

# (Through the Bible) Mark 8-9

by Chuck Smith

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*Jesus' miracles were not to satisfy curiosity or draw attention, but to help the helpless and minister to their needs.*

**Duration:** 1:27:58

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:6-8, Mark 8:1-9, Mark 8:14-26, Mark 9:2-8, Hebrews 1:1-2

**Topics:** "Miracles Of Jesus", "Divine Providence"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the miracles of Jesus multiplying food to feed the crowds. He reminds the audience of the previous miracle where Jesus fed 5,000 men with five loaves and two fish. He then highlights the second miracle where Jesus fed 4,000 people with seven loaves and a few small fish. The preacher emphasizes the disciples' lack of understanding and asks them how they still don't comprehend Jesus' power. He concludes by emphasizing the importance of recognizing the supernatural in the natural and having a deep reverence for God's creation.

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## Transcript

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Mark's Gospel, chapter 8. Now Mark has already told us how that Jesus fed 5,000 men beside the women and children with five loaves and two fish. Now we find a second miracle of the multiplying of the food in order to supply the needs of the people. It is interesting at the beginning of Christ's ministry when Satan was tempting him, he said to him, because he was hungry after the 40-day fast, why don't you take these stones and make them into bread? But Jesus would not use his miraculous power in order to take care of his own physical need.

But when it came to the physical needs of others, he was then willing to use that miraculous power, never to satisfy his own flesh or his own need, but was willing to use it in order to satisfy the needs of others. In those days the multitude was very great and they had nothing to eat. And Jesus called his disciples and said unto them, I have compassion on the multitude.

There again we have that word related to Jesus Christ, compassion on the multitudes. Always it seemed when he saw the multitude of people, his heart was moved with compassion. Now here he is compassionate because of their physical needs.

It is interesting how considerate Jesus always is. Sometimes we become very insensitive to the needs of others, but never Jesus. He was always sensitive to the needs of the people.

And he said, I have compassion on the multitude because they have been with me now for three days and they have nothing to eat. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way, for many of them have come from long distances. So it's concern for those people that have been with him now for three days.

And it's interesting if you do attempt to fast, the third day seems to be one of the most difficult days of the fast as far as physical strength. Somehow after the third, fourth, fifth day, your body changes, you begin to get a little stronger and you begin to lose that tremendous hunger. But the third day is a sort of a difficult day if a person is determined to fast.

And he realized that they've been there now for three days. Some of them had come from long distances to send them home in this condition. They would become weakened.

Some of them would faint. And so his disciples answered him, where can we get enough to satisfy these men here in the wilderness? Where can we get enough bread to take care of their needs out here in this wilderness area? And he said, how many loaves do you have? And they said seven. And so he commanded the people to sit down on the ground and he took the seven loaves and he gave thanks and he broke it and he gave to his disciples and set it before them.

And they did set them before the people and they had a few small fish and he blessed and commanded to set them, set them before them. So they did eat. And again, that word filled or glutted or stuffed, we might say today.

And they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about 4,000 and he sent them away. So again, taking just a few loaves, a few fish, blessing them and feeding a large multitude of people.

And then again, gathering more fragments at the end than what they started with in the feeding of the 5,000. When they gathered there, the 12 baskets, the word for basket is a word that signified a typical basket that was used by the Jews. It is interesting.

This particular word basket here is a typical word that is used for a basket that the Gentiles did use. Whatever significance that might have is a matter of speculation. Some have speculated that much of this crowd were Gentiles.

And so these Gentile type of baskets were available to collect the fragments that remained where the feeding of the 5,000 men beside women and children was near Bethsaida, a Jewish city is actually now over on the other side of the lake, more into Gentile territory. But they see in that the significance that Jesus is the bread of life, not to the Jews only, but now he is that bread of life also to the Gentiles. Because he is now feeding many Gentiles also miraculously with that bread of life.

Now, immediately he entered into a ship with his disciples and they came into the parts of Dalmanutha and the Pharisees came forth and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. Now, in those days, the people were looking for the Messiah. And they were, there were many men who came on the scene who declared themselves to be the Messiah.

And quite often these men who came on the scene declaring to be the Messiah promised that they were going to do some spectacular feat. Some of them promised that they were going to divide the Jordan River and to stop its flow like happened in the days of Joshua. And others promised many types of supernatural

feats that they were going to perform, like speak to the whole world simultaneously on satellite TV and everybody would understand it in their own language.

But these pretending Messiahs never did come through with their feat, but the Jews were looking for some supernatural, spectacular phenomena to happen at the hands of the Messiah in order that he might prove that he was the Messiah. So they asked him for a sign from heaven, but it says they were tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and he said, why does this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, there shall no sign be given unto this generation.

Another place in another gospel, it records that Jesus said unto them, a wicked and an adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Jesus did not perform miracles just to satisfy the curiosity of the crowd.

The purpose of his miracles were always the helping of the helpless. He always used his power to minister to the needs of people. He did not use them to minister to his own needs.

He did not use them just to make some spectacular display to draw attention or the attention of people to himself. Herod had heard of Jesus and the miracles that he did. And Herod wanted Jesus to perform a miracle for him, like having some magician show you some fancy trick.

But Jesus would not perform any miracles for Herod. He refused to perform miracles just to satisfy people's curiosity for supernatural phenomena. And so here, as they were seeking a sign, he just said no sign is going to be given to this generation.

Thomas, when the disciples told him that Jesus was risen from the dead, we have seen him, he said, I will not believe until I can take my finger and put it in his hand or take my hand and put it in his side. And so the disciples were gathered together and Thomas was with them. And Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst and he said, OK, Thomas, go ahead.

Put your finger in my hand, put your hand in my side. Now, when Jesus said that to Thomas, the first thing it indicated is that Jesus was there listening when Thomas said, I'm not going to believe until, though they didn't see him at that point. Jesus was right there with him, as he said, where two or three of you are gathered together in my name, I'm going to be there in the midst.

And so he was showing them, first of all, that he was in the midst of them when Thomas was expressing his doubts. And so when he appeared, the first said, Thomas, OK, Thomas, go ahead. You wanted to do that? Go ahead, take your finger, put it in my hand, take your hand, put it.

Oh, Lord, he said, my Lord and my God, I believe, you know, Jesus said, well, blessed are they who seeing believe, but more blessed are they who believe without seeing. There are some people that are always looking for signs. I don't know that that is healthy.

We read in the scriptures that there is a man who will be coming on the scene very soon, and he's going to be showing all kinds of spectacular signs. And if a person's faith is geared towards seeing some spectacular sign or miracle or whatever, they're going to be in big trouble. Because when the Antichrist comes, he's going to come with all types of signs and wonders and lying miracles and deceiving the people by the signs that he is able to perform.

So it is not a healthy thing to put your faith or trust in the signs that a person might be able to produce. It is important that you put your faith and your trust in the word of God, what God has said, and to believe God's word, not requiring some supernatural sign before you believe. And so he left them and entering into a ship again, he departed to the other side.

Now, when the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and neither had they any bread in the ship except for just maybe one loaf, he said unto them, take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves. Oh, he knows we forgot to get bread.

And when Jesus realized what they were thinking, he said unto them, why do you think that I said that? Because you didn't bring bread. Didn't you perceive? Didn't you understand? Is your heart still hardened? Having eyes to see, did you not see? Having ears to hear, have you not heard? Do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves among the 5,000, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up? And they said, 12. And when there were seven loaves among the 4,000, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up? And they said, seven.

He said, how is it then that you don't understand? You know, if you've got one loaf, that's all we need. If, you know, I was talking about us getting hungry or needing to eat while we were on our way across. Leaven was always a symbol of evil.

It was the starter that they would always save from the previous batch of dough that they had made. And it was that like the sour dough that they old 49ers used to use. They always had their starter.

They always keep a part of the dough from the previous batch that had already been leavened. And when they would make a new batch of dough, they would stick in this little part from the old batch, their starter, that would start the fermenting process in the new batch of dough. And it would permeate the whole batch of dough by this process of fermentation.

Or actually, it's a method of putrefaction or fermentation by which it permeates the whole loaf. And because just a little bit could permeate the whole loaf by this process of fermentation, it was to the Jews a very good symbol of evil. How just a little bit of evil tolerated can permeate throughout a whole system.

And when Jesus said, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees or the leaven of Herod, he was talking about that evil of the Pharisees, that type of spirit that is able to permeate and infect others, not talking about the fact that they had forgotten to take bread. Now, when they came to Bethsaida, they brought to him a blind man, and they besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town.

Now, rather than performing this miracle in front of all of the people, Jesus rather took this blind man out of town. And when he had spit on his eyes and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and he said, I see men as trees walking.

In other words, he began to have some vision, but it was very blurry. After that, he put his hands on his eyes again and he asked him to look up and he was restored and saw every man clearly. And he sent him away to his house saying, neither go into the town nor tell it to anyone in the town.

You just go home and don't tell anybody. This is an interesting miracle in as much as it is the only miracle recorded where there was a gradual healing. The first time Jesus laid his hands upon him, he was not completely healed, but he had a partial restoration of his sight.

And it was only after Jesus laid his hands on him the second time that he had clear vision. And so it was a case of a gradual healing and the only one we have recorded in the ministry of Jesus. There is much about healing that I do not understand.

I basically don't understand why it is that some people are healed and other people are not healed. If I were God granting healing, I feel that I would be more generous and I would be more prone to heal those good worthy people. And there are some of the people I've seen healed that I would never heal them.

So it's good that I'm not God, because I could really mess things up in a hurry. And soon men would be coming on the basis of their goodness and their merit and their worth. And there would be no more grace.

I could wipe grace out in a Because I definitely would give more by deserving than I would just, you know, grace. I do believe in healing. I believe very strongly in healing.

I believe there are all kinds of healing. I believe that there are gradual healings. Any healing process is divine as far as I'm concerned.

Even if the doctor has operated and removed the appendix or whatever and ties things off and sew things up, the doctor doesn't cause that skin to come together and to knit and all. He stitches it and he knows that there is a process by which those cells will join together and heal and scar over and, you know, will seal themselves up. He doesn't do that.

He just, he knows the processes of healing that God has established. There's an established process of divine healing within our bodies, and it's nonetheless divine just because it is nature who created nature and the processes of nature. There are some who object to divine healing, saying it's all in a person's mind anyhow.

It was psychosomatic. Well, God help those poor critics. If a person has a psychosomatic illness and they come and are prayed for and they are released from that psychological block and they are able to function properly, why knock it? I don't know what was causing the problem in that individual.

Maybe they did have a psychological block and they had just blocked out any vision and it was purely a psychosomatic thing. So what? If they come and are prayed for and can see, why not just rejoice in what God has done? He's done a divine healing in their mind. If you don't want to acknowledge it physically, at least it has gone on in their emotions and in their minds and he's done a healing of the scars or the wounds or whatever was there.

And I'm willing to acknowledge that and praise God for it and acknowledge it as divine healing. I have seen miraculous healings. I have seen gradual healings and I've seen people die.

And I do not know why it is that some have gradual healing, some have miraculous healings and some are not healed. I don't know that. That isn't in my realm or category to understand.

And I frankly confess, I don't understand. God oftentimes works in ways in which we do not expect him to work. God often works in very natural ways, but nonetheless, a supernatural work of God.

In the early years of our ministry, when we were struggling to keep alive, it was necessary many, many times to pray and trust God for the physical needs of the family. I mean, when in the Lord's prayer, it says, give us this day our daily bread. We know what that is all about.

So many days we had to pray for our daily bread because we didn't have the money to buy it. But we did have the promise of God. My God shall supply all of your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Now, God did not always send someone to the door with an envelope and money in it. He did sometimes, but not always. God did not always send the money in the mail.

Sometimes he did, but not always. God did not always send people to leave a basket or a bag of groceries on our front steps, but many times he did. But more often than not, God supplied our needs by someone calling up and saying, hey, Chuck, I need someone to help me today.

Can you work for me today? I'd say, yep. And as I was on my way, I'd say, thank you, Lord, for providing for our needs. And God so often provided for our needs by giving me an opportunity to work for someone for wages, whereby we were able to buy the food for dinner.

Many times Alpha Beta Mark would call and they'd say, we need a manager down in Store 11. Can you go down there this morning? I'd say, sure. And I'd take off and our needs would be supplied.

Or the mortuary would call and say, we've got a body we have to go out and pick up. Can you do it? I'd say, sure. And I'd get five bucks for every body I'd pick up.

And I'd say, thank you, Lord. You know, we've got food for dinner tonight. God has a sense of humor too.

God does not always use supernatural methods, you know, as we think of supernatural to take care of us or our needs. Many times it is through very natural processes that God is working. But the important thing is that we learn to see the supernatural in the natural.

I feel sorry for that person who has lost the sight of God. I feel sorry for that person who can't look at a flower and be in awe of God. To smell a rose and not be able to just worship God and the Creator.

Now, I don't think you should get all caught up in roses, you know, God, you know. There is an irrational way of looking at nature. And the irrational way of looking at nature is looking at nature and worshiping nature.

Saying, oh, that's God. Mother Nature did this. The rational man looks at nature and worships the God who has created the natural, the things of nature around him.

That's the rational way of looking at nature. Paul tells us of those who made the mistake of worshiping and serving the creature more than the Creator. Always sad when a person is so nearsighted he can only see the obvious and he worships then the obvious rather than God who has created those things.

So, here we have Jesus healing this man. And again, using spit. Using unlikely methods.

Guy comes and he's blind and he says, you know, can you heal me? And Jesus spits in his eyes. Now, another time Jesus spit on the ground and made mud and he put the mud in the guy's eyes and he said, now go down to the pool and wash the mud out. And when he did, he was able to see.

Again, I love it because the Lord is not going to be confined to a pattern. How we would love to get God in a box. How men love to tell you exactly how God is going to work and they put the limitations and the confines around God and God only works in this way and only works in this dispensation and only and

they're trying to limit God.

And unfortunately, many times they do limit God's work in their own lives as did the children of Israel because of their unbelief. As we are told in the Psalms, and they limited the Holy One of Israel because of their unbelief. But Jesus is using a variety of ways.

Healing instantly, hear a gradual healing, sometimes touching, sometimes not touching, just saying a word, sometime going to visit, sometimes just saying it and say, go home and you'll find it's done, but not being confined to a pattern. And so Jesus went out. Now he's at Bethsaida and his disciples with him into the towns of Caesarea Philippi.

So he's leaving Bethsaida, which is at the north end, the extreme north end of the Sea of Galilee. And now he is heading on up into upper Galilee on into the area of Caesarea Philippi, which is clear on up at the end of the upper Galilee, right at the base of Mount Hermon. The name of it today is Banias because when the Greeks came through, they built a shrine next to the cave from which the Jordan River used to gush forth.

Now after earthquakes and all, there was a change underground and the Jordan River comes forth. Oh, a hundred feet below these caves almost, but it used to come out of these caves. And so they built this little shrine to the Greek God Pan.

And the Greeks called it Panias. But the Arabs had difficulty pronouncing Ps and they said Banias for Panias. And so the name has come to be Banias now of this area that was once Caesarea Philippi.

And by the way, he asked his disciples saying unto them, whom do men say that I am? Now the time has come when it, when Jesus is going to reveal to the disciples his true identity. Up to now he has not declared himself to his disciples, his true mission. They suspicion it, I'm sure, but he's never really declared it to them.

And he said, whom do men say that I am? And they answered John the Baptist. Some say Elijah and others say one of the prophets. And he said unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Peter answered and said unto him, thou art the Christ.

Now, Christ is not a name. It is a title. It is the Greek for the Hebrew Messiah.

And the word Messiah in Hebrew means the anointed one. And the word Christ in Greek means the anointed one. Now it was customary in those days when a king was crowned to anoint that king with oil, to pour oil over his head in an anointing ceremony by which he was recognized and acknowledged now as the king.

So Jesus using the title Christ or Messiah was that signifying he was anointed by God to be the king. And they were looking for that king to come anointed by God. Thou art the Messiah, the Christ.

And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. The time has not yet come to reveal himself to the world. He's revealing himself now to his disciples, but he does not yet reveal himself to the world.

So he began to teach them that the son of man, and notice he did not tell them about his crucifixion until after he told them who he was. Now it is because they had a totally different concept of the Messiah. They were following the commonly accepted concept of the Messiah, that the Messiah was going to establish

God's kingdom, that the Jews were again going to reign over the earth, that he was going to overthrow the yoke of the Roman government and of their oppressors.

And once again, God's kingdom was going to come to the earth through Israel and they would rule over the earth again. And because that was the common concept of the Messiah, Jesus, as soon as Peter acknowledged thou art the Messiah, began to teach them that the son of man, which is a title of the Messiah given to him in the prophets, especially in Daniel and in Ezekiel, that the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected of the elders and of the chief priests and scribes and be killed. And after three days rise again.

So now he began to prepare them for the fact that he was not going to perform as they expected the Messiah to perform in immediately setting up the kingdom of God. But I'm going to be crucified. I have to be rejected.

The prophecy of Isaiah said he is despised and rejected of men that has to be fulfilled. Isaiah said he would be numbered with the transgressors in his death that had to be fulfilled. David in the 22nd Psalm described his death by crucifixion that had to be fulfilled.

And so Jesus is telling them, look, it's not what you think it's going to be. I'm going to have to be rejected. Daniel said, but the Messiah will be cut off that had to be fulfilled and not receive the kingdom that had to come to pass.

And so he's seeking to prepare them. I'm going to be rejected. I'm going to be turned over into the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes.

They're going to kill me. But after three days, I will rise again. Now, somehow when Jesus said they're going to kill me, this was so shocking shocking to them so far from their concept of the Messiah that their brains just shut off and they didn't hear the rest of what he said.

They didn't hear him say, I'm going to rise again the third day. It was just so shocking when he said, they're going to, they're going to kill me. And they didn't hear, you know, in three days, I'm going to rise again.

Now, Peter took him and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter saying, get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. As Peter was rebuking the Lord for declaring that he was going to be crucified, that he was going to die.

Peter was only expressing really his own personal feelings as a man who loved the Lord and didn't want him to talk about his death. But Jesus rebuked Peter really for lack of discernment. He doesn't really understand the things of God.

He only understands the things of men. If he understood the things of God, he would know that the Messiah would have to be cut off, that the Messiah would have to be slain, that the Messiah would have to rise again from the dead. So when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

The three requirements for discipleship. First of all, is to deny himself. How far this is from the world's position today.

The world today is saying you must assert yourself. And they even have created now assertive classes where you can learn how to assert yourself. You don't have to take anything from anybody if you'll just learn to assert yourself.

And I understand the women are crowding to these classes as if they needed it. Jesus said no, to come after me you have to deny yourself. Paul tells us, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself and took on the form of man.

Denied himself in order that he might be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He denied himself that place with the Father in order that he might come down as a servant and die in the cross. So if you're going to come after me, Jesus said, you too will have to deny yourself and take up your cross and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life will lose it. That person who is looking for life, doing everything he can to find life, its meaning, its purpose and following his ambitions, his goals, seeking to save your life, you'll lose it. But whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospels, the same will save it.

For what shall it profit a man if he would gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Now tonight think for a moment of the greatest ambition that you have. If you could be, play that game for a moment. If you could be anything you wanted to be, if you could have anything you wanted to have, what would be the greatest ambition of your life? What would you choose? Now, if in achieving that goal, you lost your own soul, would it be worth it? What would it profit a man if he would gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul? If you gain the whole world, how long do you think you could hold it? Now, someone said something to me the other day that absolutely astounded me.

I never thought of it that way. And it just really blew my mind. This fellow said, I just celebrated my 60th birthday, which means I have lived 1% of the time since Adam.

Man, that just shocked me to realize I've almost lived 1% of history, of the time of history since Adam. Man, what a shocking thought. So if you gain the world, how long do you think you could hold it? How long could you enjoy it? 100 years? You think you're going to live to be 100 years old? You think by the time you were 98, you'd still enjoy it? You see, the Lord is talking about eternity now.

What would it profit a man if he would gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul? That's eternal. The gaining of the world is only for a short time. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season because he knew that sin is always limited.

That pleasure in sin has its definite time limitations, but that walk with God is forever. Esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? What will you take to trade for your soul? I am amazed at the things that people give in exchange for their souls.

I'm disheartened. You know, they say the Indians over here were taken advantage of by the people coming from the old world, by these early traders, trading them these little baubles, glass beads for expensive gold and silver artifacts. You think, oh, those poor Indians, they were taken advantage of by those white men coming in, and they were, unfortunately.

They traded those expensive golden artifacts for just beads. How foolish. Oh, wait a minute.

What are you trading your soul for? What kind of a deal is Satan offering you for your soul? What will a man give in exchange for his soul? Some men, just for foolish pride. Some men for few moments of pleasure. Satan is holding out these little baubles.

Your soul, man, your soul. 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 comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. Now Jesus is saying, I'm going to die.

I'm going to rise again. And now he's saying, I'm going to come in the glory of the Father with the holy angels. So the Messiah is going to come in glory and power and establish the kingdom of God, but not this trip.

This trip, the Messiah is going to be rejected, turned over to the scribes and Pharisees, killed, but on the third day rise again. But I'm coming again one day in the glory and in the power of the Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, verily I say unto you, there are some of those that are standing here which will not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

Now, what did he mean by that? Because those disciples have all died and we have not yet seen the kingdom of God come with power. Was Jesus mistaken? Well, first of all, no, Jesus was not mistaken. If my interpretation of a scripture would make it appear that Jesus was mistaken, then my interpretation is wrong.

If my interpretation of what Jesus said would make what Jesus said ridiculous or foolish, my interpretation is wrong. And many times people misinterpret the words of Jesus. And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up into a high mountain apart by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so that no launderer on earth can make them that white. And there appeared unto them Elijah and Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

Now, Peter, James, and John were taken up into this high mountain, Mount Hermon, which is just there at Caesarea Philippi. Caesarea Philippi is right at the base. So Jesus, six days later, took them on up into this mountain.

And there he was transfigured before them. His raiment did shine. And while he was there in this transfigured state, Moses and Elijah appeared, and they were talking with him.

There they saw, Jesus said, there are some standing here that are not going to die until they see the kingdom with power. And there God took them, I believe, into a time chamber. And they saw Christ in the glory that he will have and the power when he comes again to the earth, talking with Moses and Elijah.

So they were taken out of this time zone into the eternal. And they actually saw the kingdom of God coming with power and glory. Or they saw the kingdom of God coming with power as he declares.

And Peter answered and said to Jesus, oh, master, it was good for us to be here. Let's make three tabernacles, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah. And there was the beginning of the desire to create shrines in the Holy Land to commemorate the sites where the exciting things happened.

Poor Peter, if he only knew the mess that he made of the Holy Land. And why did he say this? Because he didn't know what to say. Now, if you don't know what to say, it's probably better to say nothing.

There are some people, you know, better say something, you know. And so what you say is foolish because you just don't know what to say. Really better to keep your mouth shut.

Better to keep your mouth shut and let people think you're a fool than open it and dispel all their doubts. They were afraid he didn't know what to say, so he makes this stupid suggestion. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them.

And a voice came out of the cloud saying, this is my beloved son, hear him. We read in Hebrews chapter one, God who in different times of history and in different ways spoke to our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his own dear son. Now here was Moses.

What does Moses represent? God speaking to man through the law. Here was Elijah. What does Elijah represent? God speaking to man through the prophets.

How is the Old Testament usually divided? The law and the prophets. You remember so often Jesus would say in this is all the law and the prophets. That's how the Old Testament was divided.

God in various times and in various ways spoke to the fathers through the law and through the prophets. But in these last days he's spoken unto us by his own dear son. So here, Moses who stands for the law, Elijah who stands for the prophets, are there talking with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And God says, this is my beloved son, listen to him. Hear ye him. For the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Hear ye him. There are still some who would like to go back under the law instead of living in that grace and truth through Jesus Christ. But God is saying, look, this is my beloved son, hear ye him.

Now he did not say anything contrary to the law and the prophets. I did not come, he said, to destroy, but to fulfill. And he fulfilled the law and the prophets.

His life was a fulfillment. But in the fulfilling of the law and the prophets, he brought to us this glorious grace of God whereby we have our relationship with God today, our standing before God through grace. And suddenly when they had looked round around them, they saw no man anymore except Jesus only with themselves.

Moses and Elijah disappeared. And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man the things that they had seen until he was risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, but they questioned with one another, what does this rising from the dead mean? They just could not understand this.

And they asked him saying, why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must first come? Now you see, they've recognized you're the Messiah, but the scribes say that Elijah has got to come before the Messiah. And he answered and told them Elijah verily comes first and restores all things. And how is it written of the son of man that he must suffer many things? Now you're, you're saying, how is it that the scriptures say that Elijah has to first come? But how is it that the scriptures say that the son of man, the Messiah is going to have to suffer many things.

He's pointing out another aspect. Yes, the scriptures do say that Elijah will first come, but it also says that the son of man or the Messiah is going to suffer many things. Therefore, there are the two aspects of the coming of the Messiah.

He will be coming in power and glory. And prior to that, Elijah will come and restore all things. But Elijah has come for John the Baptist actually fulfilled that ministry of Elijah as the forerunner.

And so he said, but I say unto you that Elijah has indeed come and they have done unto him whatsoever they desired as it was written of him. So even the word was fulfilled concerning John the Baptist. And when he came to his disciples back down from the hill, now he saw a great multitude about them and the scribes were questioning them.

And immediately all the people, when they beheld him were greatly amazed and they ran to him and greeted him. And he asked the scribes, what were you questioning them about? Oh, here now is the shepherd and he sees his sheep in trouble. These scribes are there talking with him and he, you know, going to go right to the defense.

What were you talking to them about? The true heart of the shepherd to protect his sheep from the wolves. Here at Calvary Chapel, one evening when we were in the other chapel and we were conducting at that time, the Monday night studies, many had come forward to receive Christ. And I was back in the back room, ministering to them.

And when I came out from the back room, having ministered to those, to those who had come to receive Christ, I saw these guys in suits. And that's the first thing that made me suspicious because in those days, nobody wore suits, especially on Monday night. And, and they had little groups of kids around them and they were talking a mile a minute.

And I said, Romaine, get them. And Romaine and I went out and we began to tap these guys and say, come over here. We want to talk to you.

And so we gathered these guys in suits together. I said, okay, who are you guys? I mean, I saw them and I saw him talk to these kids that, you know, many of the kids, just a week, two weeks, a month old in Jesus. And here, you know, and, and when these guys are all there and talking so fast, you just knew that they're trying to lay some weird trip on them.

And I mean, I was ready to make a whip and drive these guys out of the temple. And I was really hot. And I said, what were you talking to them about? Who are you guys? Where'd you come from? Oh, brother, bless God.

Praise God. Hallelujah, brother. Oh, praise the Lord, brother.

Bless God. Oh, brother, brother, brother. I said, wait a minute.

Don't brother me. Who are you? Where did you come from? What are you doing here? Oh, bless God, brother. Praise the Lord.

Bless God. Hallelujah. I said, you're not answering my question.

And by their very actions, I had natural discernment, not spiritual. I wasn't in the spirit at the moment. I said, are you guys from the witness Lee group? Oh, bless God, brother.

Praise God. Hallelujah, brother. Oh, praise the Lord.

Bless God. Yeah. And Romaine says out.

Oh, but brother, bless God. We're brothers, man. Oh, well, you know, why don't you become the local church of Santa Ana? You can be the local church here.

And I said, you gotta be kidding for me to say that we are the only true church in Santa Ana, the only true representation of Jesus Christ and the unity of the body of Christ in Santa Ana is ridiculous. There are many excellent churches in Santa Ana, and we are not the only true church. And we could never take that type of a position or, or title for ourselves.

Romaine says out. And they went out doing the old brother, brother, hallelujah bit, you know, as Romaine was getting them to their cars and he followed them all the way to the car and says, I'm going to stand here and I want to see you out of that driveway and never come back here again. You know, I understand how Jesus felt when he saw the scribes having cornered his little sheep down here who were not yet that far along in their understanding.

And he moves right in. He says, all right, whatever you're questioning them about. And one of the men in the crowd answered, master, I brought unto thee, my son, which has a dumb spirit and wherever he takes him, he tears him.

He foams at the mouth. He gnashes with his teeth and he's pining away. And I spoke to your disciples that they should cast him out and they couldn't.

And he answered him and said, oh, faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer? You bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him. And when he saw him immediately, the spirit tore him and he fell on the ground and he wallowed foaming.

And Jesus asked his father, how long did this come into him? And he said, oh, when he was a child. And oftentimes it has cast him into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.

And Jesus said unto him, if you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes. And immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, oh Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. Very a picture that just moves with pathos.

You can imagine that the feeling of this father to see a son in this condition, unable to speak, but worse than that, going into these fits where his body is writhing, where he begins to foam at the mouth and gnash his teeth, where oftentimes he would be jumping in the fire and going through the fits or jumping into the water and going through the fits and how it must have just really ripped on the heart of this father. And in desperation, he's brought him to Jesus and Satan is taking his last fling. Even while he's coming to Christ, the spirit takes hold of him, begins to tear him.

He falls in the ground and he's wallowing there and foaming at the mouth. And the father in desperation says, oh Lord, if you can do anything, please, please help us. Have compassion.

And Jesus said, if you believe, all things are possible to him that believes. Oh, what a glorious promise. All things are possible to him who believes.

And immediately the father child cried out and said, oh Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. God help that area of my life where there's still unbelief.

And when Jesus saw that the people were running together, and of course, something like this, the crowd, you know, would come running out of curiosity. He rebuked the foul spirit saying unto him, thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him and enter him no more. Now, interesting that Jesus would make that second command, enter him no more.

Jesus said when an evil spirit goes forth out of a man, he goes through the wilderness areas looking for a house to inhabit. And if he finds none, he'll come back to the house from whence he was driven. And if he finds it all swept and clean and garnished, he'll go out and get seven other spirits that they might come and abide in that house.

And the state of that man is worse than his first. That's why Jesus said, don't enter him again. One night I'm going to talk about demonology.

I don't want to get into that tonight. It's a subject I really don't like to talk about, but we probably should know about it. Fortunately, here in the United States, there is not really much true demon possession.

There's a lot of imagined demon possession, but not much true demon possession. All kinds of demon oppression. I mean, as a child of God, you're wrestling against these principalities and powers.

We are in a spiritual warfare, but because of the strong Christian influence, we do not see much actual demon possession here. Not nearly as much as you see when you go into some of the pagan foreign countries where the light of the gospel does not shine bright. There you see actual cases of demon possession, many of them.

We are seeing more here as the occult and the Eastern mystic religions are developing and growing in the United States. We are beginning to see more demon possession. And as a result of that, I will be talking about it some night, but I really don't want to get into it tonight.

And so the spirit cried and tore him sore and came out of him. And he was lying there like he was dead. In so much that many of the people around were saying, oh, he died.

He's dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up and he arose. And when he was coming to the house, his disciples asked him privately, why couldn't we cast him out? Good question.

They were powerless in this case. And he said unto them, this kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting. Now, it would appear that there are rankings of demon spirits.

And the Bible does definitely speak of the rankings, principalities, powers, which are all rankings. And there are some that are more powerful than others and are more resistant to exorcism than are others. And this was one of those more powerful demons.

The disciples at this point weren't able to handle it. Jesus did. And his answer to them is that this kind can only come out by fasting and prayer.

We'll be talking about the various kinds of evil spirits when we do talk about that. And they departed from there and they passed through Galilee. And he tried to do it secretly.

He didn't want anyone to know it. For he was teaching his disciples and he said unto them, the son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men and they shall kill him. And after he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

Notice he's emphasizing this. He's trying to prepare them now. They know now he's the Messiah, but he's trying to prepare them for a different Messiah than what the people and they were actually looking for.

But they did not understand his saying and they were afraid to ask him. They did not understand how he's talking about his death and resurrection. And, and, and they were just afraid to question him about it.

And so when they came to Capernaum and being in the house, he asked them, what were you fellows arguing about back there in the path? But they were ashamed to tell him they were silent because back there on the path, they were arguing among themselves as to who was going to be the greatest. And they were embarrassed to say, well, we were, you know, Peter said he was going to be the greatest. And I know I am, you know, and we were arguing about that.

They were embarrassed to confess to the Lord, the petty argument that they were in about who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom. Saying things that when Jesus said, what were you saying? They were ashamed to tell him they were embarrassed to tell him. We have all been in that position.

We've said things that we would be embarrassed to tell Jesus what we said. We should say, well, what did you say? Well, nothing. We've all done things that we would be embarrassed for Jesus to know that we did them.

As if he didn't, that's what we need to know. Jesus knows everything we say. He knows everything we do.

The Bible says everything is naked and open before him with whom we have to do. You don't hide anything from him. We need to be more aware of that.

We need to be conscious of the presence of Jesus at all times so that we know that we're not hiding anything from him. And because he knew what they were arguing about, he said, come fellas, I want to talk to you. And he sat down, which is the position that the rabbi took whenever he was going to teach important lessons.

And instead of rebuking them for arguing about who was going to be the greatest, instead of condemning them for this, he told them how they could be the greatest. You know, Jesus so often has a different attitude towards me than what I anticipate. I've messed up.

I've failed. I think, oh man, he's going to wail on me now, you know. Because the Lord says, come here, check on what I'm talking about.

You know, and you're expecting him to really lay it on you. And instead, he's so compassionate. He said, now look, this is the way you can be successful.

Now you failed that time because, and instead of condemning me for my failure, he only sits down and points out how I can avoid that failure the next time, how I can be successful the next time. I love the Lord because he is never condemning. He's always so compassionate.

He's always so helpful. Jesus said, I didn't come to condemn the world, but that the world through me might be saved. And he who believes is not condemned.

I believe in Jesus because I believe in Jesus. I'm not perfect. I do stumble.

I do fall, but I'm not condemned. When I stumble and fall, he doesn't come and condemn me. He only shows me how to walk.

So they're arguing a petty argument over who's going to be the greatest. He doesn't condemn them for that and say, what a stupid thing to be arguing about. You know, he says, look, you want to be the greatest.

This is how, if any man wants to be first and let him be last and let him become the servant. He said on another occasion, if you want to be great in God's kingdom, then learn to be the servant of all. He had said before, if you seek to save your life, you're going to lose it.

But if you'll lose your life for my sake, then you'll find it. You'll save it. So you want to be great.

Here's the path to greatness. Not as you think it's not through ambition and drive and pushing yourself ahead of the others and pulling others down that you might ascend above them. But the path of greatness is by taking the place of a servant and beginning to serve one another.

Jesus said, whosoever would be the chief among you, let him be the servant of all. Now, the real position of the pastor of the church is that of the servant to the church. The servant of all.

I oftentimes tell the people back in the prayer room who've come to accept Jesus Christ, one of the fringe benefits now of your becoming a child of God is you just picked up a bunch of servants. For we who are on the staff here at Calvary, the word minister actually means servant. And we are here to serve your needs and we're available to serve you.

That's what it's all about. And Jesus is saying, look, if you want to be great, then be a servant. And then he took a child and he set the child in the middle of them.

And when he had taken the child in his arms, I love this picture of Jesus, takes a little child and then he just takes him in his arms and he holds the child. He's sitting there, probably sits him on his lap, holding him there in his arms. And he said to them, whosoever will receive one of such children in my name actually is receiving me.

And whosoever shall receive me, doesn't receive me, but him that sent me. Now, Jesus is saying, actually what you do for a child is being done for me. Now, in that culture, the children were considered almost non-persons until they came of age.

No one would take time for a child. They were just allowed to grow up until they came of age. And then they lay on them the responsibilities of adulthood.

But Jesus is saying, take time for the children. Whatever you're doing for a child, you're actually doing for me. If you receive a child in my name, you're receiving me.

And if you receive me, you're receiving the father, the one that sent me. Now, the disciples are always throwing in things that don't really relate to the situation that he's talking about, because they didn't always understand what he was talking about. And so John answered and said, master, we saw one who was casting out devils in your name and he didn't follow us.

And so we forbid him because he didn't follow us. Jesus said, don't forbid him. There's no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can actually speak evil of me.

For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. Now, John has interjected this sectarianism.

Lord, he was casting out devils, but he didn't call himself a Baptist. So we told him to stop it. He said, hey, learn that you're working together.

If he's doing it in my name, he can't be speaking evil of me. Let him alone. God help the church that someday we might wise up to the fact that we're all serving the same Lord.

May God help us to identify the enemy. It's not the church down the street. We should be working with them for the cause of Jesus Christ.

But the church is so busy competing and fighting with each other that we're really not doing much to damage the enemy's territory. God help us. May the church of Jesus Christ really get together and learn to love one another and learn to get along with one another.

We were down in Mexicali this week visiting with the fellowship that is there in Mexicali. God is blessing the fellowship there in a tremendous way. Over 900 people were out at the banquet where I spoke on Friday night.

We loaned the people down there several thousand dollars to buy a building that they might worship in because the fellowship was growing so rapidly. They had to have a place to meet. And so there was this place for sale that was an ideal location for them.

And so we loaned them, Calvary Chapel, we, that's you, Calvary Chapel, we loaned them the money so they could purchase this church. Well, they made arrangements to pay off the loan. And the people had pledged the money over a period of time to pay off the loan to us.

But in the meantime, this peso devaluation thing has hit. And when we made the arrangements, there was, there were 25 pesos to a dollar. Now there are 70 pesos to the dollar.

And though they've paid us back \$150,000, they owe us now more in pesos than what they owed when they began. And it's a very sad thing for the church. And so I, and also, you know, the government has put a freeze and you can't get dollars down there and all.

And so they were all worried because they didn't know how they were going to make their payments to us. And so they had a meeting and I was sitting with them in the meeting and they said, now we don't know, you know, what can we do to make the payments off? And we said, forget it. We're all one body.

We're not worried about the payments. We're all one body in Jesus. And so as long as this situation exists and, and there's a problem, just forget it.

We're not concerned. We're not worried because you're doing the work of the Lord here. And we're all one body in Jesus.

We loaned the U.S. World Center, U.S. World Mission Center in Pasadena. We loaned them \$300,000 to buy their facility up there. And that was supposed to have been paid off two years ago in October, and they were unable to pay it off.

And so they sent their committee down here to tell how sorry they were and what they were going to try to do. And all I said, hey, we're all one body. It's the Lord's money.

You're doing the Lord's work. Don't worry about it. Forget it.

We're not worried about it. It's God's money. We're all one body.

We're all the church. God help us that we can see that truth, that we are all serving the same Lord, one body in Christ. Now, Jesus has this little child in his arms and he's talking about receiving a child and ministering to a child and you're ministering to me.

And John throws in this sectarian bit and Jesus throws it back out. But then he comes back to the child and he said, and whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, these little children, whoever would offend one of these little ones that believe in me. It was better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he was cast into the sea.

I love the spunk of Jesus, gentle Jesus, meek and mild. Look upon this little child. And he's saying, take a millstone, tie it around his neck and toss him out in the sea.

Hey, that millstone, you ought to see the millstone there in Capernaum. It's about as big as this pulpit with a round hole in the middle. And it is round stone, sort of a lava stone.

I mean, if that thing were hung around your neck and you're tossed in the sea of Galilee, you're going to go down fast. How evil it is to plant doubt in people. In the heart of a child.

How evil it is to destroy the faith, that beautiful faith that children have. You know, whenever I'm sick, who I call to pray for me? Children. I love the children to pray for me.

I don't want any doubts. Call my grandkids. Pray for grandpa.

The beauty of that faith, the simplicity of that faith that they have in God. What kind of a twisted mind would try to destroy the beautiful faith of a child? Whatever type of twisted mind it is, Jesus said it would be better for that person to take a millstone and hang it on his neck and toss him on into the sea than to destroy the faith of one of these little children who trusted me. If your hand offend you, cut it off.

Better for you to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell. Into the fire that shall never be quenched. Where their worm dieth not and neither is the fire quenched.

Now, this is Jesus talking, friend. There are a lot of modernists today who say, well, hell isn't hell. There is no hell.

There were a modernist minister, a Unitarian minister and a Christian science practitioner going down the road together. They ran into a concrete abutment and all three of them immediately were in eternity. The modern minister says, I can't be here.

This place doesn't exist. The Unitarian said, it's only a state of mind. And the Christian scientist said, I'm not here and it's not hot.

But this is Jesus talking and I am afraid to add to or to take away from his words. I think he knows more about it than does Herbert W. Armstrong or the Jehovah Witnesses. And rather than listening to what they may say, it is better to just listen to what Jesus says.

According to him, it is a real place. A place to be avoided at all costs. Better to live a life in a maimed condition than to go into hell.

Whole, where the fire will never be quenched. Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. If your foot offends you, cut it off.

It is better for you to enter into life lame than having two feet to be cast into hell. Into the fire that never shall be quenched. The word translated hell here is not the usual Greek word translated hell.

The usual Greek word is Hades, which does speak of a temporary abode for the unrighteous dead in the heart of the earth. But this particular Greek word is Gehenna. This is not a temporary abode.

This is the place of the final consignment to Satan and his angels. And it was prepared for Satan and his angels. And those who choose to cast their lot with Satan and his angels, God will grant them that choice.

And this is where they will spend, or this is where they are consigned for eternity. If your eye offend you, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than having two eyes be cast into Gehenna's fire where their worm dies not and the fire is not quenched.

For everyone shall be salted with fire. Or the salt was used as a purifying instrument, so purified by fire. And every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, wherewith will you season it? Have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another. Heavy words. Jesus said them.

I dare not tamper with them. I will not tamper with them. I will not try to modify them.

I refuse to tamper with them. It is better to believe and find yourself wrong than not to believe and find yourself wrong. So we pray.

Father, we thank you for the opportunity of studying your word. And now may thy spirit hide it in our hearts that we might not sin against you, Lord. May thy word be strength to us.

May we feed upon it. In Jesus name. Amen.

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