

Matthew 13:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

Analysis

When he was come into his own country (εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοῦ)—The πατρίς (homeland, native place) refers to Nazareth (Mark 6:1; Luke 4:16), where Jesus grew up (Matthew 2:23). This return occurs after extensive Galilean ministry, making their rejection more culpable. **He taught them in their synagogue**—Despite knowing He would face rejection (Luke 4:24), Jesus faithfully proclaimed truth. The imperfect ἐδίδασκεν ('He was teaching') suggests sustained instruction, not a single sermon.

Insomuch that they were astonished (ῶστε ἐκπλήσσεσθαι αὐτούς)—The verb ἐκπλήσσω means 'to strike out of one's senses, astound.' Their amazement stemmed from cognitive dissonance: they knew His humble origins but witnessed divine wisdom and power. **Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?** (πόθεν τούτῳ ἡ σοφία αὕτη καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις;)—The σοφία (sophia, wisdom) parallels Solomon's reputation (1 Kings 4:29-34), while δυνάμεις (dynamis, 'mighty works, miracles') attests supernatural authority. Yet instead of faith, familiarity bred contempt (v. 57).

Historical Context

Synagogue worship in first-century Judaism included Torah reading, prophetic texts, and exposition by respected teachers. Jesus's habit was to attend synagogue (Luke 4:16), where His teaching astonished hearers (Matthew 7:28-29) because He taught with authority, not like the scribes who relied on rabbinic tradition. Nazareth's rejection fulfilled the pattern that prophets face greatest resistance from those who knew them in obscurity (Luke 4:24).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why does familiarity with Jesus's humanity sometimes blind people to His deity?
2. How can you guard against the contempt of familiarity in your relationship with Christ and Scripture?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοὺς ἐδίδασκεν

And when he was come into country their he taught

G2532 G2064 G3588 G3968 G846 G1321

αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτοὺς ὅστε

their in synagogue their insomuch that

G846 G1722 G3588 G4864 G846 G5620

ἐκπλήττεσθαι αὐτοὺς καὶ λέγειν Πόθεν τούτῳ ἡ

they were astonished their And said Whence hath this man G3588

G1605 G846 G2532 G3004 G4159 G5129

σοφία αὕτη καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις

wisdom this And these mighty works

G4678 G3778 G3588 G2532 G1411

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 7:28 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

Psalms 22:22 (Parallel theme): I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Matthew 4:23 (Parallel theme): And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Matthew 2:23 (Parallel theme): And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.