

"A Prophet in His Hometown"

Mark 6:1-6

Please turn in your Bibles to Mark 6:1-6. We'll do it in a slightly different order. This evening. I'm going to read the text first, and then we'll pray and then we can be seated. As we continue now in our series in the Gospel of Mark. The evangelist Mark writes,

...He, being Jesus, 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 are such mighty works done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon and are not his sisters here with us. And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his relatives and his own household. And he could do no mighty work there, except that he had laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about the villages teaching.

This is the word of the Lord. Let's pray. Heavenly father, as we come before you to hear these words, Lord, I pray that we would see Jesus in the midst of this. We know that this writer is writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that he writes nothing in error. He makes no mistakes. And yet, Lord, he also doesn't just write perfectly. He writes in a way that directs us towards more understanding, towards doctrine, towards a good theology. And so, Lord, as we read, I pray, Lord, that we would see Jesus because we know that he is the end of all of our theology, dear Lord, that we would understand him better, understand who he is and his character, that we might worship him better, and that we would understand what it means for us, that we might be encouraged as we pursue him and seek to be conformed to him. I pray that that would happen tonight, that we would be conformed to Christ through the power of His Spirit. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. Please be seated.

Well, many of you have heard a little bit about my father. He's a naval officer who was a career Navy guy. A lot of people don't know he was born actually in quite a small town in Iowa, in southwest Iowa, not far from Omaha, Nebraska, right around Council Bluffs, a town called Sydney, Iowa, which at the time that he was being raised was about five hundred people, and I didn't check Wikipedia before starting this sermon, but I suspect it's just about five hundred and five people now. Um, he was the son of John Schaefer. Read I come from the line, a three man line of J. S Redd's. John Schaefer Redd gave birth to John Scott Redd, who gave birth to John Scott Redd Jr. So John Schaefer Redd was my grandfather and he was a lawyer in that town and was responsible for helping a lot of the farm contracts and also trying to help guys who got in trouble with the law.

Now, when my dad went off to the Navy, he hadn't actually ever seen the ocean before. He hadn't even been east of the Mississippi. He actually wanted to go to the Air Force Academy. He knew that, but there wasn't a slot there. He only had a slot available to him at the Naval Academy. And so he thought, well, I'll go do that instead. And little did he know, that began a

lifelong love of the ocean and of seafaring. And some thirty three or so years later, he retired as a three star Admiral. He had a brief stint in commercial business and then, because of 9/11, went back into the service of the country. Um, finally, actually after going to Iraq for a period of time, he ended up standing up the National Counter Terrorism Center, which is the place, if you remember, after 9/11, it was the place where all the dots were now supposed to get connected. You remember that was one of the problems in 9/11 that we didn't connect the dots. Well, the NCTC was where all of the intelligence gathering communities were supposed to come together. As a matter of fact, he had two. He had a desktop in his office that had two screens. One was the FBI, one was the CIA. And so he was one of the few places where those two networks almost touched. Okay, why do I tell you all this? Because a few years after that time, he was going back to Sydney, Iowa. He was driving out there with my mom and they got to a place right outside of Sydney, where there was a toll booth to get across a bridge, and he pulled up to that toll booth. And the guy sitting at the toll booth was kind of chatty. And he said, well, what brings you here? And my dad said, well, I'm from this town. I'm from Sydney. He said, well, what's your name? And my dad said, Scott Red. That's my name. And the guy said to him. He looked at him and thought for a while, and he said, are you John's boy? And my dad said, yeah, yeah, I'm John's boy. He said he thought a little bit longer. He goes, weren't you in the service? I said, yes sir, I was in the service. That's right. And the guy said, okay, I know you now, I know you. And so he waved him on, uh, to go back, passed through the toll booth. There's something sweet. My dad wasn't begrudged that he didn't know that he was a three star Admiral. He wasn't upset that he didn't know about the National Counter Terrorism Center. but there's just something about being from a small place, right? People, their worlds are confounded by the small place. They're bounded by the small place. And here is a place where my dad is not Admiral Red, but he's John's boy who maybe served some time in the service.

You know, we see something like that going on with Jesus here. Think about the events that have been taking place leading up to Mark 6. We've seen Jesus calm creation on his own authority. Stand up and say, peace, be still. We've seen Jesus command a legion of demons. It's an army of demons. Okay, if you could think, what do I not want to have against me? An army of demons. Okay? Jesus commands an army of demons. They don't try to fight him. They know they can't. They fall on their knees and say, why have you come to persecute us before the given time? All right. That that's a sign of complete victory.

Okay. Imagine a boxing match where you go out to box someone and your opponent comes out and drops to his knees and says, don't beat me too fast, right? Jesus is then healed a woman of her uncleanness, right? He touches her and that's all. Actually, she touches him. He doesn't even have to touch her. She touches him and is healed. And then he goes on and he raises a little girl from the dead. We've had a series of stories in which Jesus's glory is being revealed. It's being disclosed to us in more and more incredible ways. He's creator. He is commander of the heavenly hosts. He has power over all holiness and that he makes things holy that are not holy. Okay. No one can do that except God alone. Okay. He has power even over death. He commands it like it's a soldier in his arena, right? A soldier in his army. And then he comes to his hometown. I think Mark is like a very good author because he is he is giving us stories in

such an order that it drives us to a conclusion. We might start to get the impression from these previous stories that Jesus is some kind of Herculean hero. Maybe. Maybe he's some kind of theophany and not really a human at all. Maybe he's some kind of majestic apparition, or an angel who is walking around doing these great things. And yet every single one of the gospel writers makes this point. Jesus is truly God. He has the authority of God. He speaks with the power of God. He has touched us. The same thing that the touch of the finger of God would do, and yet he is very man. It's important that that phrase that you might hear that and you think, oh, that sounds kind of like Apostles Creed or Nicene, or that's like old English. What do we mean by very man? That means he is truly, verily, literally right, as kids might say today. For reals, he is man. He is human. John puts this right out front, doesn't he? John says, in the beginning was the word. The word was with God, and the word was God. And the word became flesh and walked amongst us. He's been clear on both points. This is truly God, and this is truly man. And this is incredibly important to the gospel because of what we read about this morning. Humanity brought about itself this terrible situation of the problem of sin and death and condemnation, and humanity had to get itself out of this situation. Our problem was so dire, our curse was so complete that no one but us. Okay, hear what I'm saying? Hear how I say this right? Let's just think this sounds like heresy. No one but us could get us out of it. It had to be a real human. It couldn't be God looking kind of like a human. It couldn't be a projection of a human that if you put your hand through it, it would go on one side and out the other. It had to be a real human of flesh and blood, born of a woman walking the earth, aging, growing in wisdom, growing in knowledge, having this experience being truly made in the image of God.

So often in the gospel we focus on the fact that Jesus is God. And that's of course, important because we know a lot of humans who aren't God, right? So we want to focus. What's unique about Jesus is that he is God. But we should never forget this. We are, yes, theocentric in our belief it is God centered. But we shouldn't forget that in Jesus's Messiah hood and the way that he is saving us, we are deeply anthropocentric. We are deeply man centered. It needs to be a human. He needs to be a real human who dies on the cross because he's taking upon himself the sin that real humans committed. Okay. It's not as if Jesus died for your sins. He's not a metaphor for dying for your sins. He's not a metaphor for God's forgiveness. He is really taking upon himself all of the judgment that you deserve as a sinful, rebellious person made in the image of God. He's taking it all upon himself in that day, that night when he says it's finished, guess what? It's finished. He swallowed it all up. All of the judgment for all of the sin you've ever committed. Up until that point in history, Israel and all of the sin that new Israel would commit. Following that, everyone united in Christ, every sin you'll commit, not just up until now, but for the rest of your life, has been swallowed up in Christ on the cross because he was real man who went to the cross and took upon himself all of that sin. And of course, in exchange, he gave us all of his righteousness and his reward. So what is it about familiarity? What is it about Jesus's humanity that made it a stumbling block for many people who engaged with him? Notice what Mark writes here. Mark writes that he goes back to his hometown where his disciples had followed him. He's on the Sabbath day. It's interesting, by the way, to point out on the Sabbath day, Jesus goes to the synagogue, which would be a normal practice. I want to say we can intuit a couple of things about this. The fact that Jesus and Paul and Barnabas and all of the early apostles usually start their evangelistic ministry in the synagogue

as important. Okay, we've got wonderful stories of them going out to Areopagus and going out to King Agrippa and speaking to the Gentiles, but they almost always start their ministries in the synagogue. Why do you go there? You go there because you know, there are people who are gathered there who are acquainted with the Word of God. There are those there who have heard the Word of God, and now they need to know the answer. The answer key, the epilogue. They need to know how it finishes. They've been reading Torah. They've been reading the prophets, they've been reading the writings. And now they need to hear Jesus show how it is fulfilled in his day. It's interesting. Jesus, when he goes, he often goes to the synagogue first. What's really interesting here is that he's given space to teach. Now we can put things together. Let me just be careful. This is speculation. But we know from the Gospels that Jesus would at times, even as a child, speak out of his knowledge and authority as a rabbi. Okay. We even know that he would go into the temple. I mean, that story about the his parents leaving and then having to go back and they find him as a little boy in the temple teaching the temple heads and the temple leaders, and they're all marveling at how this young boy could be so good at preaching the gospel or preaching the Word of God. You've got to assume that this was not a secret that Mary kept within her, but rather this got out. You know, we've got a gifted young man in our town here in Nazareth. It's quite possible that how when we see how Jesus has access to the synagogues around Israel, it gives some suggestion, perhaps, that he was known to be not just a carpenter, but a Rabbi. He was known to be a teacher of the Word of God. And so notice he's in the synagogue and he's teaching. And notice people are not saying, well, why would Jesus? He's saying, this is bad teaching. He's kind of boring. He doesn't seem to be getting it right. Notice no one is saying that. What are they saying? They are astonished. They are marveling because of his incredible insight into the Word of God. They're marveling at the way that he is teaching. Sounds like a mighty work. Okay, what is this wisdom given to him, they ask, how are such mighty works done by his hands? Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us too? Do you notice they recognize the truth of his message, but they can't square the truth with their small minded local hometown boundedness.

So this gets at our first issue with familiarity. Sometimes when something is familiar to you and something is coming out of your world not far away, and then coming in as an alien thing. Okay, sometimes it's easier for us to hear someone who's coming from far away and speaking into our world. But when we see someone who's coming from our world, someone we understand, whose origins we can point to, whose relatives we know, there's a, there's a tendency that we all have Of to kind of bind up their truth and try to pigeonhole it into. Something that's knowable, that's understandable. Okay. It's kind of like the gentleman at the tollbooth saying, I know, John. Are you his son? to my dad? Right. There's a tendency that we all have to say, well, I come from this place and I'm nobody special. So what makes you think you're somebody special? I think that's the beginning. Okay. Notice they recognize the truth. They recognize the power. They'd hear. They'd heard rumors of the mighty things that he has been doing. And you can imagine them sitting back and listening to him and saying, I know all these things. I know that he's done all of these great things. But I remember when he was just a kid, I remember when he used to play with Joseph out in the streets. How could he say something special? How could he have something to offer us? That's the first problem with familiarity. I think it's

hard for us to imagine that the same place that we come from could also produce something that is great or transcendent or truly salvific. And that's perhaps kind of understandable. But notice it doesn't stay there with them. The astonishment that they have hearing his teaching progresses even further, they say, is this not, by the way, let me pass on before I move on. Is this not the carpenter? I just want to add one other thing. It's interesting that word carpenter, you know, it means really a builder or craftsman. Again, reading between the lines, the way they're talking about Jesus here indicates that they know he came from Nazareth, but they maybe weren't that familiar with his face. Makes you wonder, had he just been there a year before or two years before? Okay. Or perhaps as a carpenter was Nazareth, his kind of home site. And he would go out to the coastline and into the interior. As a matter of fact, if you are a traveling craftsman, Nazareth would be. Nazareth would be a good base for you to work out of. It's possible that they remember him, but it is kind of a vague memory. Isn't this the son of Mary? And it's giving them opportunity now to pigeonhole him. But they don't just pigeonhole him. Look what happens in verse three. They took offense at him. We know you, Jesus. We know. We know your trade. You're just a craftsman. Both of the things they say there. Isn't this the son of Mary? And isn't this the carpenter? Those are both diminutives. They're trying to put him down. Now, does raise the question, of course, that we'd all like to ask. What happened to Joseph? Where's Joseph in this story? We don't know. It is a great mystery of the gospel. Joseph is around early on, but he disappears from the account later on. Some people suggest that perhaps he passed away. Okay. Some people suggest that something else happened. We don't know what happened to Joseph. Joseph. Maybe he's there. And it's just the gospel writers choose not to mention him, but even if he had passed away, the people would have said, isn't this the son of Joseph? If they were trying to speak of him in terms of his location and his status in the town, to say, isn't this the Son of Mary is to take away from him his, his kind of paternalistic, right, as it were. You just have to understand the time. They're okay. Even today in many, in many, uh, you know, Semitic, um, speaking cultures, you talk to, you mention or describe a person, someone's name would even be the son of so and so been something, right? Okay. Sometimes it's even the father of someone so and so. Right. Okay. Um, right. The father of so and so. Okay. But you rarely ever do that with the mother, so to say. Isn't this the son of Mary kind of putting him down? Isn't it just he's a carpenter? Why? Why is he in the synagogue? Speaking out of Torah. So this brings us to the next problem. There is this kind of difficulty just to think that something that is familiar to you could also be special. But any one of us who have gone back to share the gospel with a family member also knows that there's another element to this. There's a special difficulty about sharing the gospel with your family, isn't it? If they're unbelievers, the ones who know you before you were a Christian, the ones who maybe even changed your diapers when you were a little kid, the ones who had to feed you and had to make sure you were taken care of. And now you're coming back to me, and you're trying to tell me some spiritual truth about how to be redeemed in life, how to find true joy, how to be in relationship with God. I didn't start getting serious about my faith until I was about seventeen or eighteen years old. And I remember I went to college and I was growing in my faith. It was before it was the summer before going to college that I had sort of come back around to the faith of my youth, and I felt convicted. I had to go back to homecoming at my high school game, my high school homecoming game, because I had to go back and tell my friends

what had happened to me. And I remember going back. I even took another believing brother with me. I was like, I'm going to take somebody with me, so I've got some backup. This is going to be hard because they know me in a different way. And I remember going back and I remember walking up to that group and we started talking and they started talking and we started talking about the things we used to talk about. And I said, I'm a Christian now. And I remember just the look on their faces, right? Just shaking their head like, oh man, we know you, Scott. We know who you really are. You can imagine people who had seen Jesus grow up from childhood, even having some questionable upbringing, because some people would have known that maybe, perhaps his mother had been pregnant before they were married and perhaps knew things about him. They said, Jesus, we know who you are. There's a difficulty. There's a unique struggle that I know many of us have experienced. When you go to share the gospel with a family member who knows you and has seen you at your weakest. Of course, Jesus didn't sin. It's not that they saw Jesus before he was a Christian or something, but they saw him when he was weak, when he was a child, when he was a baby, when he was an adolescent. They thought, you don't have anything to offer us. I can remember one friend talking about going back and even years after he had become a Christian, and how he had a family and the family had grown up and the family was a family of believers. And he'd gone back to his parents and he'd and he told them about the thing that had changed him in his life. And they said, that's interesting, because we do notice there's something different about you. There's something different about your family. And he said, it's Jesus. And the family member said, no, I don't think that's it. Something else we can't quite put our finger on it because the gospel. Now that I know you think that's it, but that's not really it. You see, there's something difficult about sharing the gospel with family, because the deeply familiar has a way of building our pride and building up defenses against the gospel. And there's truth in that. There's truth in that reality. And we should take heart knowing that Jesus himself experienced it. Interestingly, notice some of the brothers who are mentioned here. For instance, James, who is mentioned here, will later be an apostle of Jesus and we'll write a letter. It reminds us that there's hope that even the gospel can break through the walls that are put up because of familiarity. We know that Mary will be there with him at the cross, that she'll be weeping as she sees her son fulfill his duties, and he'll even be able to tell John, take care of her. She's your mother now.

The gospel will cut through the familiarity. So first thing, familiarity can kind of bound us. It's hard to imagine that something great could come out of the same place that we came out of. Okay? Secondly, familiarity can blind us. It can it can it can delude us into thinking, well, we know who you really are. So why do we have to listen to the things that you're saying? But then lastly, I would point this out. And this is something that we all have to suffer from. So far, everything I've said is more of a problem for them. It's not a problem for us. There's something else about familiarity. Familiarity is becoming so knowledgeable, so clear thinking. Having such an inventory of theological ideas that the gospel becomes boring. And for many years, every fall, I would go to conferences at the Society of Biblical Literature, and they'd be held all around the United States. If you went to the international meetings, they'd be all around the world, and you'd go there and there'd be thousands and thousands of biblical scholars, many of whom maybe even most of whom know something about the Bible, that I don't even go even further than that. Many of whom know the Bible as a whole better than I do, and yet are

completely bored by it. It has no binding on their life. It makes no claims on their life. There's no transformation. They can they can cite, you can read, you know, mention a Hebrew verse to them from the Old Testament. They'll close their eyes and be able to recite it into Hebrew. And yet it's had no effect on their lives. I've sat in rooms where I'm talking to people. I'm like, I know you know God's Word better than I do, and yet it hasn't had any change on you. And when I mention the things about the gospel. Yo. Yeah, yeah yeah yeah. You see, we can become so familiar with the gospel, so familiar with the Word of God, that we actually get bored by it and we don't hear it anymore. That's especially true in cultures that are still very formed around the ideas of scripture, like the Bible Belt. Okay. There's a difficulty to being in a culture where everybody's a Christian. Okay. You know, when I lived in Washington, DC, if I would share the gospel with my barber, they would often say, I don't. I've never heard these things before. Okay. In Birmingham, when I share the gospel with my barber. brother. Oh, yeah. I'm a Christian. Oh, yeah. I've already got all of that. Okay. It's a part of getting your identity card in the South is to be a Christian, right? Now, of course, that's changing and we're all experiencing that change happen right now. But we should remember there's going to be new opportunities as that does change because some of the boredom, the familiarity with the gospel, that's false, by the way, because the gospel is never boring. But that sense of boredom that comes from enculturated religion is going to be peeled away, and you're going to start talking to people who have never heard these things before. And guess what? That looks a little bit more like the first century church. But we need to be careful. Familiarity can breed ecstasy. It's true. Getting used to worshiping together on a Sunday morning can increase our worship. But we should remember this too. Familiarity can also breed boredom and complacency. I want to encourage you if you ever find yourself getting bored by the teachings of the gospel. Pray. Start reading more authors. Start committing yourself to the scripture more. Look for the newness of it. Look for it to be fresh again. Because it is fresh, it is life changing. But resist that temptation to think that because you're familiar with it, you somehow have control over it or mastery. You never have mastery of the gospel.

Let me tell you this. As someone who actually, I was paid for about twenty years to just study the Bible. It's amazing. Okay, what a gift. It's like being paid for twenty years to learn how cars work and become the best mechanic you can. I got to do it. I've gotten to study it in all the different languages. You never get to the bottom of it. You never did hit the bottom. You study more and more and more and there's always more to know. It's like a balloon that inflates, right? The more you inflate the balloon, the more stuff that's not balloon the balloon touches, right? The more you learn about Scripture, the deeper and deeper and deeper you realize how little you know about Scripture. Keep digging into it. Don't let familiarity make you complacent. Perhaps the best thing you can do is this. Say, Lord, I pray that you would be real in my life, that I would truly see you and as a result, I would not be complacent, but rather my heart would cry out properly conform, conform me and conform my emotions and conform my heart and conform my spirit to recognize the truth about who you are. That I wouldn't be like those people in Nazareth who say, we already know this Jesus, but rather we would fall before him and say, my Lord, my God and my King. Now, what's interesting in this passage is a lot that's interesting about this. First of all, we see this. Jesus experiences what we experience. Jesus truly was a human. So much so that when people saw him who knew him, they said, yeah, we

know this guy. We remember when he was born. But Jesus continues to preach and to teach with authority, even when facing the wall of unbelief that comes from familiarity. I would point out one last thing here. Notice it does say that he marveled at their unbelief. Again, I think this is showing Jesus in his humanity. He seems like in his humanity, Jesus is kind of surprised. He's like, this is my hometown. Maybe he even kind of felt like, well, knowing what I know about humans and my humanity, okay, not Jesus in his divinity, right? But knowing what he knows in his humanity, he perhaps even came into town and thought, well, surely my hometown will receive me. And he's surprised by their lack of reception. It says that he marvels at them. He wonders at it, says, huh? Look how they've responded and as a result, because of their lack of faith, he does not do many miracles there. Now, I think we need to be clear. Jesus is not bound. He's not. He's not unable to do things if there's not faith in the building, if there's not faith in the city, doesn't mean that he's unable to do things. He can do whatever he wants. He can calm the wind and the waves with his own words. Okay, wind and the waves don't have to have faith or something for him to do that. And yet what we're seeing here is this that Jesus power is not a kind of magic that draws off of faith. He's not like Santa Claus who can fly in his sleigh if people just believe, right? That's not what Jesus is like. Jesus is saving the faithful. And there weren't many faithful in this town. There weren't many sheep, to use John's language, who hear the shepherd's voice and respond like that woman with the passage of blood. Okay? Or like the paraplegic who's lowered down from the roof, there aren't many sheep who hear the shepherd's voice, and as a result, he doesn't do much work amongst them. He does do some, but it's not like he had been doing in the countryside. You see, the familiarity had bound up their hearts and made their eyes blind. And yet, as the passage continues, we see that this does not hold Jesus back. But he continues preaching and teaching and having effect in his ministry. I want to just point this out as we talk about the power of familiarity to blind us to the truth of the gospel. I just want to talk about a solution. What then can we hope for with our family members? What can we hope for with our friends who have known us since we were kids? They knew what we were like before. What can we hope for for ourselves, who are often blind and made dull and made complacent by a familiarity with the gospel? We have two great causes of hope. The first one is the sense of God's reality in every one of our lives. Okay, I'll tell you what I mean by that. Remember what Paul says in Romans chapter one. He says, even though everyone knows who God is, they did not honor him or glorify him, but rather their hearts became darkened and their thoughts became futile. Do you remember that in Romans one where Paul says this, it's a very important verse? Okay. We see this elsewhere in Scripture. In Ecclesiastes it says, don't you know that everyone within them has eternity? Okay. Most theologians recognize that this means because you are made in the image of God, no matter who you are, whether you follow Jesus or not, you recognize this kind of sense of the divine. Okay, you recognize that God exists. You may not admit it to yourself. You may press it down deep, you may suppress the truth. That's what we do in our sin. But at some level, you know it. At some level, these family members, these neighbors around Nazareth, the ones who said, Jesus, we take offense at you because we know you. At some level. They also realize exactly who Jesus is, that he is the revelation of the father, second person of the Trinity, the word made flesh. They recognize the truth of it just like the demons do, right? Why have you come to persecute us before the given time, O son of the Most High? They know who he is. Don't you

think humans made in God's image also know. Those family members who say, we know you don't try to put on your big boy religious pants and tell me about the gospel. At some level, they know what you're saying is true. They may never admit it. But here's the thing you can do with confidence. You can keep just pushing on that sense of the divine that they have. Keep pushing on it. They may say I'm annoying. Don't you know I'm not a believer. I'm an atheist. You go, I hear you, I hear you, brother. I hear you, sister. And just keep pushing on that button, right? Because at some level, they know it's true. As a matter of fact, if you want to know more about the sense of the divine, okay, this is actually a doctrine that comes out of church history.

Come back to that. Biscuits in Bible Talk on Saturday at eight thirty. Grace Sutanto, who is a scholar in Calvinist theology, is going to be talking about John Calvin and another guy named Herman Bavinck, who some of you may know about, but he's had kind of a heyday of late, a little bit of a renaissance over the last ten years. Herman Bavinck, a Dutch theologian, Tim Keller called Grace Sutanto, Corrie Brock and James Eglinton of Saint of Edinburgh University. He called them the Bavinck mafia. Okay. Um, in late in his life, uh, Keller committed himself to the study of Herman Bavinck. If you want to hear from Grace Sutanto about this idea of the sense of the divine. Come back on Saturday to Biscuits and Bible with Birmingham Theological Seminary. But that's one thing that we can find hope in. That's a solution to the problem of familiarity. Everyone, no matter how complacent they act, has this sense of divine. What's the second one? What's the second part of the solution for us? The Spirit of God, the Spirit of God, can cut through the greatest addictions. It can cut through the greatest spiritual blindness. It can cut through the strongest sense of familiarity and superiority. The Spirit of God has a way of melting down walls and opening blind eyes. As you're talking to those friends, you may not see the result of your gospel planting, but what do you do? Just like the sower, You plant the seed, you go home. You go to bed. Let the spirit do its work.

I've seen decades long family members being witness to and witness to and and it's not until late in life that finally the spirit pops through and breaks in, shining a light within their hearts so that they come to faith. Okay. Jesus was not daunted. It's interesting, he marvels. He marvels at their complacency, but he's not daunted by their complacency. He knows that the sheep hear his voice, and they will in time. If they are the sheep, they will respond to the shepherd. We can find hope for ourselves in this as well, because we live in a Bible. Many of us come out of Christian families, grew up at Briarwood or perhaps at another church. Grew up in Birmingham. The Bible is familiar to you. You're used to going to Bible studies. That's not a strange thing to be invited to a Bible study. You know, in some parts of the world, that's a very strange thing, that you spend some time with a group of people during the week studying the Bible. But for many of us, you're used to that. If you start to feel the creep of familiarity and complacency. Pray spirit like David this morning. Spirit, invigorate me. Wash my soul, wash my heart. Restore to me the joy of my salvation. Or, as the psalmist says in one thirty nine, Lord, show me the complacent ways within me. Lead me in your faith filled ways. Your everlasting ways invigorate. Create in me a new heart that desires you. That's our hope. Jesus wasn't daunted, and neither should we be. Let's pray.