesus.

### Introduction/Opening

William Tyndale risked his life to make the Bible more accessible to the normal person. He left England because he was forbidden to translate the Bible from Latin into common English. After completing his translations of the New Testament and the Pentateuch, Tyndale was betrayed by a false friend who handed him over to the authorities. After more than a year in prison, Tyndale was strangled and burned at the stake for his actions. What drove him to risk his life for God? Would we risk rejection to follow Jesus and make Him known?

### Outline

#### 1. Jesus experienced rejection (Mark 6:1–6).

- a. One might expect that Jesus, for all the miracles He performed and the authority in His teaching, would have been welcomed in His hometown. Instead of being received with open arms, Jesus experienced skepticism and rejection. Those who were closest to Jesus distanced themselves from Him.
- b. The rejection of Jesus is the key issue in Mark 6:1-6, but one must note the reason for His rejection. It was because of the lack of faith, or unbelief, of the people.
- c. Jesus said, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown, among his relatives, and in his household” (v. 4). Those who watched us grow up often know more about us than those outside of our family and hometown. Maybe you know what it is like to grow up in a small town where everyone knows everything about everyone else. Jesus had grown up in Nazareth, and now he had returned to preach the coming kingdom of God. For the people in Nazareth, it was hard for them to reconcile that the One who worked as a carpenter in their town was not preaching like a prophet.
- d. If Jesus was rejected by those close to Him, we should expect rejection as well. As Jesus said in Matthew 10:24, “A disciple is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master.”

## 2. The disciples experienced reception and rejection (Mark 6:7-13).

- a. The commissioning of the disciples followed the rejection Jesus experienced in Nazareth. This should give us a clue regarding what the disciples would experience as well.
- b. Jesus granted His disciples His authority over unclean spirits and instructed them to travel light. The disciples were met with some measure of success, as “they went out and preached that people should repent,” and “they drove out many demons, anointed many sick people with oil and healed them” (vv. 12-13).
- c. Jesus prepared them to experience rejection and instructed them on what to do when their message was rejected. By shaking the dust off their feet, the disciples were indicating that the town had rejected God and was like the Gentile pagans rather than the people of God.

## 3. John the Baptist experienced rejection (Mark 6:14–29).

- a. Next, Mark included the narrative of John the Baptist’s death. John the Baptist appeared earlier in the Gospel as the forerunner of Jesus who preached repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:1-11). According to Mark 6:18, John had confronted Herod for a sinful relationship with his brother’s wife, Herodias. She held a grudge against John and arranged to have him killed at an opportune moment.
- b. John continued to preach the truth to Herod, even when it put his life at risk. John was already in prison (6:27), and Herod ordered John to be beheaded at the request of Herodias.
- c. When Jesus sends us out as His disciples on mission, we must be ready to receive rejection for speaking the truth. The narratives in Mark 6 help us see that if Jesus, His disciples, and John the Baptist experienced rejection for speaking the truth, we should expect to experience rejection as well. However, our success is not dependent upon people responding positively to the gospel message; our success is determined by our faithfulness to Jesus and acting as His ambassadors in the world (2 Cor 5:20).

## Conclusion

In 1 Samuel 8, Samuel spoke with the Lord about the people of Israel and their desire for a king. Samuel understood their desire for a king as a rejection of his leadership. In 1 Samuel 8:7-8, God said, “They have not rejected you; they have rejected me as their king. They are doing the same thing to you that they have done to me, since the day I brought them out of Egypt until this day, abandoning me and worshiping other gods.” If we follow Jesus, we should expect to be treated the same way He was. Our loyalty will be tested when we face rejection. Will we be faithful to the mission even when we are rejected?

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