

**MARK CHAPTER 8 – Feeding the Four Thousand; The Pharisees Seek a Sign; Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod; A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida; Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ; Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection; Take Up the Cross and Follow Him!**

**OBSERVATION**

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – **Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221**; email – [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

**INTERPRETATION**

**APPLICATION**

**Feeding the Four Thousand:**

*Mar 8:1 In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them,*

*Mar 8:2 "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat.*

*Mar 8:3 And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."*

*Mar 8:4 Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"*

*Mar 8:5 He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven."*

*Mar 8:6 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and they set them before the multitude.*

*Mar 8:7 They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before them.*

*Mar 8:8 So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments.*

*Mar 8:9 Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away,*

**vs. 1-3** For three days, the multitude had hung on His every word. They had stayed at His side, taking in His teaching, receiving His ministry. And because they had done so, Jesus wanted to feed them lest, without nourishment, they be unable to return to their homes. It is my opinion that this understanding has been somewhat lost. All too often, it seems, the church feels a responsibility to feed people physically before she can impact them spiritually. Scripture, however, gives us no such precedent. Jesus always fed those who were already being taught and instructed. And Paul says, “Do good to all men—but especially, particularly to those of the household of faith” (see Galatians 6:10). “Silver and gold have I none,” said Peter to the beggar asking for alms (see Acts 3:6). Yet because just a few verses earlier, we read that everyone in the early church sold all of their goods and laid the money at the apostles’ feet, it is highly likely that Peter and John had access to a great deal of money. Why, then, would Peter say, “Silver and gold have I none”? It is my belief that he was saying to the beggar, “For you, we have neither silver nor gold. Your need is not silver and gold. Your need is to stand up and walk.” And a great miracle followed. So, too, sometimes we feel the need, or others ask us to pray on their behalf for a physical solution to a physical need. But what will it profit us if we gain the whole world but lose our soul (Matthew 16:26)? Because the fundamental issue is to be able to stand strong in the Lord and walk with Him, any other answer to prayer pales in comparison.

**vs. 4-8** There’s a remarkable similarity between this story and the one that took place in chapter 6, where we read that Jesus had miraculously fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. Yet here we see the disciples say to Jesus, “How are You going to satisfy these men?” Were the disciples that forgetful? I believe the answer lies in the term “these men”—the men of Decapolis. Decapolis was comprised of ten cities on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. The people of Decapolis had their own government, had adopted Greek culture, and willingly lived under Roman authority. This would mean that this crowd of four thousand—unlike the previous crowd of five thousand—was primarily Gentiles. And perhaps this explains the disciples’ question when they said to Jesus, “How will You feed these men? We can see You doing a miracle for our people, the Jews, but not these guys!” The Lord has a wonderful way of working through, working with, working on all kinds of people. Jesus, the Bread of Life, was given to the five thousand, to the Jews first, just as the promises were given to them when the covenant was established in the days of Abraham. But then, beginning with the Incarnation and into the birth of the church, the Bread of Life was made available to the four thousand, to the Gentiles, to us. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

**v. 9** Four being the number of the earth, this speaks further of the Gentiles.

**Vs. 1-8 Application of Feeding the Four Thousand:**

Mark makes clear that basically it arose from the compassion that Jesus had for these people. They had been with him for three days without any food.

As we read this account, we must ask ourselves, “What did he want these disciples to learn from this?” Because what he wanted them to learn is what He wants us to learn. This is why it is recorded for us here on these pages. Some things are very obvious.

**1 First, He wanted them to learn to begin with what they had.** When you want God to act, do not wait for God to do everything, because he expects us to be involved in the work that he does.

**Start with what you have.** When he said he was going to feed the crowd, and they asked how he was going to do it out there in the desert, his first words were, “How many loaves do you have?” They checked around, and said, “Seven.” He said, “That will do. Any amount -- whatever you have. , **Start with what you have. When you want to see something accomplished for God, begin where you are.**

**2 God’s sufficiency to meet the need.** The second lesson our Lord clearly wanted them to learn is **that the supply will always equal the demand. God will never quit giving as long as the need remains.** It is wonderful the way this is put in the original Greek. Our translation says, “... he took the seven loaves, and ... broke them”; but the English is faulty. What the Greek really says is, “... he kept on breaking them” -- and the disciples kept on feeding the multitude.

**3. Your spirit must be fed.** Jesus said. And in the lesson of the feeding of the five thousand he made it very clear. He told them, “I am the bread sent down from heaven,” (John 6:41). If you want to keep your spirit strong, so that you are able to understand what is happening to you, and cope with the problems which arise out of what is happening to you, you must learn to feed upon the Lord Jesus. You must learn to take from him the strength you need, and worship him, and rejoice in him, and be thankful to him. And you need this every day, just as you need bread for your body.

**4 God is more than sufficient in providing what’s needed.** One final lesson our Lord was seeking to drive home to them was the sufficiency of the resource. This is implied in the fact that seven baskets of pieces were left over -- seven hamper, the term is, large baskets full of fragments. At the close of the feeding of the five thousand there were twelve baskets left over -- not the same kind of baskets, but smaller ones..

Did these disciples learn this lesson? Unfortunately, they didn’t. They were just like us. The account tells us what happened, Verse 10:

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*Mar 8:10 immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.*

**The Pharisees Seek a Sign:**

*Mar 8:11 Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him.*

*Mar 8:12 But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation."*

**Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod:**

*Mar 8:13 And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side.*

*Mar 8:14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat.*

*Mar 8:15 Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."*

*Mar 8:16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have no bread."*

*Mar 8:17 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened?*

*Mar 8:18 Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember?*

*Mar 8:19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" They said to Him, "Twelve."*

*Mar 8:20 "Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?" And they said, "Seven."*

*Mar 8:21 So He said to them, "How is it you do not understand?"*

**A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida:**

*Mar 8:22 Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him*

*Mar 8:23 So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.*

**INTERPRETATION**

**vs. 10-12** Jesus had just fed four thousand people. Before that, he had opened blind eyes, healed lepers, worked powerfully. Yet the Pharisees had the audacity to say, “Show us a sign to establish Your validity.” No wonder He sighed deeply. Signs do not produce faith. They only produce a craving for more signs. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). How does your faith grow? Not by seeing miracles, but by studying the Word.

**vs. 13-15** The leaven of the Pharisees speaks of legalism. The leaven of Herod refers to the Herodians who were trying to bring about righteousness through political rule. Jesus would also speak of the leaven of the Sadducees, which is liberal theology. Legalism, politics, liberal theology—like leaven, each of these tendencies can start small and innocently, but grow to impact the entire Body.

**v. 16** “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,” James tells us (see 1:5). Instead, these disciples reasoned among themselves, and came up with the wrong answer.

**vs. 17-21** Jesus makes it clear that there is a direct correlation between a hardening of heart and a failing of memory. When does my heart become hardened toward the Lord? When does my heart begin to lack the fire of faith? When I forget the bread the Lord provides for me every day. My faith is strengthened and my heart softened not only through an awareness of the daily bread He provides for me but also through the broken bread of His Body. “Do this in remembrance of Me,” Jesus said (see Luke 22:19). Consequently, whenever I partake of the broken body, the bread of the Eucharist, the table of Communion, I am reminded once again of the Lord’s provision for the greatest need I will ever have—the need of salvation.

**v. 22** Like this man, we were once blind spiritually. Blinded by Satan, the god of this age, we could not see. Church seemed weird to us, the Bible incomprehensible, Christians bizarre. But then someone extended an invitation to us to come to Jesus—and a miracle was set in motion.

**v. 23** As noted previously, I believe one of the main reasons Jesus led the man out of town was to avoid the frenzied atmosphere often associated with healing ministries. *if he saw anything*..In the Hebrew culture and much of the ancient world at this time, spit was thought to contain medicinal value. Therefore, in applying spit to this man’s eyes, Jesus seems to be putting His seal of approval on the use of the medical technology of any given day. Sometimes when I cut my finger and watch the blood coagulate, I marvel at the ability of my body to seemingly heal itself. Other times, when I have a pounding headache and down a couple of aspirin, I marvel at modern medicine. Still other times, when I’m hurting physically, a couple of brothers will lay hands on me and pray—and I marvel at the power of prayer. But it is not prayer that heals. It is not medicine that heals. It is not our own body processes that heal. It is God who heals. And as God, He can utilize prayer, medicine, and our natural body processes—or any combination of the three.

**APPLICATION**

**Vs. 17-18 - The Disciples didn’t understand! What can we learn from this?**

**Application:** From Jesus’ questions, note **four things that will keep us spiritually alive and alert, vital and functioning:**

**1 Use your mind.** “Do you not perceive nor understand?” Stop and think about where you are, about what is happening to you and why it happened. Analyze it. Read what the Bible has to say about it. That is what the mind is for. Study the revelations of God to you.  
**2 Check the dullness of your heart.** “Is your heart still hardened?” That is, analyze the state of your heart. Are you dull, or do you respond? Have you forgotten truth? Because if the heart does not respond to what the mind has understood, then it is because you have not really believed it. You do not really believe God is going to do what he has said he will do, that is the problem. This is always revealed by a dull, unresponsive heart. Truth always moves us -- when we believe it. It always grips us and excites us. And if we are not excited, if we do not feel a response of joy, it is because the mind has grasped it but the heart has not. One of the things the Word suggests we do at this point is to pray that the eyes of our heart might be enlightened.

**3 Use your eyes and ears to see beyond the physical!** “Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?” Do not just look at the events you are seeing and think that is all there is to it. Use your eyes to see beyond the physical to the spiritual.”

**4 Remember** “Do you not remember?” Hasn’t God taught you things in the past through your circumstances? Hasn’t he led you through events which have made you understand something about your life? Do you not remember the times he said things like that in the past? Well, remember them now, and interpret these events now, and recognize that you are in the hands of a loving Father who has put you right where you are to teach you a very needed truth. Learn to lay hold of that truth, and rejoice!

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**INTERPRETATION**

**APPLICATION**

*Mar 8:24 And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking."*

*Mar 8:25 Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.*

*Mar 8:26 Then He sent him away to his house, saying, "Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town."*

**Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ**

*Mar 8:27 Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?"*

*Mar 8:28 So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets."*

*Mar 8:29 He said to them, "**But who do you say that I am?**" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."*

*Mar 8:30 Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.*

**Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection**

*Mar 8:31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.*

*Mar 8:32 He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.*

**v. 24** I love this man's honesty with Jesus. He saw the Lord, but he didn't yet have an ability to see people properly. And therein is a lesson. When you and I were touched by the Lord and saved, our eyes were opened. And yet even though we were now able to see Him, our healing was not complete until we could also see people clearly, for if we love God but hate our brother, we miss the mark entirely (1 John 4:20). Many of us have no problem loving God. But there are some people who seem like trees to us. They "stump" us. We wish they would "leave." We try to cut them down. It might be a father who ignored you. It might be a husband who divorced you. It might be a boss who fired you. It might be a friend who deserted you. "What is the greatest commandment?" they asked Jesus. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength," He answered. "And the second is like unto it," or literally, "There's a second part to it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (see Matthew 22:35–40). Loving God and loving our neighbor are inextricably linked. But how are we to love those we see only as trees?

**vs. 25-26** The fact that this man needed to be touched twice encourages me in my own areas of need. Be it with regard to physical healing, spiritual help, material provision—sometimes we need to pray for a second touch, a third touch, a tenth touch. Sometimes we must keep coming back to the Lord over and over and over again. You might have been doing well physically as a result of the Lord's help and healing touch. But then the difficulty returned. Seek Him again and continue on until you're totally healed—even if that total healing won't take place until you get to heaven. **made him look up...** When did the man see not only Jesus but also every man clearly? When Jesus lifted his head toward heaven in the posture of prayer. That's the key. Jesus told us to pray for our enemies—the people who bug us, bother us, or hurt us—to pray for those who spitefully use us. Will we be able to love people perfectly? No, for although we are to look up in prayer, it is not until we are called up to heaven at the moment of the Rapture that we will see perfectly the things that presently confuse and perplex us (1 Corinthians 13:12). What a day that will be!

**v. 27-29** "Christ" is the Greek word; "Messiah," the Hebrew word. They both mean "Anointed One."

**v. 30** Matthew tells us that Jesus said, "Blessed are you, Simon bar Jonah. Flesh and blood have not revealed this unto you, but My Father which is in heaven. And upon the rock of your confession—the revelation that I am Messiah—I will build My church" (see Matthew 16:17–18).

**v. 31** Jesus didn't begin to teach His disciples about rejection, suffering, or the Cross until it was first revealed to them that He is the Christ. So, too, in my opinion, it is a mistake to try to explain the necessity of the Cross to those who don't first understand that Jesus is the Christ. Our first objective in sharing with people must be that they understand who Jesus is

**v. 32** The original language makes it clear that Peter continually rebuked Him. "Come on, Lord," Peter could have said, "cut out this talk about crucifixion and rejection, suffering and pain. You're the Christ. Let's talk about health and wealth, prosperity and the kingdom!" But there is no crown without the Cross. Jesus knew the Cross was part of the plan from the beginning of the world to provide for our redemption. Jesus always sees the big picture.

**v.25** "saw everything clearly" cf. *Pro 4:18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

*1Co 13:12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.*

**v. 29 APPLICATION:** "**But who do you say that I am?**" Am I your Lord? -- The Lord of: My attitude? My tongue? my time? my remote? my computer mouse?

**v. 30** "not tell anyone" The disciples don't have the right view of the Messiah yet. **Do you?**

**v.32** "began to rebuke Him" Peter thought that God was speaking to him, but he was really speaking as inspired by Satan. Peter's comments did not agree with Scripture. **Do you test the things you think that God is telling us, do insure that these things agree with the written Word**



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*Mar 8:33 But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

**Take Up the Cross and Follow Him!**

*Mar 8:34 When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

*Mar 8:35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.*

*Mar 8:36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?*

*Mar 8:37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*

*Mar 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*

**INTERPRETATION**

**v. 33** . “You’ve got it all wrong, Peter... Men are concerned about the material. God is concerned about the eternal. Men are concerned about prosperity. God is concerned about sanctity. Men are concerned about power. God is concerned about purity.” Only moments earlier, Peter had been a heavyweight prophet, having been given revelation so substantial that the entire church would be built upon it. But here, he’s totally off the wall. This encourages me greatly because sometimes I share things I believe are truly the heart of the Lord—only to turn around and say something else that makes me wonder why I even said it. Do you think the Father said, “Oh no! If I had known Peter would say that, I would have given revelation to James or John!”? No, He knew Peter. But because God the Father wasn’t taken aback by Peter’s mistake, I understand He makes room for our humanity. Peter would still go on. God was far from finished with him.

**v. 34** Jesus spoke not of self-denial, but of denying oneself. And between the two lies a monumental difference.

**v. 35** The more you live for yourself, the more miserable you’ll be. We have all found this to be true to one degree or another. If you want to feel miserable, start thinking about yourself. Wonder how you’re coming across, how you’re doing, how you’re feeling. When we take the temperature of how we’re doing, what we’re feeling, what we’re thinking, we lose the very essence of what it means to truly live. It’s in saving others that we so often save ourselves. It’s in helping others that we help ourselves. It’s in giving to others that we get ourselves. It’s when we die to self that we find life.

**vs. 36-37** Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. We wouldn’t sell our soul to Satan for a billion dollars. And yet in actuality, we often give it away whenever we allow some cheap trinket, momentary pleasure, or earthly relationship to come between the Lord and us.

**v. 38** T There is no such thing as closet Christians, secret saints, disguised disciples. It’s always been this way... “Where are you?” God called to Adam—not because He couldn’t find Adam, but because He wanted Adam to come forward to admit his sin and his need to get right (see Genesis 3:9). “Who is on the Lord’s side?” Moses asked the Israelites. The sons of Levi stood with Moses publicly, even though to do so was out of sync with the rest of the tribes (see Exodus 32:26). “Who is on the Lord’s side?” asked Joshua as the people were challenged publicly to make a stand (see Joshua 24:15). “How long will you halt between two opinions?” asked Elijah. “If Baal be god, serve him. But if Jehovah be God, serve ye Him,” calling people to make a public decision (see 1 Kings 18:21). Every man Jesus called, He called publicly.

**APPLICATION**

**v. 34 "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"**

This is our Lord’s outline of the process of discipleship. Here, in his own words, we look at what it means to be a disciple.

**APPLICATION:**

**1 First Step** – “let him deny himself” – Not hate himself, but deny himself. “Deny” means to “**disavow any connection with something**, to state that **you are not connected in any way with whatever is in view.**” Think of Peter’s denial of Jesus, that’s exactly what he did. To deny yourself means **to give up your rights to run your life**. To submit yourself to His leadership, to His Lordship.” This is fundamental to all discipleship. There can be no discipleship apart from it.

**2 The second step** - “Let him deny himself, and take up his cross...” What does “take up his cross” mean?

Many people think that a cross is any kind of trial or hardship you are going through, or any kind of handicap you must endure -- like a mother-in-law, or a ding-a-ling neighbor or a physical handicap. “But that is not what Jesus means. The cross was something different. **The cross stood for something in the life of Jesus connected with shame and humiliation.** It was a criminal’s cross on which he was hung. It was a place of degradation, where he was demeaned and debased. **It stands forever as a symbol of those circumstances and events in our experience which humble us, expose us, offend our pride, shame us, and reveal our basic evil. It is the cross which brings this out.** Any circumstance, any incident which does this to us, Jesus says, if we are a disciple, we are to welcome. That is His meaning. “**Take up your cross, accept it, glory in it, cling to it, because it is something good for you.** It will reduce you to the place where you will be ready to receive the gift of the grace of God.” That is why the cross is so valuable to us.

**3 The third step is, "Follow me."** This really means, “Obey me.” It takes us so long to understand that if disobedience is the name of the game before we are Christians, then certainly obedience is the name of the game after we become Christians. It must be. Our Lord is not talking about perfection as a disciple; he is simply telling us what discipleship means, what it involves. It involves following Him. It means choosing to do or say what He commands us to do or say. This is what the disciples did. They obeyed him, and they were taught to look to Him for whatever it took to make it possible