

Be Mindful of Your Worship...Beware

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Preacher: Jim Masters

[0:00] If you would please take your Bibles and go to Matthew's Gospel. Matthew chapter 16.

Matthew chapter 16. And that black Bible in the chair in front of you if you need a Bible. Pull that out and go to the back. Find page 13 for Matthew chapter 16.

Page 13 in that black Bible. Matthew chapter 16. We're gonna study the first 12 verses this morning. Again, I apologize for my stuffiness.

Thank you for being gracious to me. I'll do my best, Cailin, not to get all my slobber all over this little gizwichtet. Well, let me read and then we'll dive in, okay?

Matthew chapter 16, the first 12 verses. And coming, testing, the Pharisees and Sadducees asked, asked a sign from heaven to show them.

[1:17] But answering, he said to them, evening you say, fair weather, for the sky is red. Morning, a storm today.

The sky is red and becoming dark and gloomy. The face of the sky you know how to discern, but the signs of the times you are not able.

Verse four. An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah. And leaving them, he went away.

And coming to him to the other side, the disciples had forgotten to take bread. And Jesus said to them, watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

And reasoning among themselves, they said, because we took no bread. But knowing this, Jesus said, why do you reason among yourselves, little faith ones, that you have no bread?

[2:25] Do you not yet understand and remember the five loaves of the 5,000, and how many baskets you received? Or the seven loaves of the 4,000, and how many baskets you received?

How is it that you do not understand that I not speak to you concerning bread, but beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? Then they understood.

He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. If there's one thing, many, not all, although sometimes you wonder if it's all, many politicians, if there's one thing they're really good at, it's this, diverting attention away from the real subject at hand.

Especially when it comes to their view or their stance on a particular subject. Or topic. Many times they'll dance around and never seem to answer the question.

Now, some questions are phrased poorly. Other questions are phrased in a manipulative way.

Okay. So an answer may need clarification.

[3:47] I understand that. Still, many politicians love to do this. shift our attention away from the real issue.

Media and social media, they love to do the same thing. Shift our attention away from the real thing to divert us from what's most important.

And this is exactly what Jesus warns disciples with the religious leaders of the day. The Pharisees and Sadducees.

Beware. Don't get diverted. Beware. Watch out. Or, bow down and worship Jesus, the Messiah, King of Israel.

This is the driving theme of Matthew's gospel today. We'll see. Be mindful of that worship. Be mindful of your worship. Or beware. Be attentive.

[4:47] Watch. As you respond in worship to Jesus, be mindful of that. Be aware of it.

I'll put in a statement for you. Be mindful of your worship. Dot, dot, dot. Beware. We are called to faithfully worship Jesus and focus on Him.

We all worship something or someone. How is your Jesus worship gaged today? Be mindful of your worship of your Messiah, King. Worship is our response to God.

We understand something from God and there's a response that comes from our emotions, from our will. Obedience.

Galen talked about that in his prayer. How is your Jesus worship gaged today? Speak, O Lord. We're ready to hear in our acts of love and deeds of faith.

[5 : 52] You were singing that, remember? Great is your faithfulness. You're faithful. I'm gonna trust you. How is your worship today?

Another way to put it. Here's another statement. We should be concerned about heart issues, doctrinal affairs, spiritual matters, and staying faithful to the truth of Christ.

And why do we worry about the material, physical things of this life? It's stupid. Ridiculous. It's silly. We get it diverted and sidetracked.

We must watch out and beware, put it in a negative way, of the influence of sin in our lives, of false teaching, of people or situations who will try to take our hearts away from his most important, our love and devotion and commitment to Jesus, our King.

And don't worry about the material issues. They are not a priority. What's most vital are spiritual issues.

[7 : 10] Attitudes of the heart. That's why we sang those two songs. Great is your faithfulness. God's faithfulness to us. God of wonders.

He's amazing. Come thou fount of every blessing. My heart is prone to wonder. Lord, I feel it. Here's my heart.

Take and seal it. That's why we sang those songs. That's why I chose those songs. And speak, oh Lord. These are, I'm trying to get you, trying to get me to respond in worship to our God.

The permeating yeast or leaven, the pervading influence of the religious leaders was dangerous. Why?

Why? Because they rejected Christ. They lacked spiritual insight. They focused on traditions, not the word. They lived a life of religiosity. They had no relation with God.

[8 : 15] They were total fakes. And anything that gets us to respond in these ways, the way the religious leaders did, is anti-Christ, is non-Christian.

Is non-Christian. This opposition against Jesus, it continued to increase.

Now these religious leaders, they saw Jesus. They initiated this confrontation. We'll look at that in a moment. But this confrontation, Jesus is gonna take this and teach a huge lesson to his disciples who were worried about material stuff.

Oh, we got no bread. Jesus is trying to get them to see the religious leaders' hearts were evil. They didn't really follow God because they rejected his word for the sake of their traditions and denied Jesus to be the Messiah King.

They focused on other things and now, the disciples are going down the same road because they forgot Christ's power. They doubted his provision.

[9 : 29] They focused on material stuff. This is a challenge for us. Because you might say, well, I don't reject Jesus. I trust him. Good. But have you forgotten his great power?

Have you forgotten his great faithfulness? Have you forgotten have you doubted his provision for you? Are you focusing on material stuff?

Diverting you away from what's most important? From worshipping our King. The prosperity gospel preachers of our day, this is what they do.

They make wealth, health, riches, and the stuff of this life most important. Spiritual issues are secondary. Right? On the contrary, spiritual issues and sound doctrines first and foremost, as far as Jesus was concerned, all this material stuff is secondary.

Why? Because God always provides. He always provides for his people. He always does. Let's walk through this.

[10 : 41] This text. First, notice, you see the evil pervasive influence, verses one through four. We spend a lot of our time here verses one through four.

And this is the nuance. I gave you the nuance of the Greek. It's just simply and coming, testing, they asked a sign from heaven to show to them.

You know, what's striking, the Pharisees and Sadducees, these two groups got together. They definitely disagreed with each other. They didn't agree with each other.

It was like getting, I don't know, Republicans, Democrats together. There you go. That's for free. I don't have any notes. Trying to get them together. They hate each other, right? It's like they're all together. They're going to go after one person. Not Donald Trump. Jesus. One thing was for sure they had a common enemy who threatened their whole livelihood.

[11:45] Jesus. They both hated him. They despised him and his teaching. So this is shocking in and of itself. And notice, they came to him. They sought him.

They asked him their ridiculous Asa 9 question so they could test him. Their true motives revealed, notice, give us a sign from heaven or really from God.

And by the way, this word for testing, excuse me, one writer put it like this, is with a view to failure. In other words, they wanted him to fail. They expected him to fail.

What do they want? They wanted something so spectacular, so undeniable that it would clearly show that he was from God. But did they miss the healings he just did?

What about the feedings? What about the other miracles? Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. As I was going through this last night, my notes, I wrote this down because it hit me.

[12:57] These Pharisees and Sadducees were just like their forefathers who doubted. Where is the Lord? Exodus chapter 17, is it 17, 16?

Are the waters of Meribah? Where is the Lord really among us? I'm sorry, wait a second. You just cross through the Red Sea with water on both sides of you where you could stick your hand and pull out a nice big fat trout and cook that up later that evening and then you're asking if the Lord is really among you?

I'm sorry, are you an idiot or what? This is exactly what their forefathers did. Is it not? I mean, what other sign could be more convincing that he truly was the Messiah King of Israel?

That's because they didn't seek for something as an act of compassion or gentleness upon people. No, no, no. They were skeptics. They dared, even demanded, a great spectacle or show from Jesus. They wanted Jesus to accredit himself.

[14:12] What they want from Jesus, they want him to accredit himself by doing some spectacular miracle. But the miracles Jesus did were acts of God's goodness not to fulfill an unbelieving skeptic's demand to perform for them on a whim.

Jesus didn't do these miracles to be like, hey, look at me. Ain't I so awesome? That's not why Jesus did those miracles. That's not why Jesus did those miracles. Beware.

Beware of those who demand a sign from God and then won't believe in him unless he does a sign. They're most likely an unbelieving skeptic demanding some kind of evidence that is actually right in front of their face.

They just want God to perform for them. One writer put it like this, quote, seeing is not always believing, end quote.

The scary part is the disciples look like at first. We're in danger of doing the same thing. Notice Jesus' response verse two, answering, he said to them, there's a nuance of the Greek here, evening you say fair weather, sky's red, morning, storm today, sky's red and becoming dark and gloomy.

[15:30] Now Jesus' answer has actually two parts. There from verse two and three is the first part. Now it's debated in terms of its actual inclusion in Matthew's gospel.

I'll talk about that in a moment. But here, what does Jesus do? Jesus contrasted their understanding of the weather with their incompetence when it came to spiritual issues.

In other words, i.e., the signs of the times, Messiah has come. Now as a side note, as far as its inclusion in Matthew's gospel, that part there in verse two, verse two and three, I think you see it there, the earliest manuscripts do not contain that part.

The evidence is split. It's a variant in the manuscripts, but it has no bearing on major doctrines or major teachings of scripture. I mean, something that's usually you can take this to the bank, but not always, but usually.

Scribes will always add things in. They'll never take things out. So usually, not always, the shorter reading is the original reading, but not always, but usually.

[16:42] What's that? Yes, it appears, I think it's in Luke's gospel. So that's why they wonder if they just got it from Luke's gospel. But be that as it may, we'll take it for what it is.

And notice when Jesus says this here, the end, verse four, excuse me, verse three, the appearance of the sky you know how to discern, but the signs of the times are not able.

The signs of the times, the last days have come. Messiah is here. God had visited his people in the person and work of his son, Jesus. I mean, they should know that.

But instead, they just memorized the little phrase. Red sky night, sailor's delight. Red sky morning, sailor's warning. They just knew that. I didn't know that. I had to read it, sorry.

They could do this, but they could not discern that God had come in the person of Christ? Really?

Dr. Carson says this, quote, the proof that they cannot discern the signs is that they ask for a sign.

[17 : 54] End quote. Exactly. Completely lacked spiritual discernment. But the second part of Jesus' answer, the problem is their heart.

Look at verse four. An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign. A sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah. Generation, that is those alive at that time, they ask for a sign.

They didn't ask from pure godly motives. Their motives were evil. Adulterous evil with no goodness or justice. Adulterous, they had false vows to God.

Their vows were false. Their hearts were evil. We talked about this earlier. They did not really follow God. They rejected His word for the sake of their traditions.

They denied Jesus being the Messiah King. They focus on the other things. Remember we said this earlier. the leaders rejected Christ.

[18 : 57] They lacked spiritual insight. They focused on traditions, not the word. They lived a life of religiosity. They had no relationship with God. They were shams. And anything that gets us to do that is diverting our attention away from where we're supposed to be.

Ah, but they were still culpable. Jesus' miracles clearly showed He was truly the Messiah King of Israel. So, the only sign they'd be given was the resurrection.

His resurrection. The ultimate sign from heaven. Yet, even if someone rose from the dead, they still would not believe. Somebody says, I need God to appear before me.

If God Himself were to appear before them, they still would not believe. Still. That's what Jesus said about what happened with Abraham and the rich man.

The rich man said, just send someone from the dead. Then He said, no. Father Abraham said, no.

If they will not believe the law and the prophets, neither will they believe if someone resurrected from the dead. It's exactly what you see here with the Pharisees and Sadducees.

[20 : 12] the sign of Jonah has to do with Jesus' death and resurrection. That's the only sign they would be given, but guess what?

People need heart changes to trust Him and to believe in Him and to believe in that resurrection.

Look, if you're a see it to believe it kind of person, beware.

You ever thought about maybe we need to believe in order to understand? That's what Augustine said. The truth is plain. It's right there in front of you.

I don't need to convince you that that's a table. No, you can believe that to be a nice, big, huge birthday cake for you. You're more than welcome to believe that.

If you want to believe that table is a birthday cake, go ahead. But the fact of the matter is that's a table. The fact of the matter is Jesus has physically resurrected from the dead and you need a heart change to believe in that.

[21 : 13] People need heart changes. And look at Jesus' response at the end of verse 4 here.

Leaving them, He went away. This was an act displaying His defiance against them.

He blew them off, taught to the hand. Totally incompatible they were with each other. So we spend a lot of time here, the evil, pervasive influence.

And now notice we come to the main point here which is be mindful of your worship. Beware.

Notice what happens in verse 5 and 6 with the disciples. However they arrived, they came to the other side, they'd forgotten bread.

Verse 6, Jesus said to them, watch out, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. So Jesus, He would use their forgetfulness to warn them about the teaching of these religious leaders.

Be mindful of their influence. Why? Because it works in unseen ways but has considerable effects later. That's why you take the yeast, put it in from last week's bread, put it in this week's, work it in.

[22 : 28] And it's gonna go throughout so the bread will rise, right? And then you take that and use it next week and that's what they would do. Be mindful of that leaven, that influence.

Guard against one writer put it like this, the quote, insidious and pervasive influence of the false teaching of these false teachers. Our concern should be a spiritual discernment not about eating bread or provisions.

Watch out, beware of their yeast, their influence which was poison. Be mindful, brethren, of the sinful influences in your life.

Be aware of those who will not direct you towards spiritual life and greater devotion, love, passion, commitment to your King Jesus Christ. Beware of them. Be mindful of them.

We should be skeptical of those who direct us away from the truth of Jesus, who direct us away from spiritual or heart issues.

[23 : 36] Where's your heart today even? Have you bowed down to Jesus and worshipped Him? That would be your first response. If you're here and you're not a Christian and you don't know Jesus, you should bow down and worship Him.

You should repent and trust Christ alone who will save you from all your sins. That's how you should respond. Be mindful of your worship.

Beware. But don't worry about material stuff. Look at verses 7 through 11. Verse 7.

Reasoning among themselves, saying, because we took no bread. Oh man, Jesus is ticked off at us because we forgot bread. Crud! One writer put it like this, quote, this is not one of the disciples' better moments, end quote.

Lots of laughing. That was funny. Watch out. Beware of the left. I don't get it. Oh wait, we were supposed to bring bread. Oh no.

[24 : 46] Wait, wait, what? He's mad because you forgot to bring bread? Really? That's what you think? That's why Jesus called them little faith ones.

They had forgotten. The disciples were going down that same road. They forgot Christ's great power. They doubted his provision. They focused on material stuff.

The disciples focus on material concerns. Friends, friends, we must get our focus off of the material, worldly things of this life. We must not worry about the stuff in this world, our material needs, comforts, health, and wealth.

False teaching will focus on this. Notice verse eight. Knowing this, Jesus said, why do you reason among yourselves, little faith ones, that you have no bread?

He lets them have it with both barrels. Why are you doing this? And called them little faith ones. And notice the verbs that Jesus uses.

[26 : 06] Verse nine. Do not yet understand or remember. It's about understanding and remembering.

And that is connected to having faith. In other words, quote, have you forgotten that I will provide for your physical needs? Do you lack trust in me? That's a question for you, oh Christian.

That's a question for me. Have you forgotten that God will provide for your needs?

Do you lack trust in your God? And look at what Jesus says. The five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you received.

The seven loaves of the four thousand and how many baskets you received. guys, I fed twenty thousand people or more and it was I was spitting out bread and fish out of my hands.

[27 : 18] And then I did it again with over sixteen thousand people spitting out bread and fish from my hands. two.

How in the world did you come up with the premise that I'm warning you about not having bread?

Have you forgotten? You really think that we're debilitated because you forgot to take bread?

Knucklehead disciples, right? Right? And we're so hard on them because we're never like that. I'm glad I'm not as dumb as they are. Don't we trust our master?

Don't we believe that he will take care of our physical needs? Has he not promised that he would? are things of this world diverting your attention away?

He challenged his disciples to wholly trust God for their needs. Don't get sidetracked. Don't worry about this stuff. Our focus should be worshipping our king and our heart attitudes, doctrinal matters and affairs, spiritual issues.

[28 : 41] which goes back to verse 11, 12, be mindful of your worship. Beware.

Because Jesus says, verse 11, how is it you don't understand? I did not speak to you concerning bread, but beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. have spiritual discernment.

Be mindful of your trusting, you trusting me. Let your concern be of spiritual items and heart issues, not eating bread. Verse 12, oh, hello McFly.

Then they understood. Now we get it. Jesus was concerned about the false teaching of the religious leaders who opposed Jesus, not about the leaven of bread.

The teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Beware and watch out for those who are opposed to Jesus. Beware of their yeast of the pervasive influence toward ungodliness.

[29 : 52] These religious leaders did not have the ability to see that Jesus was the Messiah. They hated Jesus. And they wanted him out of the picture. They wanted to lead other people astray too, away from Jesus.

Beware of those who want us to make much of the physical stuff of this life. What you shall eat, what you shall drink, what you shall wear. Your heavenly father knows you need these things. Where did he say that? Oh yeah. The sermon on the mount. Remember Matthew chapter 6? Jesus' miracles and his teaching were in direct contradiction with these religious leaders who did not want to lose their power or their status among the people or their power there in Rome for that matter. Spiritual food was their problem. So why then do we become preoccupied and concerned about material things of this life which lulls us to sleep and renders us dull of what God values in this kingdom and the teaching of his word.

This is the danger of the prosperity gospel today. It's about God making you rich, healthy, wealthy. No, God will give you what he wants to give you. Seek first his kingdom and his kingdom and his righteousness.

[31 : 22] He'll take care of the other stuff. Our concerns should be heart issues. Have we forgotten Christ's power? Do we doubt his provision and focus on material stuff?

Have we grown cold to the sinful influences in our lives? Are we making efforts to foster true worship in our lives or love, passion, commitment to our king? In what ways are we doing that? Reading scripture, coming together as his body, praying. Those are the means of grace for us to grow. We should be concerned about heart issues, doctrinal affairs, spiritual matters and staying faithful to the truth of Christ.

So why are we so worried about material, physical things of this life? It's silly. We're called to faithfully worship Jesus and focus on him.

We all worship something or someone. So how is your Jesus worship gauge today? Be mindful of your worship of your Messiah King.

[32 : 30] How is your Jesus worship gauge? How will it be tomorrow, Wednesday evening, Thursday morning, Saturday afternoon? How is it gonna be your Jesus worship?

Your response or will we get sidetracked? Will our attention be diverted away? Lord, help us as we pray this.

We know that we're weak and yet thank you that you show us such amazing grace anyways. All those times that we doubt you, Jesus, it's why you had to die.

So help us with our unbelief. Work in our hearts that we may have hearts that worship you, that respond in true worship and love for you, Lord Jesus.

Whether we're sick or healthy, or we have so many things going on, health issues, trying to figure out life, the uncertainty of things that take place in our world, and all of this.

[33 : 56] Help us to evaluate our heart issue, our heart attitude, to be mindful of our worship of you. You are our king.

Oh, deepen our love for you, Lord Jesus, we pray. So if you would, at this time, encourage you, just take a few moments between you and the Lord to let your mind focus on these things, to ponder the truth of His word.

Let your mind dwell on these things. And you know, after a few moments, we sing, we do our giving, we sing, pray, I encourage you, before we go eat and fill our tummies.

As Paul says, let your mind dwell on these things. Let your mind dwell on the word. Feast upon the scriptures. Feast upon God's truth.

And let His word test our thoughts and our attitudes and the radiance of His glory. And the radiance of His word. Do that. Take a few moments to do that. O.

[35 : 27] The diets of His nature spread. Thank you.