

Sermon Title: The Ordinariness of Jesus

- **Opening Comparison:**
 - Reference to the unpredictability of general elections to illustrate the unexpected rejection Jesus faced in his hometown of Nazareth.
- **Jesus' Ministry Success:**
 - Prior successes in Capernaum and Galilee, including healing the sick and raising the dead, contrasted with his rejection in Nazareth.
- **Rejection in Nazareth:**
 - Initial astonishment from the hometown crowd at Jesus' wisdom and deeds.
 - Sudden shift to scepticism due to Jesus' ordinary background as a carpenter and the son of Mary.
- **Ordinariness as a Stumbling Block:**
 - Jesus' lack of formal rabbinic education and noble birth led to offence among the townspeople.
 - The challenge of accepting a fully human, fully divine Jesus.
- **Nicene Creed Affirmation:**
 - The Creed's declaration of Jesus' divinity and humanity.
 - The difficulty in accepting a God who is all-powerful yet intimately involved with human suffering and weakness.
- **True Power Defined by Weakness:**
 - Jesus' demonstration of true power through service and humility.
 - The incarnation as an expression of God's solidarity with human suffering.
- **Suffering and God's Relatability:**
 - St. Paul's writings on Jesus emptying himself and embracing human vulnerability.
 - The significance of Jesus' human experiences in understanding God's empathy.
- **Acceptance of Jesus' Qualities:**
 - The struggle to accept a gentle and weak God versus a tyrannical, distant one.
 - The personal implications of following a God who exemplifies humility and service.
- **St. Paul's Insights:**
 - Jesus' words to Paul: "Power is made perfect in weakness."
 - Paul's embrace of his own weaknesses as opportunities to experience Christ's strength.
- **Call to Follow Christ's Example:**
 - Embracing humility and serving others as central to the Christian life.
 - Letting go of pride and the desire for power to embody the weakness of Christ.

Questions:

1. Why do you think the people of Nazareth rejected Jesus despite his wisdom and miracles? How does this reflect our own struggles with accepting familiar individuals in new roles or identities?
2. What does it mean to you that Jesus was both fully divine and fully human? How does the ordinariness of Jesus challenge or reinforce your faith?
3. How does the concept of God choosing to become weak and serve others contrast with traditional views of power? How can we apply this understanding of power in our daily lives?
4. How does knowing that God, through Jesus, experienced human suffering and emotions impact your relationship with Him? In what ways does this influence your understanding of pain and hardship?
5. In what ways do we struggle to emulate Jesus' humility and self-emptying nature? How can we overcome these challenges to better serve others and live out our faith?
6. Reflect on a time when you felt weak or vulnerable. How did that experience draw you closer to God, or how might it have done so if viewed through the lens of "power made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9)?