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Open hearts, open minds

Reading in the Gospel of St. Mark we find that Jesus has recently begun his ministry. He has stilled a raging storm, healed a chronically sick woman and raised a girl from the dead. He is already beginning to attract the crowds.

However, when Jesus comes to his home town of Nazareth, it's not a case of 'local boy makes good' but 'who does this jumped-up carpenter think he is?' We read the telling line "because of their unbelief, he was unable to do any mighty miracles among them".

Is this the very limitation that we have placed on Jesus in his work today? The parable of the sower speaks of the gospel that will not take root in a heart that is hardened towards God. Is this why we see so few miracles in the UK in our generation? Has the emphasis on the rational in our society hardened us against the possibility of God's supernatural activity? Pope Benedict, in his recent visit, challenged the exclusion of our faith from the public square.

Christians need not apologise for holding both scientific and supernatural beliefs. He discussed religion's 'corrective' role with regard to reason, and the 'purifying' role of reason within faith. This challenges each one of us to open our minds and hearts to what sort of society we want for the future, but whether we personally are whole in body, mind and spirit as God would have us be.