

Week 42 Chronological

October 12: Matthew 11

John the Baptist is in prison, but he hears all the things that Jesus is doing. He sends some of his disciples to ask Jesus if He is the One that is to come or should they be looking for another. Jesus tells them to tell John that the blind see and the lame walk. John's disciples depart to give John the news.

Jesus denounces the unrepentant cities. Despite all the good things He has done, there are still many that do not believe Him. If He had done these things in sinful cities, then they would have repented, but because these cities were filled with the pious and religious, they do not see their need for Him. Let us never get to the point where we puff ourselves up thinking that we are perfect and holy. When that happens, we forget our need for Christ and His forgiveness.

October 13: Luke 11

Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray. He gives them what is known as "The LORD's Prayer. From this prayer, the ACTS method of prayer was developed. A- Adoration. When we pray, we should give praise to God first for how good and holy He is. C- Confess. We then confess our sins. T- Thanksgiving. Then give thanks for all the blessings God has given us. Finally, there is S- Supplication. This is where we ask God for whatever it is we need. Notice that when Jesus asks for His blessing, it is the daily bread He seeks, not a future blessing. God delivers blessings daily.

There is discussion about how Jesus heals people and casts out demons. Some say that it is the power of the devil. Jesus rebukes them, explaining that is a ridiculous concept. A house divided cannot stand. After this, Jesus explains how temptation works in the life of a believer. A person comes to faith, the unclean spirit leaves the person, that spirit then wanders the wilderness. After wandering, it decides to go back to the person it left and finds the place clean and squared away. Then that spirit goes and grabs seven more friends to dwell there. We must be diligent when it comes to temptation and sin. A victory over sin today does not mean a future victory over the same sin.

Jesus is invited to dine in a Pharisee's house. The Pharisee is abhorred that Jesus did not wash His hands before dining. Jesus uses this as a teachable moment. The Pharisee is worried about the outward appearance and not the inward. They clean the outside of the cup, but do not worry about cleaning the inside.

October 14: Matthew 13 and Luke 8

We see that Jesus's ministry was supported by several women. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and many others support Jesus in His ministry.

Jesus teaches the parable of the sower. Out of all the seed that is scattered, some seed fell on the hard path where the birds came and ate it. Other seed fell into the rocky ground. That seed

quickly shot up, but because it did not have much soil, it was quickly destroyed by the sun. Other fell into the thorns and were choked out. However, some seed did fall into the good soil. That seed produced an abundant crop.

Jesus teaches another parable about a man that planted good seed on his land. His enemy comes in and sews weeds in the field as well. When the weeds are discovered, his men want to pull the weeds, but the landowner declines. His concern is that they will damage the good plants by pulling the weeds, so he allows the weeds to stay. At the time of the harvest, they will take the weeds, bind them, and throw them into the fire. This is why evil continues to be on the earth. Many of us wonder why God allows evil to exist rather than just destroying it. One day, He will gather up His sons and daughters and we will be joined with Him.

The LORD heads back home to Nazareth. While there, the people in the synagogue are astonished at His understanding. Others cast doubt, asking, “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son?” They remembered Jesus as a boy. Rather than seeing that He had the understanding and is the Messiah, they instead figured it was not possible since they knew Him when He was a child.

October 15: Mark 4 and 5

Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a mustard seed. The mustard seed is tiny, but when it is planted, it becomes much larger than all the garden plants. At the conclusion of this teaching, Jesus tells the disciples that their next destination is across the sea. As they are sailing along, a storm comes up. Everyone is freaking out, except for Jesus. Jesus is in the stern, taking a nap. The terrified disciples wake Jesus. He gets up and calms the storm. The disciples are even more fearful now because He has the power over wind and wave.

They get to the other side of the sea to Garasenes. There was a man with a demon that walked among the tombstones. This man was wild and had incredible strength. Not even chains could bind him. He sees Jesus and runs to Him asking, “What have you to do with me?” Jesus commands the spirit to come out of the man. The unclean spirit identifies itself as Legion, since there were many. They ask to be cast into the pigs nearby. Jesus sends them to the pigs. The pigs then run into the sea and drown. Because of this, the people ask that Jesus leave. Rather than be happy and amazed that the man with the unclean spirit was healed, they were worried about a loss of income.

Jesus heals Jairus’s daughter. The little girl had died. Some folks asked Jairus why he would even bother Jesus with this. Jesus explains that he needs to only believe. Jesus goes into the home where everyone is mourning the loss of the child. When Jesus says she is merely sleeping, they laugh at Him. Jesus tells the girl to arise and she immediately comes back to life.

October 16: Matthew 10

The LORD assembles the 12 disciples. He gives them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all diseases. Jesus tells them to go out and let the towns know that the kingdom of God is near. He sends them out without any traveling money. They are not to take any gold or silver. They are just supposed to go and heal. When they enter a town, find out which home is worthy to stay in. When they arrive in the home bless it. However, not everyone is going to

accept them. When they are not welcomed, the disciples are to shake the dust off their sandals and move to another town. Jesus does not want them to waste time. Not everyone is going to come to know Jesus as LORD. That is heartbreaking and we certainly want everyone to come. However, if we get hung up on trying to get one person to believe despite his or her refusal, there are many ministry opportunities we miss.

Jesus warns them that persecution will come to them. The world hates Jesus. Since they belong to Him, they will be hated as well. As weird as it may sound, being hated for our faith is one measure of success. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, but He openly admits that He will cause division among family and friends. Jesus should be the One that we love more than anything. This is why He says that whoever loves their mother or father more than Him is not worthy of Him. In a perfect world, there would be harmony, united under the banner of Christ.

October 17: Matthew 14, Mark 6, and Luke 9

John the Baptist has been imprisoned. John has a tendency to tell the truth. Herod had divorced his wife and Herodias had divorced Herod's half-brother Philip. Then Herod and Herodias married. John told them that this marriage was unlawful. They did not like to hear that. Herod wanted to put John to death, but he dared not do it because he feared the people. During a feast, Herodias's daughter came in and danced for the folks gathered for celebration. Herod is so pleased that he offers to give her whatever she wants. The girl had been coerced by her mother. She is to ask for John's head on a platter. Herod has no choice, he made an oath and must now execute John.

Jesus is out teaching. The day wears on and it is getting late. The disciples tell Jesus it's a good idea to let the crowd disperse so they can go find food. There were no McDonald's or Burger Kings back in those days, so finding food would be a little more challenging back then. Jesus tells them to give them something to eat. The disciples say that they only have five loaves of bread and two fish. The bread loaves were only about the size of a twinkie. Jesus takes the fish and loaves, break them, and gives them to the disciples to pass out. From those few items, Jesus feeds 5,000 men plus the women and children gathered there. There are even leftovers. God can do a lot with a little!

After the crowd was fed, Jesus tells the disciples to get in the boat and head across the water while He disperses the crowd. When He is done with that, Jesus goes and has prayer time with the Father. After that, he sees the disciples are well ahead of Him, so he begins walking toward them across the water. The disciples see this and are terrified, thinking it is a ghost. Jesus tells them to calm down, it's just Him. Peter says that if it really is Him, then tell him to come out on the water with Jesus. Jesus tells Peter to come. Peter does so and walks toward Jesus on the water. Things are going fine until Peter sees the waves and begins to sink. Jesus grabs him and asks him why he doubted. In life, the best thing we can do is keep our eyes focused on Jesus. No matter how bad things get, as long as we keep focused on Him, the scary stuff of the earth is not that scary. Our God is bigger than anything this place can throw at us.

October 18: John 6

John six also details the feeding of the 5,000. After the crowd dispersed, they came back the next day looking for Him. When they saw He was not there, they boarded some boats and headed to Capernaum to find Him. When they find Jesus they ask when He got there. Jesus knew what they were up to, though. They were not really seeking Him for guidance or salvation, they were seeking Him because they wanted another free meal. Jesus then explains that He is the source of fulfillment. This fulfillment does not come from filling the stomach, but by following Christ and doing His work.

As Jesus continues giving instruction, many of these would be followers begin deserting Him. As far as they are concerned, the teachings He gives are just too hard and unacceptable. Following Jesus is easy when we get what we want, but it is much harder when things are difficult. As the great throng of people are deserting Jesus, He asks if the 12 if they are going to leave too. Peter asks, "Where will we go? You have the words of eternal life." Peter knew following Jesus was worth it. Yet, as we look at Peter's life, we will see that he has struggles in his faith.

October 19: Matthew 15 and Mark 7

The elders are upset that Jesus's disciples do not ritualistically wash their hands before eating. The problem is that the washing of the hands has merely become a tradition amongst the faithful. It is not something they do to make themselves closer to God. They use it as a symbol to show everyone how holy and good they are. They display false piety. They present a clean appearance, but on the inside, they are rotting. Jesus explains that it is not what goes into the person that defiles him. Instead, it is what comes out of the person. "What comes out of the mouth comes from the heart." That is the source of our evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, etc. That is why we cannot trust our hearts!

A Gentile woman approached the LORD about healing her son from a demon. At first, Jesus denies the request, but she makes an appeal. The dogs get the crumbs that fall from the master's table. The woman recognizes Jesus's authority, and He heals her son.

Jesus once again feeds a great multitude of people. This time it is only 4,000 people. I find it interesting that in this feeding, they have more food to start out with. Instead of the five loaves of bread and two fish, they have seven loaves and a few small fish.