

SOFO PRAYER PARTNER LETTER

JANUARY 2022

Dear Prayer Partner,

“except”

There is one that is different. The rest all follow the pattern, but this one stands out. All the cars in the parking lot are gray “except” that Ferrari.

There is one that is different. The situation repeats itself, but one time it does not. It rained every day last week “except” Tuesday.

Jesus described two exceptions. Mark 6:1-13

1. No honor at home.

Two times the situation was against the pattern. He said, “A prophet is shown honor everywhere “except” in his own hometown and among his own family. He taught in the synagogue, and instead of marveling at his wisdom, and instead of seeing that he spoke God's Word, they said, “What makes him think he's so smart!? He's just a carpenter's kid, and we know his mother and his brothers.”

Everywhere Jesus went, the people received him, and they recognize that his teaching was from God, “and many believed on him.” Except at Nazareth!

THAT RESULTED IN THE SECOND EXCEPTION...

2. No mighty works at home.

You cannot believe on someone who you do not respect. You do not respect someone if you think you know everything about him. That guy you grew up with, God was doing something with him that you could not see. The prophet Samson probably did not look like Arnold Schwarzenegger! His own girlfriend could not figure out why he was so strong! If he had looked like a linebacker from the Pittsburgh Steelers she wouldn't have asked. She even said it herself that his strength was a secret. So, what is my point? **You** know somebody who is a Slayer of Philistines, and when it happens, you are going to wonder how. Go ahead and let God be God!

You may be that prophet!

You may be that general in God's army!

You may be that “preacher of righteousness” who built an ark!

Who said, “You can't do it?”

Who said, “What makes you think you're so smart?”

Who said, "You don't come from the right family?"

Even Jesus had places where he could not do his work because of their unbelief.

"except"

*except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them.
Mark 6:5*

Do you wonder, like me, who those people were? There were a few even in Nazareth who said, "I don't care what the whole rest of the town thinks, I believe him!" No one believed in his hometown **except** a few folks. Well, that did not matter, he still laid hands on those few folks and healed them.

Are you the exception?

Are you the one that says, "I don't care what the entire world thinks, I believe Jesus!"

Are you the one that says, "I don't care if everyone says it can't be done, God said it could!"

Are you the one that says, "I don't care if the entire world stands against me, I'm going to do what God told me to do!"

Are you the one that says, "I don't care if everyone else is just religious, I'm going to get to know Jesus as a friend, face to face!"

*Thus, the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.
Exodus 33:11*

Do you see it? The Lord talked to Moses face to face like a man speaks to his friend, **but there is more**. Look at the last part of the verse! Moses' assistant, the guy that ran errands, and cleaned his tent, and washed his clothes, "**would not depart from the tent.**" He said in his heart, "God's in here. I'm staying until God talks to **me** like that!"

Whatever happened to that young man?

- His name was Yeshua.
- He brought people into the place of God's promises.
- He took his orders from the Father.¹
- The enemies of God were afraid of him.³
- He won his battles by submitting.⁵

He had the same name as Jesus.
He did the same thing as Jesus.
He heard the same voice as Jesus.²
He terrified them the same as Jesus.⁴
He won the same way as Jesus.⁶

¹ Joshua 1:1-8

² John 5: 30

³ Joshua 2: 8- 10

⁴ Matthew 8: 29

⁵ Joshua 5: 13- 15

⁶ John 10: 17, 18

THERE is the exception!

The thing that makes the difference.

The thing that wins the battle.

The thing that overcomes the disease.

The thing that drives out the demon.

It's the presence of Jesus!

When Jesus got in the rowboat, the storm ceased, and it was immediately on the other shore!

When Jesus spoke two words, the little girl rose from the dead!

When Jesus spoke four words, his dear friend walked out of the grave!

When Jesus spoke one word, Peter walked across the sea!

When Jesus touched the bread, it became more than enough for 20,000 people and a little boy!

When Jesus spoke, a legion of demons left a man clothed in his right mind!

We need more Jesus!

We have enough useless religions!

We have enough arguing denominations!

We have enough critics!

We have enough cynics!

“except...”

You live in a real-world Nazareth! Are you one of the ones who believes, or one of the ones who says, “What makes him think he's so smart!?” What did he tell you today, but you said, “Well, my denomination doesn't see it that way?” You will be amazed at what God will teach you when you stop telling him what he believes.

Get away!

Go back to our text. In Mark 6:30-33, Jesus disciples had just returned from casting out demons and healing sick people in his power. Notice Jesus instructions: “Come away by yourself to a desolate place and rest.” After every miracle Jesus performed, he got away from everybody and into the presence of his father. Look at verse forty-six. After he fed the five thousand, He even sent the disciples away, and He went to be with dad. Repeatedly in his ministry, Jesus worked a miracle, then He went up in a mountain.

It is spending time with Jesus that causes you to believe Him.

It is believing Jesus that causes you to be the exception.

Faith comes by hearing his words.⁷

So, if you are tired of just being religious, like the people of Nazareth, go be alone with Jesus.

⁷ Romans 10: 17