

Do You Still Not Understand?

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Date: 13 November 2022

[0 : 00] We'll begin our worship by singing to God's praise in Psalm 103, the Scottish Psalter version. Psalm 103, page 369 of the psalm books. We're going to sing from verse 8 to verse 13.

The Lord our God is merciful, and he is gracious, long-suffering, and slow to wrath, and mercy plenteous. He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still. With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did we quiet our ill. We'll sing from verse 8 to 13 to God's praise.

The Lord our God is merciful, and he is gracious, long-suffering, and slow to wrath, and mercy plenteous.

He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still.

With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did we quiet our ill.

[1 : 55] For us the heaven, every time, the earth surrounded by. So we to our statue and fear, His tender mercy's high.

His tender mercy's high.

As far as he's distant from the west, so far at me, from us we looted in his love, all our may need. His tender mercy's high. His tender mercy's high. The earth is distant from the west, so far at me, from us we looted in his love, all our may need.

His tender mercy's high. The earth is distant from us we looted in his love, all our may need. His tender mercy's high. The earth is distant from us we looted in his love, all our may need.

His tender mercy's high. The earth is distant from us we looted in his love, all our may need. The earth is distant from us we looted in his love, all our may need.

[3 : 08] The earth is distant from us we looted in his love, all our may need. Melanie. He asked the Father, I will come to God in prayer.

Let us pray. Our gracious God, our Father in heaven, as we sing praise to you, we are thankful for the wonder of these words, of what they remind us of.

They remind us of who you are and how gracious you are towards us. You are a Father who pities his children and you do not deal with us according to our ways.

You have been patient and kind with us and long-suffering in so many different ways. And we thank you that today and this evening as we come to worship you, as we come seeking your face, we are reminded in so many ways, O Lord, of how you have kept us, how you have spared us, how your favor has been upon us.

We are reminded in the Psalm 2 of who we are. We are a pitied people, Lord, for we have sinned and fall short of your glory in so many ways.

[4 : 55] But we thank you, Lord, that we are reminded too that as we come to worship you in the right spirit of fear, that we are indeed your dear children and that you are a God who cares for us.

Even in our sin, Lord, we are reminded that as we come to you seeking forgiveness, that you have removed our sin as far as east as from the west. And we thank you that we are reminded of that, not because of our deserving of it.

We are reminded not because of anything that we have done, but we are reminded of our sin removed through your own Son, through his sacrifice, through the shedding of his blood, through his giving his life as a ransom for many.

And so we thank you, Lord, for your great love and compassion towards us in these things. And as we come today on a day of significant and special remembrance, we look back, oh Lord, in so many ways.

And we remember, Lord, in so many different ways, things that have taken place in the past, things that we didn't experience, many of us ourselves, and yet, oh Lord, things that have left a mark upon us all, things that have made an impression on our lives and indeed marked out our lives for us.

[6 : 18] For apart from the loss of so many lives, apart from those who were willing to stand up to wickedness and evil when it arose, apart from those great sacrifices, Lord, our world would be so different, our freedoms, maybe we wouldn't even have them.

And the worship of your name could be so curtailed that, Lord, we would have to do so as we do this evening in much privacy and even hidden away. And we know, Lord, that we have so much to be thankful for, for all who went, who laid down their lives, that we might have the freedom that we do.

We thank you, Lord, that even to this day there are those who serve for that means, oh Lord, for your people far and wide, to give freedom and liberties that are not ours.

Apart from, Lord, they were given by you. And so we thank you for all our services, our armed forces. We thank you for them in the past, Lord, how they defended our nation on land, at sea, and in the air, and in so many different ways on the home front as well.

We thank you, Lord, for all that was done for us. And in our remembrance, Lord, help us that we will indeed give thanks for them, but above all, give thanks to you this day.

[7 : 41] May we remember, Lord, the conflicts taking place even in our own day and age as well. That throughout the world, there are still these battles ongoing, still so many lives being lost because of the wickedness of man.

And we do pray, Lord, for you to come in a day of your power to have pity upon us, Lord, to have mercy upon us, and to turn us once again towards you.

So, Lord, we pray that you will help us to remember all these things, but above all, Lord, that we would remember you in it. As someone said, Lord, that the further we go from an event, the more we forget.

And the further we go, not just from the conflicts and wars of these past centuries, but the further we go, Lord, from the conquest of sin at the cross, the more we tend to forget.

When Jesus said that he would come again to his people, they were expecting it so imminently. But now that years and centuries have passed, we live as a people who have almost forgotten the promises of Christ.

[8 : 50] But we thank you that your word gives us a remembrance towards that. And we thank you, Lord, for every means that we have to remember you. We thank you for your word and the proclamation of it.

We thank you for the preaching of it week by week. We thank you, too, for the sacraments for both the Lord's Supper and baptism. They're reminders to us, Lord, of all that you have done for us and the way that our salvation has been purchased.

And so we pray that you will continue to build up your church far and wide, that in all we do, we do so in remembrance of him who gave his life for us. We thank you for our people, Lord, our congregation, and our communities.

We do pray your blessing on us as a people. We thank you, Lord, that you are always near, that there is never a moment when we cannot turn to you. We thank you that even in this past week as we have experienced great needs in our midst as a people, with ill health, with the passing of loved ones, with the various trials that come our way, Lord, we thank you that you are a God who is faithful, that you are always there for us.

And we pray, Lord, that you will surround us as a people, that you will uphold us as a people, that you will be a strength to those who need you in particular ways. We think of those who are laid aside in their homes, those who are in hospital, those who are in homes for the old age.

[10 : 19] We pray, Lord, for our young people, our middle age, for all with many ongoing issues in our lives. Lord, we know that our lives are complex in so many ways and our understanding is so dull at times.

We think we understand so many things and yet so much we do not understand. But we thank you that in Christ we have one who is a teacher, who is our Lord.

And we pray, Lord, that you will direct our paths, that you will help us to know our ways and to walk in your paths, to walk in your ways. We pray, Lord, your blessing over us and we thank you for our young people, for the YF tonight.

We pray that you will bless them in their time together for that subject they will be speaking upon, the life in this world where we think of our image and all that that means.

We know it's such a pressure on us as a people and especially our young ones. We pray for you and as he leads them in that and as they enjoy that time together, Lord, may you bless them and give them your spirit upon them.

[11 : 28] And in all things, Lord, that we think of image, may we remember that we are made in the image of Christ. And we pray, Lord, that we will see Christ in one another and that we would see, O Lord, your image being perfected in us, that we would see our people as a whole, all of us together, seeking after him and longing to be more like him.

So we pray your blessing on us as we continue in our worship. Bless your people far and wide. Build up your church, O Lord, and look down upon us in these days with mercy.

Remember those who lead us in government and who rule over us as a people. May you uphold them and give them wisdom from on high. Bless the nations of the world, O Lord.

We pray again, Lord, for all the various needs around us, that you will be with us as a people. We thank you that in our remembrance of so much, that you are a God who has remembered us.

May you continue to do so, Lord, that you would turn your face towards us, shine upon us and bless us by the pity of your nature and all that you are. Lord, may you find us to be a precious people, a people purchased at a great price and a people who would come and offer up our praise and worship to you.

[12 : 48] So, Lord, hear our prayers, hear our praise, uphold us in all we do. Bless us as we sing your praise. Be with the one who leads us in it, Lord. And may we all lift up our hearts together in worship and adoration of you.

Bless your word to us as well as we ask all things with forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' precious name. Amen. We'll again sing to God's praise, this time in Psalm 77.

In the Singed Psalm, Psalm 77. It's on page 100 of the psalm books. We're going to sing from verse 7 down to verse 15.

Verse 7, it's the question of the psalmist where he's looking to God and asking this question, forever will the Lord reject and never show his grace as he withdrawn his steadfast love and turned from me his face.

There's this searching question that the psalmist has. But then in verse 10 he says, then to my heart there came this thought, on this I will rely, the years of the right hand of power of him who is most high.

[14 : 03] I rely on a dependence upon God. We'll sing from verse 7 to 15 to God's praise. Forever will the Lord reject and never show his grace as he will turn on his king cross and turn from me his face.

For all time has his promise failed his God no No longer kind, as he in his great proudestness, O passion from his mind.

Then to my heart, their kindness thought, On this I will rely.

The years of the bright hand of power, Off him who is most high.

I will recall the Lord's great deeds, Your words of long ago.

[16 : 18] I'll meditate on all your acts, Your mighty deeds I'll show.

O God, for so in higher ways, What God compares with you.

You are the Lord of miracles, Whose powers that nations view.

You have redeemed your people, Lord, With your almighty arm.

Jacob, St. Joseph, children you Delivered from all heart.

[17 : 53] We will turn together to read God's word now in the Gospel of Mark. Mark, Mark chapter 8. Reading from the beginning of the chapter down to verse 21.

Mark chapter 8, the beginning of the chapter down to verse 21. In those days when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, He called His disciples to Him, He said, They said seven.

They said seven. And He directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, He broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before the people.

And they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, He said too, He said that these also should be set before them.

And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people.

[19 : 33] And He sent them away. And immediately got into the boat with His disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. The Pharisees came and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven to test Him.

And He said, Why does this generation seek a sign? And He said, Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.

And He left them, got into His boat again, and went to the other side. Now they had forgotten to bring bread. And they had only one loaf with them in the boat.

And He cautioned them, saying, Watch out. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread.

And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand?

[20 : 40] Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?

They said to Him, Twelve. And the seven for the four thousand, How many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?

And they said to Him, Seven. And He said to them, Do you not yet understand? And so on. And may God bless that reading from His Word.

We're going to sing again to God's praise, this time in Psalm 85. In the sing Psalms on page 113. Psalm 85, page 113, from the beginning of the Psalm.

In times past, Lord, you showed favour to your own beloved land, the prosperity of Jacob. You restored by your strong hand. You forgave your people's trespass.

[21 : 48] You were pleased their sins to hide. You withdrew all your displeasure from your wrath. You turned aside. We'll sing from verse 1 to 9 to God's praise.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let go! Amen. In times past, Lord, you should favor to your own beloved land.

Let prosperity of Jacob you restore values from hand.

You forgive your needless past. You had peace as sins to hide.

You withdrew all your displeasure. From your wrath you turned aside.

[22 : 58] God our Savior now restored us. All must turn away your rage.

Will your anger burn against us? Will it last from age to age?

Will you not again revive us? That we may rejoice in you.

Show us, Lord, your covenant mercy. Your salvation grant anew.

I will hear what God the Lord says. To his saints he offers peace.

[24 : 03] But his people must not wander. And return to foolishness.

Surely for all those who fear him. His salvation is our time.

So that once again his glory may be seen within our land.

Amen. Well, if we can turn back to our reading in Mark's Gospel, Chapter 8.

We're going to be looking at the whole of the section that we read from the beginning of the chapter down to verse 21. But it's in light of the question that Jesus asks of his disciples.

[25 : 08] The question you see asked twice of them here. In verse 17 and then in verse 21. In verse 17, Jesus says, aware of what they were speaking about, he said to them, Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread?

Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? And then in verse 21, he says to them, Do you not yet understand?

I think it's important for us, first of all, as we think of that question, to realize who the question was being asked of. It wasn't of a large crowd of people.

It was of his closest disciples, those who were closest to him, those who had experienced so much with him up to this point. Yet in all that they've seen, in all that they've experienced with them, he still has this question of them.

Do you not yet understand? And it's a question for ourselves to think about too. Do you understand?

[26 : 27] When we think about our lives, we live as if we understand so much. Whatever age and stage of life we are, we always feel we know more than we actually do.

We often feel we understand, maybe even everything that there is to know about life. And yet the more we go on, the more we realize just how little we understand.

What's your favorite school subject? It could be a question for the young people here, but it's also a question maybe for every one of us.

When you look back over the years to your days in school, what was your favorite subject? Some maybe would excel in maths, some in English, some in sciences, some in geography, some in history.

You'd all have maybe different strengths and weaknesses. But if you went into the class the first day and you were expected to understand everything about that subject there and then, how would you fare?

[27 : 29] If you were to sit an exam, that's actually a higher exam for sixth year when you went into primary one, do you think you'd pass? Do you think you'd understand trigonometry?

You'd understand algebra? You'd understand how everything goes together. You wouldn't because you haven't reached that stage. But your teacher wouldn't say to you on primary one, do you not understand?

Do you not understand how algebra and trigonometry works when you haven't been fully taught? You wouldn't be expected to know it or understand it at that point.

But yet as our lives go on, we begin to understand more and more. But I could ask hands up if anyone now understands algebra. And it doesn't matter what stage of life you're at, some people still don't understand.

But it doesn't mean that that's it. You're pushed away. There's certain things that we should seek to understand. Maybe we're not interested in certain subjects.

[28 : 31] We've got other areas we'd like to focus on. But when Jesus is asking us this question, he's asking us for a different reason. He's asking a more searching question.

A question that we really need to think about ourselves because it's not something we can just put away and say, well, I'm not going to need that in life. I'm not really interested in learning about that.

I've got other areas I'm more focused in. When Jesus is asking this question, do you understand? He's asking it because it is an important question for every one of us.

As believers or as seekers or wherever we are in life, Jesus is asking this question of you this evening. And he's saying, do you not yet understand?

In all your experience in life and all the understanding you feel you have and you may be starting to think, oh, I know so much in life now. I'm understanding everything.

[29 : 32] But when Jesus asks us, do you really understand? Do you understand what's important? Do you understand what's vital for your life, for death, for eternity?

Do you understand? Do you understand? We realize we don't. But we have a great teacher. We have one who gives us instruction in his word, saying to us, you maybe won't understand it all.

You won't understand everything. But I will give you what you need to know and what you need to take hold of. So this question that Jesus has for his disciples, it's in light of having been with them for some time together now, having seen so many miracles and healings, having heard the greatest teaching they would ever hear.

He's asking them, do you understand? And so tonight, that's your question too. Do you understand? Or what do you understand of what Jesus is asking here?

Whatever situation you're in, if you're a believer, do you understand what that means? Are you confident in what you know?

[30 : 54] If you're a seeker, do you understand what you're looking for? Do you understand where to find it? If you're a doubter, do you understand what that means?

Do you understand the danger you're in of just pushing Jesus away? Or if you're rejecting the truth completely, do you understand what that means?

Do you understand what a rejection of Christ means eternally? Do you understand is the question. And with this evening, we're going to look at different things that can hinder our understanding, that can become a barrier to our understanding.

Circumstances we see in this passage, things that come between the people and their understanding of who Jesus is and what he can do and see how they speak to ourselves as well and how they remind us that even though we will not understand fully, Jesus has made himself known in a way that we can understand to the way of salvation.

So the three things are this. First of all, there's circumstances that can prevent us from understanding. Secondly, there's conflict that can hinder our understanding.

[32 : 16] And then thirdly, there's confusion that can hinder our understanding. So the first thing is circumstances. If you look at, first of all, verse 1 to verse 10, here we have the account of the feeding of the 4,000 as it is in this part.

And it's important to note that this is not the same as the feeding of the 5,000 because that's made clear for us later on in the verses that we read because Jesus asks them about the two incidents when these miracles happened, the feeding of the 5,000 and the feeding of the 4,000.

So this is the second time this great miracle has happened. And the question that he asks of the people is really, this is the main aspect of it, it's in light of the miracle that they've seen here in the talk about bread and how Jesus is able to understand it.

They're questioning where the bread is going to come from. So he's asking, do you not yet understand? Do you not understand who I am? You see as you read through the Gospel of Mark, many miracles that Jesus has done.

He shows his power again and again in remarkable ways. He's healed many people already to this point. He's calmed a storm that the disciples were in with him.

[33 : 43] He made the sea just to be still at the power of his voice. And now this is the second miraculous feeding of a large group of people. And you would think to yourself at this point now, surely, well, the disciples, they'll be understanding who this man is.

They'd asked in the storm, who is this? That even the wind and the waves obey him. But surely now, they're understanding who he is. Having seen all these miracles again and again, that Jesus has done so much that is impossible.

And yet, when this challenge arises, you'd think, well, the disciples will know Jesus can help. So again, as you see in this section, they're gathered together, a large crowd.

They've got nothing to eat. In verse 1, and he says, he called his disciples to him and said to them, I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat.

And he explains that if he sends them away, they'll faint on the way. So his disciples answered him and said, how can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?

[34 : 58] They've seen it done before. And yet, the question they have immediately here is, how can anything be done? And Jesus is asking them later on, do you not understand?

They've seen it, but they maybe don't believe it can happen again. They've had that wow factor in the past when they've seen so much of the power of God, and yet here they are just a short time later asking, what can we do?

How can anybody help us in this situation? Sometimes it's good when things are going well, when we're tuned in and trusting God the Lord and seeing blessings around us.

But when our circumstances change, we can so easily doubt and begin to look away from God.

Circumstances can affect us so much, but should they? Not so much that we wouldn't have God in our vision at all times, but the reality is, they do.

- [36 : 12] And we ourselves go into circumstances, and even though we've seen the Lord's hand in the past, we've seen many ways where he's helped his people, whether we're looking at scripture, whether we're looking at history, whether we're looking at our own personal experience of the past, where God has helped me, God has been with me, and yet we come to another trial, another event, well, what can God do?

He can't help me here. We take our eyes away from him. Just like that psalm that we were singing, Psalm 77, where the psalmist saying, whatever will the Lord reject and never show his grace.

This is the psalmist who's known it in the past. And yet he's saying, you know, can God do it now? And maybe that's so much our attitude as well.

Circumstances eat away at us, and they dictate the way that we see God when really it shouldn't. Because even the psalmist says in that psalm, then to my heart there came this thought, on this I will rely, the years of the right hand of power of him who is most high.

I will recall the Lord's great deeds, your works of long ago. He begins to look back and say, well, actually, in all my questions, God's done it before.

- [37 : 36] And he goes on to say, oh God, most holy, are your ways what God compares with you. You are the God of miracles whose power the nation's view.

What makes the difference? It's to look to God and to remember who he is. And circumstances here, the disciples are saying, who can help us?

There's nothing here for us. They've forgotten already what God can do, what Christ has done in the past. But he reminds them again how he is able to do the things that are impossible.

This is no ordinary event. It's a miracle. It's a miraculous event that Christ has shown his power once again.

He is the God of miracles. But have we lost sight of that? Are we forgetting who he is?

- [38 : 42] Do we really understand? When he asks that question, do you not yet understand? Is that a question of ourselves?

Even though we've seen his favor, even though we've seen his blessing, we still doubt. What have we got? And what can Jesus do with it?

Is how we should look at it. That should have been the response of the disciples here. Instead of saying, nothing can be done. Jesus points them in the right direction.

He begins to say, what have we got? What can we give to these people? He asked them, how many loaves do we have? They said, seven.

Now again in their eyes, this would never be enough to feed them. Or the fish, just a few small fish, never would that feed this crowd. But through the Lord's blessing, it does.

- [39 : 43] And there's seven baskets full left over. Their circumstances made them look away from God and look at the situation and think nothing can be done.

And for ourselves today, it's a time maybe to ask, what have we got? And what can we do? What can God do with what we have? Not we ourselves.

What can we achieve? But what can God do for us? In our circumstances, we think everything is low. Everything is hard. Everything is difficult. And they are at times.

But are we trusting God? Do we understand who He is? And do we understand what He is able to do? Our circumstances are no different to the circumstances of those in the past who trusted God.

And that's what we pray tonight, that God will revive our trust in Him. We need an urgency for Him.

[40 : 56] So we don't let our circumstances dictate our view of Jesus. Instead, we look first to Him and then to our circumstances.

And see, He is able to do abundantly more than we ask or imagine. The second thing we see here is the conflict that comes between mainly Jesus and the Pharisees.

And how again, this hinders an understanding of who Jesus is. You see this with the Pharisees in verse 11.

The Pharisees came and began to argue with Him, seeking with Him a sign from heaven to test Him. And He sighed deeply in spirit and said, Why does this generation seek a sign?

Truly I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation. And He left them, got into His boat again, and went to the other side.

[42 : 00] Here's the Pharisees. And their attitude towards Jesus is an immediate barrier to their understanding because they're straight away into conflict with Jesus.

The Pharisees came and began to argue with Him. Straight off. As soon as He comes their way, they begin to argue with Him, seeking for a sign from heaven.

They would have known all about the miracles. They would have heard about everything that Jesus was doing. It's almost like they're mocking Him here. Show us a sign.

Do another miracle as if it's just a show. But Jesus is rebuking them. Why does this generation seek a sign? They refused to accept anything that Jesus did.

It didn't matter what He did, they would still have something to argue with Jesus about. Something that would make Him pushed away. It's as if to say, we don't need you.

[43 : 06] The Pharisees, just like so many of us today as well, they understood everything. They always had an answer. They always had something to show the people how superior they were, how they had this greater understanding than anybody else.

So few could silence them. But Jesus did on many occasions. He always had a rebuke or a challenge for them that made them to be silent.

But here they kept coming back, kept coming back, seeking after a sign. Can we not be like that ourselves too? We've got all the answers.

We understand everything that we need to know about life. But maybe, maybe if Jesus just gave me a sign, maybe if He showed me something, then I would believe.

If God maybe did another miracle today, then I would believe that He is real. But would you? Would you believe even if you saw another miracle?

[44 : 15] two things to ask yourself if this is your attitude. First is, why should you get a sign just for yourself?

Are you deserving of it? The second thing is, has He not given you all the signs that you need? Has He not shown you everything you need to know about Him?

think about the signs that you have all around you, the things that point you towards God, and the kind of questions that you maybe have.

Oh, if only Jesus would do this, when so often He already has. Just think about the creation around you.

on a night like tonight when you go out and there's a clear sky, you lift up your eyes, you maybe see the moon, you see the stars, does that not speak?

[45 : 14] Does that not show you that there's a creator behind it all? As you watch a sunrise and a sunset, as you watch this week the torrents of rain we had, you think to yourself, well, where should it all come from?

He has made all of these things. Is there not a creator behind them? He has given so many signs, the signs all around us in creation.

There's a story told about Sir Isaac Newton and you think to yourself, well, there's someone who had such a great understanding of so many things in life.

But perhaps the greatest understanding he had was that he knew that there was someone else behind everything. And he had a miniature model made of the solar system that he had in his study.

And apparently it was quite an amazing thing to see. It had the sun in the middle and revolving around the sun were all the planets and it would move around, you could tell what was what.

[46 : 25] And another scientist entered his study one day and was amazed by this model. And he was just taken aback by it, how exquisite it was.

And he started to ask questions. One of the questions he asked was, who made it? And Isaac Newton replied, nobody. Well, the other scientist said to him, you must think I'm a fool.

Of course somebody made it, and whoever made it is a genius. Isaac Newton apparently replied by saying this, he said, this thing is but a puny imitation of something much more grand and marvelous.

And I'm not able to convince you that this mere toy has no designer. Yet you profess to believe that the great original which this design comes from was made without designer or maker.

Now tell me, he said, by what reason do you reach such a conclusion? Amazed by the model, but unamazed by the real thing.

[47 : 50] And how many things are we amazed with today? How many things do we see that take our breath away? Whether it's some kind of technology or something else that we see around us, we're just like blown away by things that we see have been made.

And yet we fail to be amazed by the creator. Jesus says to the Pharisees, why do you seek a sign? God is saying that to ourselves, why would you seek after a sign today?

When all the signs are there for you, whether it's looking at creation, whether it's looking at his word, whether it's looking at history, whether it's looking at everything goes on around us, God is reminding us again and again and again that he is the God of miracles.

miracles. And yet still we don't believe. Consider the marvel of the human body. When you read in Psalm 139 that we were fearfully and wonderfully made, formed in the womb, no two people alike in the world, no two fingerprints alike.

When you consider the marvel of DNA and how all of that works together, and yet you're unique. Every one of you. You are different from every other person in this world.

[49 : 20] Is that not something that should leave us amazed and thinking, how is that? Where did we come from? How are we made? Well the Bible tells us we are made in the image of God.

We are made by him and for him. All these signs are there for us and yet we push God away. we are amazed by him.

All of these things scream at us saying there is a God. He has made us, he has given us all of this. And still you ask, show me a sign.

well the greatest sign of all was given by Jesus himself. When he replied to the Pharisees in another place, in Matthew 12 verse 39, he said, a wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the son of man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. He has given us the greatest sign of all.

[50 : 42] Three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Christ Jesus came to lay down his life for sinners.

when we think about remembrance day to day, do we understand the significance of it? Do we understand back further the significance of the one who laid down his life for us?

Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. This is a text we'll hear oft quoted today, as we give thanks for the sacrifice that so many made.

But are we amazed by the sacrifice of Christ, his love that he laid down his life for us? The Pharisees are not the only ones in conflict with God.

We all are. Every one of us is in a conflict. Through sin, we are in rebellion against God. And yet Jesus came to defeat that enemy, to bring peace into our lives.

[51 : 59] Do you understand? Do you understand the conflict you're in? And do you understand the way to victory is through Christ Jesus?

Because when you look at verse 13, there's a great warning there for us. It says, he left them. He left them, those who are asking for a sign.

The danger we are in today is if we keep asking for a sign, we keep asking for something else, Jesus will leave us. Nothing he can do for us.

Do you understand that conflict? Do you understand your need to turn to Christ? We're in conflict.

The final thing we see here is the confusion. The confusion. In verse 14 to 21, the disciples are just in this confused state.

[53 : 04] And again, it's just a reminder to us of the world in which we live today. Everyone is so confused. Everyone is looking for answers but doesn't know where to turn.

So much that just brings confusion into our life day after day, week after week. And the confusion comes down to this. You do not understand Jesus.

If we understood him more, there would be so much less confusion. And he gives them this insight into just where this confusion is coming from.

He says, watch out, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. He's warning them about this kind of sin that comes in. This just pushing Jesus to one side and saying, we understand.

We've got it all sorted. We've made so much advancement now. We don't need the word of God. We don't need the spirit of God. We don't need anything of that.

[54 : 07] Because we've got all the answers. But Jesus is saying, beware the leaven of the Pharisees. Beware the leaven of Herod. Beware this kind of attitude that says, we don't need God.

So often in the scriptures, yeast, this leaven is the picture of sin. And how sin so easily corrupts. A little leaven leavens the whole lump, as 1 Corinthians says.

And the idea here that Jesus is saying, beware the little sin. The yeast in your life just escalates and permeates throughout all your life, infiltrates into every part, and leads you to say, we don't need Jesus.

We don't need anything to do with him. The Pharisees were religious men, but the religion was external. It didn't change their hearts.

Their hearts were hard. Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? He's asking the disciples. Is this the danger that you're in as well?

[55 : 23] Do you not yet understand? You've been coming for so long to hear the word of God again and again, but the leaven of this world is still there, still pushing out God, still this barrier, this confusion, this conflict, these circumstances still going on, that Christ is still being pushed out.

But Jesus is saying, do you not understand? Do you not understand what this means? Do you not understand who I am?

And if he's saying this to them, he's saying it to us as well. Even as a believer, we have to be on our guard against this leaven, against this confusion that so easily comes in and things have become acceptable that should never be.

To be on our guard against this leaven and our hearts hardening so much that we feel we've got a greater understanding now than we ever did before.

And the answer today is so often seen by looking at our own wisdom. Throughout these last few years, throughout everything that's going on in our world today, there's always an answer.

[56 : 49] Science will get us through. Our military power will get us through. Our resources will get us through.

Our money will get us through. But there's no thought that God is the one who will get us through. Do we not understand?

Do we not understand that apart from him, we are nothing? Do we understand that apart from him, we are lost? If the disciples who were so close to him and saw so much could be asked this question, do you not yet understand?

What was he saying to them? He was saying to look to him and to trust in him. They couldn't understand what could be done in the midst of this famine of 4,000.

They didn't know where to turn when the answer was there before them, to be their trust in Christ. Christ. And for ourselves today, in all the circumstances that we have to face up to, in all the conflict that goes on in our lives, in all the confusion that surrounds us, when Jesus is asking, do you not yet understand?

[58 : 11] Do we not know where to go? And will we not turn to him, the one who is able to do so much for us? And yet we just neglect him.

We push him away. We'll get through this by ourselves. The danger is, just like the Pharisees, where he said, he left them.

Our prayer today is, Lord, will you not again revive us? That we would see your blessing on our land. That we would recognize once again that you are the God of miracles, and that the nations of this world would view this God and turn to him.

Our circumstances, our conflicts, our confusion, the teacher is there for us to help us understand and to give us understanding in his ways, the ways of life and the ways of peace, if we will but turn and thrust.

in him. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, we do thank you for the peace that you are able to give, but it's a peace that we so often neglect or turn away from.

[59 : 35] And we do pray, Lord, your blessing on us as a people, that you will again revive us, that you will show us your mercy, that you will bring us your blessing, O Lord, and grant us a day of your favour to help us to understand the things around us, to understand the days and times that we live in, and to understand above all our great need of Christ Jesus as our Lord.

We ask it all with the forgiveness of our sins, in his precious name. Amen. Amen. We'll conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 105.

We'll sing Psalms version, page 138, Psalm 105, verse 1 to verse 11. Give thanks to the Lord God and call on his name, his wonderful deeds, to the nations proclaim, sing praises to him, his exploits record.

Let all those who seek him rejoice in the Lord. We'll sing from verse 1 to 11 to God's praise. Give thanks to the Lord God and call on his name, his wonderful who deeds to the nations proclaim, sing praises to him, and his exploits report.

Let all those who seek him rejoice in the Lord. you you chosen what stood to the Lord and his might, seek ever his peace and his wonders recite, his miracles true and his judgments divide, your children of heaven, and so blind.

[62 : 13] The Lord is our God and he rules all the earth, in and bring his covenant, the word he set forth.

He bowed for the ages to come to make good, his promise to Abraham to I shall renew, to Jacob his sovereign decree must make sure, where his service is common, would always endure, to you I will give us to portion to stand the country of Canaan, the beautiful land.

After the benediction, I'll go to the main door. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you all now and forever more.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.