



Lesson 35 – The True Sign

Based on Matthew 15:29-39; Mark 7:31-37; Matthew 16:1-12; Mark 8:1-21

- 1) Where does our lesson start today?

Mark 7:31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of _____, through the midst of the coasts of _____.

It was in the region of Decapolis that the demoniacs of Gergesa had been healed. Here the people, alarmed at the destruction of the swine, had constrained Jesus to depart from among them. But they had listened to the messengers He left behind, and a desire was aroused to see Him. As He came again into that region, a crowd gathered about Him.

- 2) What did Jesus do while He was there?

Matthew 15:30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he _____ them:

- 3) What notable deed did Jesus do?

Mark 7:32-34 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his _____; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be _____.

- 4) What happened?

Mark 7:35-36 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was _____ and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they _____ it;

- 5) Were the people moved by Jesus' actions?

Mark 7:37 And were beyond measure _____, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Jesus went up into a mountain, and there the multitude flocked to Him, bringing their sick and lame, and laying them at His feet. He healed them all; and the people, heathen as they were, glorified the God of Israel. For three days they continued to throng about the Saviour, sleeping at night in the open air, and through the day pressing eagerly to hear the words of Christ, and to see His works. At the end of three days their food was spent.

- 6) What cryptic words did Jesus tell His disciples?

Mark 8:2-3 I have _____ on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will _____ by the way: for divers of them came from far.

- 7) What familiar words did the disciples respond with?

Mark 8:4 And his disciples answered him, From _____ can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?

- 8) Remembering the feeding of the 5000, what did the disciples do next?

Matthew 15:34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, _____, and a few little fishes.



Obedient to His word they brought Him what they had, seven loaves and two fishes.

9) What happened next?

Matthew 15:36-38 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave _____, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the _____ to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven _____ full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

Four thousand men, besides women and children, were thus refreshed, and Jesus sent them away with glad and grateful hearts.

10) What did Jesus do right after feeding the 4000?

Matthew 15:39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of _____.

11) Where more specifically did Jesus take the disciples?

Mark 8:10 And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of _____.

Then taking a boat with His disciples, He crossed the lake to Magdala, at the southern end of the plain of Gennesaret. In the border of Tyre and Sidon His spirit had been refreshed by the confiding trust of the Syrophoenician woman. The heathen people of Decapolis had received Him with gladness. Now as He landed once more in Galilee, where His power had been most strikingly manifested, where most of His works of mercy had been performed, and His teaching given, He was met with contemptuous unbelief.

12) Jesus saw ahead of Him a collection of Sadducees and Pharisees waiting to speak with Him, what did do?

Matthew 16:1-4 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and _____ desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not _____ the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet _____. And he left them, and departed.

13) How did Mark describe the exchange?

Mark 8:12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall _____ sign be given unto this generation.

Christ's own words, spoken with the power of the Holy Spirit that convicted them of sin, were the sign that God had given for their salvation. And signs direct from heaven had been given to attest the mission of Christ. The song of the angels to the shepherds, the star that guided the wise men, the dove and the voice from heaven at His baptism, were witnesses for Him.

14) What did Jesus say to try to help the disciples understand what they witnessed?

Mark 8:15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the _____ of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.



15) Did the disciples understand?

Mark 8:16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no _____.

16) How did Jesus respond to them?

Mark 8:17-18 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither _____? have ye your heart yet _____? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

Jesus was trying to help the disciples discern between the good bread of life and the bad. Unfortunately, they immediately thought of their own situation. Jesus didn't miss a step and helped them to remember who is able to supply their need.

17) What was the sign that was given to the Pharisees and Sadducees?

Matthew 16:4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a _____; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

As the preaching of Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so Christ's preaching was a sign to His generation. But what a contrast in the reception of the word! The people of the great heathen city trembled as they heard the warning from God. Kings and nobles humbled themselves; the high and the lowly together cried to the God of heaven, and His mercy was granted unto them.

18) What did Jesus say at a different time about Ninevah?

Matthew 12:40-41 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be _____ days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they _____ at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

That which led the Jews to reject the Saviour's work was the highest evidence of His divine character. The greatest significance of His miracles is seen in the fact that they were for the blessing of humanity. The highest evidence that He came from God is that His life revealed the character of God. He did the works and spoke the words of God. Such a life is the greatest of all miracles.

19) What is one of the greatest miracles that God can do?

Ezekiel 36:26-27 A new _____ also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my _____ within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

When the message of truth is presented in our day, there are many who, like the Jews, cry, Show us a sign. Work us a miracle. Christ wrought no miracle at the demand of the Pharisees. He wrought no miracle in the wilderness in answer to Satan's insinuations. He does not impart to us power to vindicate ourselves or to satisfy the demands of unbelief and pride.

20) What was Jesus' general attitude about those who knew Scripture best?

Luke 16:31 And he said unto him, If they hear not _____ and the _____, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.



Even the disciples, though outwardly they had left all for Jesus' sake, had not in heart ceased to seek great things for themselves. It was this spirit that prompted the strife as to who should be greatest. It was this that came between them and Christ, making them so little in sympathy with His mission of self-sacrifice, so slow to comprehend the mystery of redemption.

21) As in Jesus' day, what is the word of warning for His church?

Mark 8:15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the _____ of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

Among the followers of our Lord today, as of old, how widespread is this subtle, deceptive sin! How often our service to Christ, our communion with one another, is marred by the secret desire to exalt self! How ready the thought of self-gratulation, and the longing for human approval! It is the love of self, the desire for an easier way than God has appointed that leads to the substitution of human theories and traditions for the divine precepts.

22) What should be every person's desire?

John 12:28 Father, _____ thy name...

Zeal for God's glory is the motive implanted by the Holy Spirit; and only the effectual working of the Spirit can implant this motive. Only the power of God can banish self-seeking and hypocrisy. This change is the sign of His working. When the faith we accept destroys selfishness and pretense, when it leads us to seek God's glory and not our own, we may know that it is of the right order.

1 John 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Can you see what God counts as important?

Do you want to be filled with the Spirit?

When is the time let go of our selfish ambitions?