***Matthew 13:53-58 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. 54 When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? 56And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?” 57So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.” 58Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.***

This past Sunday, we celebrated the Savior’s Resurrection. As we emerge from this Holy time in the Christian Faith, we’ll examine belief over the next several weeks. Coming out of this Holy time, there is no greater determining factor in our walk with Jesus than the Belief we place in Him. Belief determines how deeply we’re willing to surrender, how far we’re willing to submit, and how joyously we’re willing to serve. Small belief, small surrender. Great belief, great surrender.

Let’s look at this word belief for just a second. It’s such a common word. I believe I’ll watch a little TV. I believe your sister is calling. I believe those were the best brownies I ever tasted. It’s become a throwaway word just like love in our world today. But Jesus says in John 6:28-29 that belief is the only way we can work the works of God. *Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”* How do we serve? God says all the roots are found in belief. Our service to God reveals our belief. Well, where did this word belief come from? It’s a compound word rooted in Old English – Be (a state of existence) and lief (meaning love). Belief – to be in love with. When we believe, we declare our love. Believing in Jesus is loving Jesus.

Verse 53 - *Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there****.*** Jesus finished the parables He was teaching to the multitudes: the Sower and the Seed, the Wheat and the Tares, the Mustard Seed, and so many others. He now departs.

Verse 54 - *When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?*Now, we know that He journeyed to His own country, Nazareth. And He enters their synagogue. And the verse says that they were astonished! Astonished at His wisdom. Astonished at the mighty works they’d heard of. They were amazed! And many today are amazed and astonished hearing of the miracles of Jesus. They are amazed at His Wisdom and His Mighty Works, but are they in love? Belief is being in love.

Verses 55-56 the people say this - *Is this not the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? 56And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?”*The people begin to explain away, to diminish the person of Christ. Just as we do today. Oh, we say it a different way. Boy that was lucky. Wasn’t that a coincidence? I had the very best doctors. I guess all the tests were wrong. This can’t be Jesus. If we go all in that He is the Son of God, then that means we must go all in in service. We must be in love with Him… and modern day people can’t have that. It interferes with our worldly desires. We might have to forego a bigger house, a newer car, hold our children accountable. Belief in Jesus has a cost! Discipleship, true discipleship, comes with a cost.

Verse 57 starts - *So they were offended at Him.* How did the people react to the opportunity to believe… to be in love with? They were offended, greatly displeased, scandalized. They rejected Him. His hometown, His nation, and today, the world He created rejects Him.

Verse 57 ends - *But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.”* A prophet is nowhere less esteemed than in his own country and among his own people. How sad the missed opportunity. And we have the same issue today. We’ve grown so used to the words we hear in church, to the lessons we’ve learned from the Bible, the resources and opportunities we’re presented day after day, that we fail to honor and magnify the Savior. Churches have grown cold and callous to the mighty works of God and the guidance of the Bible. Wisdom has been replaced by worldview. Be in love with Jesus for an hour on Sunday, as long as it doesn’t interfere with the things of this world.

Verse 58 - *Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.* Mark 6 tells us He marveled at their unbelief. The people clearly know of His mighty works in other places – so they knew of His power to perform miracles. What’s the difference? Belief, not in His ability, but in His identity. They believed He could do mighty things. They failed to believe in His Divine Mission. That, my friends, makes all the difference. Do we believe in Who He Is?

This morning, are we in love with Christ’s mighty works or His Divine Mission? What is the state of our belief? Are we existing in a state of love for Him? The tomb is empty, the stone rolled away. Are we only astonished with all we’ve heard or are we in love with Christ and surrendering to His Divine Nature, submitting to His Divine Call, and serving His Divine Purpose? We can only walk in His Divine Mission from a place of belief. Who will we choose to be in love with today?