

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ**

### **Beware of the Leaven**

Last time...Jesus and His disciples departed from Gentile territory on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee and returned to Galilee, Jewish territory

There Pharisees and Sadducees for the first time ganged up on Jesus, demanding a sign “from heaven”, attempting to disprove His claims of Deity and Messiahship

Jesus rebuked them, calling them a wicked and adulterous people.  
He did give them a prophetic sign to prove His Deity and Messiahship –  
the sign of the prophet Jonah, the foretelling of His Resurrection  
(celebrated last week)

This time...Jesus walks away from the wicked and adulterous Pharisees and Sadducees...  
He has no time for their foolishness

And He warns His disciples against their foolishness  
But they are kinda slow on the uptake

We will be in Mark 8 and Matt 16

## **Mark 8**

v13 He left them...other side:

Jesus has rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees after they confronted Him in  
Magdala demanding a sign from heaven

Now He leaves...He will not waste any time and effort debating/arguing/fighting  
with them

Nor will He be entangled in their foolishness

So Jesus and His 12 disciples get back into the ship and leave the Galilee  
(jurisdiction of Herod Antipas) to go back to the other side of SoG

v14 forgotten to take bread...one loaf:

On board ship, setting out abruptly on another journey to who knows where,  
the disciples realize too late that they forgot to pack lunch.  
And the ship's galley is almost bare – only one loaf of bread

Some things to consider about their ministry relative to the bringing of food:

- the pace of ministry has precluded meals planning  
Mark 6:31
- they were to leave that detail to the Lord  
Matt 6:31-33 don't worry about what to eat or drink, but seek...  
Matt 10:9-10 don't take money, workman worthy of his food

Were the 12 mindful of (remembered) those things?

Don't think so

They were thinking about their next meal

Jesus never misses a teaching moment or an opportunity to test their faith

v15 Take heed, beware of the leaven:

With the confrontation of the Pharisees and Sadducees just concluded and  
probably dominating His thoughts,  
Jesus takes the everyday situation (What are we going to eat?) to teach a  
spiritual truth

Take heed and beware:

- a stern warning
- when in deadly peril

Leaven:

- physical bread/sustenance
  - a corrupting/rotting influence
  - that which puffs up
- spiritual bread/sustenance
  - a type of pride and sin (deadly)
  - and it only takes a little bit (1 Cor 5:6)

of the Pharisees and of Herod:

- Religion – self-righteous religious elites with a worldview of  
man-centered attempts to be pleasing to God
- Gov't – secular politicians with a worldview of  
man-centered wisdom and answers, authority and dominion

v16 they reasoned among themselves:

The disciples discuss the succinct message of the Lord...  
and come to the wrong conclusion

With only one loaf of bread for the 13 of them,  
Thinking carnally (What's for lunch?),  
the disciples think Jesus is talking about physical loaves of bread to eat

They are hearing with their stomachs instead of their hearts  
There is a disconnect between the Lord's warning and the disciples' reasoning  
Theirs is bad thinking...that needed to be corrected

v17-18 Why reason ye:

Jesus rebukes His disciples, calling into question  
(causing self-examination to see if they are in the faith) their

- reasoning – it's all about the food
- spiritual perception/discernment – spiritually not discerning...  
about as sharp as a bowling ball
- understanding – they missed His point altogether
  
- their hearts – hardened (by unbelief)
- eyes and ears – blind and deaf to spiritual truth, no different than the  
Pharisees and Sadducees (Is 6:9-10)
  
- memories/remembrance – of other lessons He has taught them
  - plain and direct (pre-prince of devils accusation)
  - parables (Mark 4:1-2, 10-13, 33-34)
  - Bread of God (ingesting/eating/believing)  
John 6:63      It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh  
profits nothing: the words that I speak  
unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life
  - v19-20

v19-20 five loaves...seven:

In the very recent past

- feeding 5000 (Jews) with 5 loaves, with 12 baskets (1 each!) of  
leftovers (the last time they took a boat ride in this direction)
- feeding 4000 (Gentiles) with 7 loaves, with 7 baskets of leftovers

v21 How is it that ye do not understand:  
With all the instruction/teaching/doctrine they have received from Jesus,  
With all the evidence to prove the veracity of that instruction/teaching/doctrine,  
why do you not understand?

In the immediate context of what the disciples are reasoning:  
Is lunch for 13 going to be a problem with 1 loaf of bread in the hands of  
Jesus?

Our bellies are not the problem, our hearts are the problem  
Jer 17:9       deceitful and desperately wicked  
Eccl 9:3       full of evil and madness

So Jesus is NOT teaching about physical nourishment (they not to worry about),  
He is teaching of spiritual nourishment (His teaching) and  
spiritual malnourishment (the teaching of Religion and Gov't)

v22 cometh to Bethsaida...blind man:  
Now we and the disciples learn of their destination  
When Jesus got on this boat in Magdala  
(Galilee, jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, murderer of John the Baptist),  
He was going to Bethsaida  
(in the tetrarchy of Philip...out of the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas)

The last time He was here He fed 5000 and had to escape the mistaken zeal of  
the "kingmakers"  
This time, some residents bring Him a blind man, even presuming to prescribe  
how Jesus should heal him (probably right there, right in front of them)

v23 by the hand, and led him...spit in his eyes:  
What do we know about the "methodology" of Jesus' healing miracles?  
There isn't one...He healed differently every time to prevent man from  
constructing a life-sucking methodology for healing

Not paying attention to the "direction"/prescription of the people,  
(He does not need our advice on how to do anything), Jesus

- took the man by the hand and led him out of town
  - Personally tenderly took his hand, Personally led him
  - What did Jesus say to him?
- spit on his eyes
  - who would prescribe such a thing?
- put His hands on him...his eyes
- asked him if he saw anything

v24-26 men as trees...again upon his eyes...restored:

In response, the blind man tells Jesus that he sees men as if they were walking trees (i.e. does not see clearly)

So Jesus again puts His hands on the man's eyes

How about now?

I see clearly!

The 2<sup>nd</sup> time Jesus touched the blind man's eyes his sight was restored

This is the only "gradual" healing miracle of Jesus Christ (and it's only in Mark)

What does that mean?

1. Jesus failed in His 1<sup>st</sup> attempt?  
Jesus is God, God cannot fail, so...no
2. The progressive healing/restoration/revelation was an object lesson for the 12 (v14-21)...and us (1 Cor 13:12)?  
Could be
3. We don't know (yet) what it means because Scripture is silent  
Certainly

Then Jesus

- sent the sighted man home, not back to town where the crowd is
- tells him to keep it to himself
  - to think on what Jesus said to him more than what Jesus did to him  
  
the words of Jesus save (Rom 10:17 with Hab 2:4),  
the miracles of Jesus are evidence of the truth of His words
  - the miracle/sign is for those who believe, is not for those who do not believe (Matt 11:20-24)

## Matt 16

v5-6 leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees:

In Mark 8:15, the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod

This, of course, on the heels of the Pharisees and Sadducees ganging up on Jesus

(v1)

Therefore “of Herod” = “of the Sadducees”

The Sadducees were

- pro-Gov’t/pro-Rome
- worldly...embraced the man-centered Greek culture and philosophy
- allies of Herod Antipas  
(because they loved their sumptuous, influential lifestyles)
- anti-spiritual (did not believe in resurrection)

v7-10 O ye of little faith:

In this account, Jesus’ rebuke is of their faith...little, lacking confidence in Him

Heb 11:1

Heb 11:6

Because their faith is lacking, the disciples

- reason carnally and incorrectly...wrong thinking
- do not understand what Jesus said...because of unbelief
- do not remember the evidence He has given them to have Rock-solid faith/confidence

Therefore...lunch is NOT the problem worthy of a “you are in deadly peril” warning

Now, in Matt’s account, important information not in Mark’s account

v11-12 Then understood they...the doctrine:

Jesus helps His disciples to connect the dots

Luke 12:1      Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy  
Leaven and Heaven don't mix

With the reasoning assist from the Lord, the disciples understand the message –  
that which is of deadly peril to followers of Jesus Christ is the  
doctrine/teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees

The danger to the Jewish disciples of Jesus Christ is...Jewish

What brand of bread (doctrine) did the Pharisees and Sadducees/Herodians offer?

- Pharisees:
  - Religion...the works of man to be pleasing to God (vs faith)
  - traditions of men that make the Word of God of no effect
- Sadducees:
  - Gov't and worldly man-centered culture and philosophy
  - humanism
- spiritually false/deceptive and eternally dangerous
- contrary to the teaching/doctrine of Jesus Christ...Who taught as one having authority, not as the scribes (Matt 7:29, Mark 1:22)

Jesus' warning of deadly peril is very simply this:

To not eat/believe false doctrine...  
any doctrine that is not His (the Word of God)

Therefore, according to Jesus Christ Himself: doctrine is VERY important!

The Word of God is not to be compromised or watered down

## Application

### 1. Take heed and beware of false doctrine

We can only recognize false doctrine if we know Jesus' doctrine

Acts 17:11

1 Thes 5:21

Rom 10:17

Col 2:1-9

1 Tim 1:3-4, 6 teach no other doctrine, nor pay attention to "Christian fiction"  
or nonsensical babbling

1 Tim 1:8-11 Law, Word, Gospel

1 Tim 4:1-2 depart from faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils..  
speaking lies in hypocrisy

1 Tim 4:6 put brethren in remembrance, words of faith and good doctrine  
(Matt 19:17)

1 Tim 4:13 give attendance to doctrine

1 Tim 4:16 take heed and continue...eternity is at stake

1 Tim 6:3-5 shun

2 Tim 4:1-4 time will come (is here, ecumenicalism, OWR) when Christians will not  
endure sound doctrine but prefer "Christian fiction"

The danger to the Jewish disciples of Jesus Christ was...Jewish false teachers

The danger to followers of Jesus Christ today is...Christian false teachers

Matt 24:3-5 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him  
privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be*  
the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?  
And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man  
deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am  
Christ; and shall deceive many.

We must know the sound/good/healthy doctrine of God in order to know the  
false/deceptive doctrines of demons

Sound doctrine is not to take a back seat to unity, as it does in ecumenicalism,  
so loudly promoted in "Christian circles" (Pope, Rick Warren, Brian Broderson)

Unity without sound doctrine is a false unity (man is lord, doctrine of devils)

Unity in sound doctrine is "in Christ" (Jesus is Lord, doctrine of God)

Titus 1:9 (qualifications for elder)

Titus 2:1, 10

- Elder men and women
- Young men and women
- Servants



2. Jesus Christ and Him crucified and raised again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day is our hope  
Religion: A church denomination is not our hope  
Gov't: Politics is not our hope

Your hope is not in me!

When I'm not here, more than a few do not come to worship the Lord

You do not come here for me, you come here to worship Jesus Christ,  
to hear the Word of God regardless of the vessel the Holy Spirit has selected

So when I'm not here and folks stay home, what are they saying to Jesus Christ and the  
Holy Spirit?

Or more importantly, what would Jesus and Holy Spirit say to you?!

I am not your hope...Jesus is your hope and mine!

3. Acts 2:42

Apostle's doctrine – Jesus' doctrine, sound doctrine, good doctrine, the Word of God

Prayer – take advantage of our gathering to pray

Fellowship – hugely important

Let's put the chair stacking and tear down on pause for 10 minutes  
every Sunday morning and fellowship!!!