

Capernaum
A Study of Lost Opportunity
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Introduction: Why is it that those with the greatest advantages in spiritual matters often fail to take advantage of them?

- A. Today I am speaking to people who have great advantages in spiritual things.
 - 1. You have the complete word of God! **(1 Pt 1:10-13)**
 - 2. You have the promises of God. **(2 Pt 1:3-4)**
 - 3. You have the care of God. **(1 Cor 10:12-13)**
 - 4. If I am truly taking advantages of these things, then what will my life be like?
- B. Unfortunately there are wrong ways we can look at the blessings of God.
 - 1. We can become proud and hardened in pride. **(Rom 2:3-6; 2 Cor 12:7)**
 - 2. We can make excuses and allow the opportunity to pass.
 - 3. We will study the Jews of Capernaum and learn how they lost the greatest opportunity of their eternity.

I. Jesus' arrival in Capernaum

- A. Jesus came here after the imprisonment of John the Baptist. **(Mt 4:12-13)**
- B. Jesus' work here was prophesied in scripture. **(Mt 4:14-16; Isa 9:1-7)**
 - 1. These people who were once in darkness would now have a great light!
 - 2. These people sat in the shadow of death. Reasonable people should look at death with great humility and seek God. Jesus has the answer! **(Heb 2:14-15)**
 - 3. As we will see, not many want the light! **(Jn 3:19-21)**
- C. After departing Capernaum, He worked a miracle there. **(Jn 4:46-54)**
 - 1. Jesus knew the hearts of men and saw that they would only believe by seeing signs. **(Jn 4:48; Jn 2:23-25)**
 - 2. This man had a weak faith, but one that would be made stronger. Many never sought out Jesus because of their prejudice!
 - 3. Even though Jesus was not physically in Capernaum, light came to a household there! **(Jn 4:53)**
 - 4. Never look down upon a weak faith that is willing to seek the Lord!

II. A day of miracles in Capernaum

- A. They acknowledged His powerful teaching. **(Lk 4:31-32)**
 - 1. Here is where God's work in men will take place!
 - 2. Just because they acknowledged His ability does not mean they had yielded to the Lord. **(Jn 8:31-32)**
 - 3. Many glory in a teacher because of their ability and never let the word work in their hearts. **(Ezk 33:30-33)**
- B. They acknowledged His powerful miracles. **(Lk 4:33-37)**
 - 1. This should have shown them that He was clearly from God.
 - 2. Still there were many who acknowledged these things and later killed Him and persecuted His apostles. **(Acts 4:16-17)**
 - 3. How many here will acknowledge these things? Jesus knew that men must go further than an intellectual acceptance of these facts. **(Jn 3:1-5)**

- C. They began seeking Him but Jesus went to other cities. **(Mk 1:37-38)**
 - 1. Jesus wanted to give others opportunity too. Sadly Jesus gained a great popularity at Capernaum but they had little depth to them.
 - 2. Was Jesus successful in Capernaum?

III. Confrontation in Capernaum

- A. Jesus has all the religious leaders before Him. **(Lk 5:17)**
- B. He heals a paralytic before them all. **(Lk 5:18-26)**
 - 1. The religious leaders viewed Jesus as a competitor, one to be defeated lest they lose their popularity. **(Mk 15:10)**
 - 2. These leaders viewed Jesus as a blasphemer and wanted Him destroyed.
 - 3. Jesus tried to reach these leaders with the truth as well. They would have other opportunities. Still, they had rejected this one.
- C. These leaders would later beg Jesus for a miracle because of a lesser light.
 - 1. Later a Roman Centurion would request a favor from Jesus. **(Lk 7:1-2)**
 - 2. These same leaders in Capernaum would be the ones to beg Jesus! **(Lk 7:3)**
 - 3. Many times hearts are moved by the day to day acts of kindness and faith that preaching alone could not shake. **(Mt 5:16; 1 Pt 3:1-2)**
 - 4. Many doors of opportunity are opened by new converts rather than by the most experienced Christians. Why is this so?
 - 5. This centurion had no ordinary faith! **(Lk 7:9)**
 - 6. Who had the greater advantages, the Jews or this Roman Centurion?

IV. The Final rejection at Capernaum (Jn 6:24,59)

- A. In every life there comes a “watershed” moment where we choose to stand or we choose to reject the Lord. This day came with the multitudes at Capernaum.
 - 1. The people showed why they followed Jesus and were rebuked! **(Jn 6:24-30)**
 - 2. How many judge the success of a church by numbers? How would Jesus judge success?
 - 3. What would Jesus say about the “family life centers” and the attempts to use food and frolic to draw a crowd?
- B. The crowd walked out on Jesus when they failed to understand His message. **(Jn 6:52-53)**
 - 1. What did these people think? What did Jesus mean?
 - 2. What would it take for these people to know the truth? This was an obstacle they had to struggle with by God’s design. A shallow person will quit. **(Mt 13:13-15)**
 - 3. The crowd finally rejected Jesus. He was not surprised! **(Jn 6:60-66)**
 - 4. In Capernaum there were a small handful that did not leave. Where were the elders and those who had seen the miracles? **(Jn 6:67-68, 59)**

Conclusion: What happened at Capernaum happens all over the world. **(Mt 7:13-14)**

- A. When the real Jesus is preached there are strong reactions to the light of truth.
- B. What was Jesus final analysis of Capernaum?
 - 1. Other cities knew of His great works in Capernaum. **(Lk 4:23)**
 - 2. Jesus gives His view of the final results of His work there. **(Mt 11:23-24)**