



# World Christian Fellowship

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## 1<sup>st</sup> Response to Jesus Unbelief!

### Matthew 13:53-58

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

**Chapter 13**, Kingdom Parables were spoken.

**Chapter 13**, Jesus says how the world is going to react to them. What it's going to be like out there as they labour and minister in the harvest.

Jesus is through with this element of their training, and it is time now to move out.

From this passage at the end of 13, through the beginning of 16, we find Jesus out now in the harvest, proclaiming the message as the rejected King, still calling men to come to His kingdom.

The major mark of this period of time of the King's rejection until His return to be received in power and glory.

During this period mixed good and evil will remain here in this church age.

To illustrate this, Matthew gives us from **Matthew 13:53 till Matthew 16:12, eight incidents** in the life of our Lord which illustrate the kind of response that there will be to the King.

They are masterfully presented.

Open your heart and mind to see what the Holy Spirit was really doing in this section.

Unbelief is something you determine. You will not believe.  
Doesn't matter what the evidence is, we don't believe.

## **1. Unbelief hides the evident.**

**V 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?"*

A dumb question.

**Where do you think supernatural miracles come from?**

**Where do you think divine wisdom comes from?**

A child knows the answer to that.

But the nature of unbelief makes the choice to reject, and then hides the evidence.

Nicodemus knew it well.

**John 3:2**, *This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."*

**Who are the defences of the deity of Christ?**

You may answer it is His disciples true but then there are another group which defended Him.

It isn't His friends, His disciples, and the church that affirm that He did these miracles, but it is His enemies.

**John 21:25**, *And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.*

**John 20:30**, *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;*

Repeatedly in the gospel of John, Jesus says, *“My words and My works are sufficient to prove to you who I am.”*

**John 5:36**, *But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.*

**John 8:37-38**, *“I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. <sup>38</sup>I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.”*

**John 10:37-38**, *If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; <sup>38</sup>but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”*

Jesus enemies didn’t deny the miracles.  
They didn’t deny His wisdom.

**What is the one thing of all things that a Jew knew came from God?**

They knew that wisdom comes from God.

They knew the fear of the Lord to be the beginning of wisdom.

Yet what did they ask?

Where does He get all this wisdom?

Jesus taught them about

- Regeneration,
- Worship,
- Sin,
- Salvation,
- Evangelism,
- Judgment,
- Heaven,
- Hell,
- Fasting,
- Praying,
- Giving,
- Marriage,
- Divorce,
- Murder,
- Adultery,
- Hate,
- Anger,
- Stealing,
- Lying,
- Loving God, Family, Friends, and enemies,
- Money,
- Possessions,
- False doctrine,
- False teachers,
- Obedience,
- Discipleship,

- Grace,
- Life and death,
- Humility and Pride,
- Persecution,
- Church,
- Freedom, and bondage,
- Faith, and unbelief,
- Satan and evil,
- Hypocrisy,
- End of the world,
- Rewards, and
- He taught about everything they needed to know.

No man could ever even catch Him in His words.

They knew it came from God.

### **Where does He get this power?**

From God.

They had experienced so many miracles, yet they wanted more!

It is not a lack of evidence.

**John 3:18-19**, *“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup>And this is the condemnation, that the light has come*

*into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

**Why don't they believe?**

It isn't lack of evidence, but it's love of evil.

**How can I prove to my friend that Jesus is God?**

**How can I prove the Bible is true?**

They keep asking for more.

The issue is not lack of evidence but the love of evil.

**What was the problem was in Nazareth?**

They loved their sin.

They didn't want Christ at all.

**2. Unbelief builds up the irrelevant.**

After they have blurred out what is patently obvious in the presentation of the gospel message, after they have willingly refused to see what is clear, they will then attach themselves to something that is totally irrelevant. Press that to divert you from the real issue.

Maybe you have brought someone to church, and as you are going home or as you spend time with them, you present Christ to them, and you get comments like this.

- They weren't very friendly.
- I didn't like the seat.

- The guy in front of me kept moving his head, and I was disturbed.
- The guy is too loud who preaches there, or too long.
- I will never go back there again.

They build up this big smokescreen of that which is irrelevant.

**The real issue is what about your eternal soul?**

**What about the claims of Jesus Christ?**

**What about the gospel of the kingdom?**

Not about the pew, or the length of the sermon, or the looks of the preacher, or the whatever.

Unbelief diverts itself off the main issue.

It is settled on self-justification, and it moves to that which is irrelevant.

You can tell a true seeker from one that isn't.

When we present the gospel, and they say ask the following questions.

**How do I make that my own?**

**How do I appropriate the gospel?**

**How do I really know the resurrection is valid?**

You present the evidence. You can tell that from the person who just doesn't believe any of it and wants to divert you from

that which is the real issue at hand and get you off onto all kinds of other stuff.

The Jews thought that they had already attained to the kingdom of God through their legalism. They weren't willing to back up and confess their sinfulness and accept Jesus Christ.

They could not accept that anybody from their town could have arisen to such power.

They just wouldn't accept that somebody from their community could have gone higher than they did.

There was a

- pride,
- jealousy, and
- envy issue.

All bound up in their evil hearts was unbelief.

**V 55-56**, *Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? <sup>56</sup>And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?"*

*"Is not this the carpenter's son?"*

**What does that have to do with the truth of what He said?**

The fact that His father was a carpenter has nothing to do with it.

*“Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers, aren’t they James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas?”*

**James**, the one who later became the head of the Jerusalem Church and presided at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.

**Joseph**, obviously named for his father.

**Simon**, not to be confused with Peter.

**Judas**, not to be confused with Judas in the apostles.

*And His sisters are not all of them with us?*

Jesus was just the son of the carpenter.

Joseph, the father of Jesus was a common labourer.

How God dignifies common labour by bringing the Messiah into such a family.

When His father died and Joseph was unnamed here, which may mean that he was dead by this time. Jesus had taken over the business before He began His ministry.

Jesus can’t be anybody special and we know His family.

**What an irrelevant thought?**

**What does that have to do with His message?**

**How does that in any way, shape, or form impact the fact that He did miracles?**

## **How can you use that to explain away the fact that He raised the dead?**

It is irrelevant.

His family is not the issue, but it is so typical of unbelief. It will find something that doesn't matter, and attach itself to that, and make that an issue, and divert you.

Now they want to get into a discussion about whether He has got the family credentials. How silly?

**Mark 6:3**, *Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him.*

*"Is not He a carpenter?"*

Not only did He not have the right family, but He just didn't have the right kind of trade.

He was just a common person.

His brothers were just His brothers.

His sisters we know them. This can't be anyone special.

It is hard for us to understand as Christians how they could just ignore this mass of miracles, and this tremendous teaching, and just get stuck on this issue. But that is the character of unbelief.

Apostle John records in his Gospel Jesus's second visit to Jerusalem.

**John 13:14-15**, *Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. <sup>15</sup>And the Jews marvelled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"*

He hasn't been to the right school.

He doesn't have his degree.

They have all these false criteria.

So, they ignore His words and His works. They disqualify Him because of a lack of credentials.

They did the same thing to the Apostles.

**Acts 4:13**, *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.*

**How can these uneducated from up in northern end Galilee know all this?**

They divert to that which is totally extraneous to the issue.

*"Is not His mother called Mary?"*

Indicates that they perceived Mary as an ordinary person, certainly far less than some perceive her under the term “the queen of heaven.”

She was just very common.

*“And His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas.”*

Jesus certainly is being connected to them in the family.

There are some who would like us to believe that Mary never had any other children.

The Roman Catholic Church calls it perpetual virginity. But that is against the obvious indication of this text.

They would say that perhaps they are using the word “brethren” here in some kind of a religious sense.

These are the enemies of Jesus. They are trying to debunk Him to discredit Him. They are trying to do it by showing that He comes from a common family.

Mary did have children.

**Luke 2:7**, *And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

Luke says firstborn the implication of that is that there were others that followed.

They are even named.

**Matthew 12:46-47**, *While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. <sup>47</sup>Then one said to Him, “Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.”*

**John 2:12**, *After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.*

Mary, very ordinary woman of great godliness, but not supernatural. The brothers and sisters, very ordinary people.

**With this kind of family, from where then this man got all these things?**

- He doesn't have the heredity to pull this off.
- He doesn't have the training.
- He doesn't have the education.
- He is not from the elite.

Jesus' birth to His ministry except His encounter with religious leaders when He was 12, there are no other records we find in the Gospels.

There are very many fanciful stories about the time of our Lord when He was from His childhood to thirty.

Some have tried to tell us that He was manifesting His deity in wonderful ways.

- He as a little boy, would walk down the road, and He would find a bird with a broken wing, and He would stroke its wing, and then it would fly away.
- Or He would find a calf with a broken leg, and He would heal its leg.
- Or He would find a little child that was ill, and He would heal the child.

They sort of have Jesus going through these thirty years doing all kinds of miracles here and there. But this text militates directly against that.

The problem the people in Nazareth is very simple. They cannot relate the Jesus they are seeing now to the Jesus they knew for the prior years, which indicates that there was nothing about Him that went beyond that which was human, in the sense of overt acts of deity.

He was perfect.

He was sinless.

But there are no indications that He demonstrated divine power during that time.

When Jesus became man as in **Philippians 2**, He humbled Himself, He took on Himself the form of a servant. In every sense, those years were lived in the confines of His humanness.

Sinless but not with manifestation of divine power.

That's why they didn't make the connection.

They knew Him as a carpenter.

He is the son of Mary, and the brother of these men and these ladies. This is not anybody, any special person.

This indicates that there were no indications during that period of the manifestation of His deity. Their confusion initially was based on His commonness.

They drag out the commonness of His life as if it were the issue.

**V 56, *Where then did this Man get all these things?***"

They asked the right question, but they will not believe the right answer.

They are unbelieving in spite of the right question. The one thing they can't believe is that it's from God, because He is too common.

Because they can't live with the fact that one of their own should be so anointed above His fellows. Hard for people to handle that.

### 3. Unbelief blinds to the truth.

**V 57**, *So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country and in his own house."*

*"They were offended at Him."*

The word "offense," *skandalizō*, scandalized, they stumbled, simply means there was a wall.

They just stumbled over it.

They couldn't handle it.

This couldn't be the Messiah.

They were offended by His background.

They were offended by His commonness.

They were offended by the fact that He came from their town.

They were offended by what He taught too, because He must have unmasked their hypocrisy and spoken to them in true terms of entrance into the kingdom.

They were not neutral. They were adamantly antagonistic and bitter toward Him.

**Matthew 7:14-15**, *And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; <sup>15</sup>For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'*

**1 Corinthians 1:23-28**, *but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. <sup>26</sup>For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. <sup>27</sup>But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; <sup>28</sup>and the base things of the world and the things*

*which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,*

### **Why wouldn't they believe?**

Because they were not ready to have the sin revealed.

It isn't more proof that people need, it is a willingness to abandon their sinfulness. Demands that ploughing of the hard soil that is the preparation work of the Spirit of God.

Sometimes God will use us as tools to help in that ploughing process. But until that is done, and they are willing to break with their sinfulness, there can be no believing, there can be no seeing, there can be no understanding.

Israel, "They were broken off by unbelief," not because the facts aren't there, but because there is no willingness to deal with sin.

So, our Lord is giving us a beautiful illustration, and to the disciples as well, that when you go out into the world in this era of the kingdom, in this mystery form, you will hit unbelief, and this is how you can recognize it. Only those who believe will understand.

**John 8:31-32**, *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples*

*indeed. <sup>32</sup>And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

It is only those who show a willingness who will understand. The heart must be open.

### **You remember the story of Lydia, in Acts?**

It says, "whose heart the Lord opened, and the gospel message came." That's the pattern.

**V 57**, *So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country and in his own house."*

A proverb. He was saying, in a sense that He is fulfilling a proverb. All experts are from out of town. Nobody can be an expert from our town. This is just Him, it's nobody special."

You have fulfilled the proverb by rejecting Me.

**John 7:5**, *For even His brothers did not believe in Him.*

Even in His own house, they didn't believe in Him, which again demonstrates that there was a tremendous amount of obscurity in those years.

It also demonstrates the typical human envy and jealousy, even within His own family.

He was just nobody.  
There was no honour in His own house.  
He was just older brother.  
There was a lot of jealousy and envy.

**Deuteronomy 32:20**, *And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, For they are a perverse generation, Children in whom is no faith.*

#### **4. Unbelief blocks the supernatural.**

**V 58**, *Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.*

God through Christ did many mighty works.  
Many of them were done in response to a person's faith.  
Some of them were done where there was no faith exercised.

Many of Jesus' miracles were done where there was no faith.  
For example, when He raised the dead, you can believe there was no faith on the part of the dead.

When He cast demons out of demoniacs, there was no faith on the part of the demoniac.

There are times when He acted in response to faith.  
There are times when He acted where there was no faith.

But He acted sovereignly, with or without faith, in terms of His healings and His dealing with people.

But while faith then is not necessary for miracles in the Gospels, unbelief that is willing and hard and overt will always stop miracles.

He may heal someone who is neutral, or someone who is somewhat open, or the man who says, "I believe, and help my unbelief," where there's a mixture.

But where there is hard hearted unbelief, that blocks the supernatural.

**Luke 17** where the ten lepers met Jesus, and Jesus said, "Now you go to the priest and show him that you are clean."

You go pass their test that they gave, so that they could put lepers back into society, because they were outcasts.  
Jesus healed all ten of them.

**How many came back?**

Only one.

One came back to give glory to God.

**Luke 17:17-19**, *So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"<sup>18</sup> Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"<sup>19</sup> And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."*

### **What did Jesus mean?**

He already cleansed of the leprosy so did the other nine.

Jesus healed them physically by His sovereign choice. Their unbelief ended the process at that point.

You came back.

You received not only physical healing, but your faith has made you whole.

Wholeness is not just physical, it's physical and spiritual. The leper received the saving of his soul.

So, while God will heal with faith or without faith by His sovereign choice, when it comes to the unbelief of the heart, that will stop the divine and supernatural intervention.

**Matthew 7:6**, *"Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces."*

In **Matthew 12**, the Jews came. They asked Him that we want a sign. Do a miracle. Do a mighty work. He said, "I will give no such sign to this evil, adulterous, and unbelieving nation."

We find a person who's wilfully hard hearted and unbelieving, and they can run around all they want demanding miracles, and God is not going to give them any, because that is not the issue at all. The issue is their sinfulness.

So, unbelief is powerful.

- It blurs the obvious,
- builds up the irrelevant,
- blinds to the truth, and
- blocks out the supernatural.

## **Conclusion:**

John chapter 9.

**John 9:1-2**, *Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

They were holding on to the tradition that the sins of the parents are sort of borne by the children.

**John 9:3**, *Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.*

He is blind that the works of God should be manifest in him.  
He is blind for the glory of God.

It's no sin issue at all.

He is blind for today, that he may be given his sight, and God may be glorified. He was created for a miracle.

He was made blind for a miracle."

**John 9:6-9**, *When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. <sup>7</sup>And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. <sup>8</sup>Therefore the neighbours and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" <sup>9</sup>Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he."*

Blind man beginning to be a preacher.

**John 9:10-12**, *Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" <sup>11</sup>He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight."*

<sup>12</sup>Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

They get the blind man, and they scoop him up to bring him to the theological experts for an investigation.

**Do you know what happens when unbelief investigates a miracle?**

**John 9:13-16**, *They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. <sup>14</sup>Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." <sup>16</sup>Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not <sup>[e]</sup>keep the Sabbath."*

This man is not from God.

**What a brilliant conclusion?**

Astounding.

They bring the person he has been blind all his life, he can now see, Jesus did it, therefore Jesus could not be of God.

Great reasoning.

**John 9:16**, *Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others*

said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?"  
And there was a division among them.

Their tradition was ridiculous.  
Tradition isn't even the issue.

So, they blur the obvious, build up the irrelevant.

There were a few rational people in the group asking them  
how can you explain this?

There was a division among them.

**John 9:17-23**, *They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."* <sup>18</sup>*But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.* <sup>19</sup>*And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"* <sup>20</sup>*His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;* <sup>21</sup>*but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself."* <sup>22</sup>*His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.* <sup>23</sup>*Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."*

They were afraid being casted out of the synagogue.

**John 9:24,** *So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner."*

In spite of all the evidence, rejecting the facts, just blurring out the obvious, building up the irrelevant, blind to the truth, totally blind because of unbelief.

**John 9:25-34,** *He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" <sup>27</sup>He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" <sup>28</sup>Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. <sup>29</sup>We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from."*

<sup>30</sup>*The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvellous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! <sup>31</sup>Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. <sup>32</sup>Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. <sup>33</sup>If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." <sup>34</sup>They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.*

He has become a preacher.

He was a better theologian than all of them put together.

Both people had the same facts.

One had a heart that was open,

Other had a heart that was closed.

**John 9:35-38**, *Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"* <sup>36</sup>*He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"* <sup>37</sup>*And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you."* <sup>38</sup>*Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.*

That man will spend forever in Christ's presence.

But the others, because of unbelief, blocked the supernatural.