



A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

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“A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” (Mk 6:6)

Like most Christians, I aspire to be like Christ. I know I have a loooooong way to go, and any progress I make only comes through the Grace of God, but I work at it. I doubt I’ll reach a Christ-like state in this life -- I’m just too broken.

But there are times when **I really identify with Jesus**. Today’s Gospel is one of those moments for me and probably for a lot of us. Jesus returns to his hometown, and it doesn’t go well. He reminds us that “A prophet is not without honor **except in his native place** and among his own kin and in his own house.”

Most of us have been there. We may not be big “P” Prophets — or small “p” prophets for that matter — but we know things. We have experiences, insights, and gifts from a loving God who calls us to share those gifts with the world. Put another way, “We got some skills.” Yet, we have all experienced those moments when we are not accepted. Particularly, when speaking difficult truths, and especially when we are speaking to people who know us.

Prophets, by nature of the role, call us to act differently. I’m no scripture scholar, but I can’t think of a single exception to this rule. Perhaps there is a book of the Bible lost to time from the *Prophet Enoch the Encourager* that says, “*Hark ye all, for God is pleased with thee. Carry on just as thou are!*” I doubt it, though. Prophets hold us accountable, which doesn’t play well in places where people remember the person before they were a *prophet*.

Christ in his own humanity shared in this home-town shamming. Can you imagine if social media was around in Biblical times? Even Christ might have faced the barbs of lesser demons known as internet trolls.

Jesus: “You should forgive your brother seventy-seven times...(Mt 18:22)”

Guy in the Crowd: “Bro, aren’t you the guy in this video flipping over tables in the temple? #tableflipper #grumpysavior”

Woman in the Crowd: “*Yeah, yeah, I get you’re a prophet now, but when you were twelve didn’t you run away from your parents for three days on that trip to Jerusalem?*”

Christ’s ability to back up his words with divine authority and perform powerful miracles wasn’t enough. The people in Nazareth, his people, still didn’t buy it. Welcome *home* folks, where change is always suspect even when it comes from the Savior of the World.

I feel a great connection to Christ during this Gospel passage. He spoke truth yet was rejected. Mocked by the very people He came to save. We have all probably had a similar experience sharing an idea at a work meeting, offering wise counsel to a child only to be ignored. It's happened to me, and it's frustrating. It was frustrating for Jesus too! But He wasn't discouraged, and never quit. "He was amazed at their lack of faith..." perhaps he even found their lack of faith disturbing. So, he left. Not out of malice or spite. He didn't curse all who were there, plague their lands with drought, or use the force of His divine authority to prove his point. He just recognized it was time to move on. He carried his message to other places.

On our journey to be more Christ-like we will likely face rejection and challenges. We may be prepared for those challenges to come from strangers, but when those criticisms come from within our inner circle our own people it's harder to navigate. Being like Christ may mean being rejected by people who have known you the longest, called you friend, been a mentor, even your own family. It hurts. This reading reminds us that Christ experienced that pain too and chose to persevere. Jesus knew that God brings about great things... in God's time (Kairos) not ours. Jesus carried on, despite the disappointment of not being accepted by his own people. We too are called to keep at it. We have to keep trying, keep spreading love, and fostering reconciliation in a world full of hurts.

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