

Date: Sunday, February 21, 2021 Scripture: Mark 8:10-21

Well, this morning we continue in Mark chapter 8. We're in Mark chapter 8. As we've been working our way through Mark, we're about halfway through it now, in Mark chapter 8, and the title of a sermon this morning is Do You Not Yet See? Do You Not Yet See. We're going to be in Mark chapter 8 and we're going to begin in verse 10. And will you read with me as we read the Gospel of Mark. Mark chapter 8 and starting in verse 10

10 And immediately He entered the boat with His disciples and came to the district of Dalmanutha.

11 The Pharisees came out and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, to test Him. 12 Sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, "Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." 13 Leaving them, He again embarked and went away to the other side.

14 And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. 15 And He was giving orders to them, saying, "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." 16 They began to discuss with one another the fact that they had no bread. 17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart? 18 HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR? And do you not remember, 19 when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?" They said to Him, "Twelve." 20 "When I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?" And they said to Him, "Seven." 21 And He was saying to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

Sanctification seems like a big theological term to many people. Sanctification. But this is a very important theological truth that more Christians need to embrace. They need to understand it, and they need to embrace it. But before they can embrace it, they need to know what it means. What does sanctification mean? This theological term of sanctification? What does it mean?

Well, there are three aspects to sanctification, three aspects to it.

1. The first one is that there is sanctification that happens at the moment of salvation. The moment someone is saved. The moment that they repent of their sin and put their faith in Jesus, they receive the gift of salvation. They are sanctified at that moment. That's the first aspect of sanctification.
2. The second aspect of sanctification is what we call progressive sanctification. Progressive sanctification, which simply means to become more and more like Christ. Just as a tree grows when it's watered. Or a child grows when he is fed milk. So Christians grow as they come to know the truth of God's Word. That's what we need to do. We need to grow.
3. But there's a third aspect of sanctification as well, and that's what we would call final sanctification. Final sanctification that happens at the end. In the future, when we see Christ, we could call this glorification. This is the time of our glorification. When we, as believers are glorified with Christ in the future. That will happen at the moment we die -- where we will go and be with Christ, and we will be made complete. That's the final sanctification.

As believers, we've already had this first aspect of sanctification happen, right? We've been saved, we've been sanctified. That happened when you repented of your sin and put your faith in Christ. You were sanctified then. The third aspect will happen in the future. It's something that we will get in heaven when we are glorified with Christ, but **this morning I want to talk about the second aspect of sanctification. That's the growing part of the Christian life.**

We need to be people who are growing, who are being sanctified. Charles Spurgeon said "Christ's prayer is sanctify them through thy truth. The more truth you believe, the more sanctified you will be. The operation of truth upon the mind is to separate a man from the world, unto the service of God." And that's what Jesus is doing here with His disciples in our passage this morning.

Now let me just say a word about sanctification, which I believe will help us as we seek to understand this passage. I used to talk to my interns when I was a pastor back at Grace Church, about what they would do when they would go into a church. What would they do when they go into a church? I would tell them that they need to be patient with their people. Be patient with them. Love them, especially with those who are new believers.

Those that are new believers, they need to be very patient with them. Sadly, there's a lot of pastors in our churches today that are preaching the gospel, and they see people get saved -- and at the moment of that person's salvation they are expecting that person to be as spiritually mature as they are. Not realizing and understanding, there is a process that needs to happen. There is sanctification that needs to happen.

And so, I would tell these guys you need to be patient with your people. Don't expect them to be on the same level as you. You've been through four years of seminary. Think about all the theological knowledge that you have. Think about all the time and devotion that you spent in God's Word. But when someone gets saved. They haven't done that. They're just trying to figure out this thing called salvation. They're trying to figure out this Bible that they've never read before. And so they must be patient with them, as the people need to be sanctified, because sanctification is a process. It's a process that happens, and it's an ongoing process that happens, within the life of a believer. And here's the thing -- sanctification must be happening each and every day in our life. We must be growing as believers in Christ.

We're not going to reach glorification here on this Earth. We're not going to reach total perfection upon this Earth, and so we can't expect Christians to be perfect, but we can expect that they'd be sanctified. That's what we need to be doing. As believers, we need to be sanctified.

But sanctification is a process. It's a process of growing day by day, and that's what's happening with these disciples here in our passage this morning. Their job, really soon, is going to be to go and take the gospel out to the world, right? Jesus is going to send them into the world to go and preach the gospel, but there are still some things that these guys need to learn.

They haven't reached the spiritual maturity that they need to be at. There are still things that these guys need to learn. In fact, they're not even that mature in their faith, as we're going to see here in our passage this morning. There's a lot of growing that needs to happen with these guys. But the way that you can tell that someone is truly saved or not is to see if they are growing in sanctification.

That's a question that you can ask even of your own self. Am I growing in sanctification? Do I long to know Christ more and more, and am I being conformed to the image of Christ, day by day in my life? That's the sign of a true believer.

John MacArthur says "An unsanctified life is the mark of an unbeliever." We're going to see this morning in our passage, a major dividing line between those who are not saved who are not being sanctified, and those who are saved and those who desire sanctification in their life.

And so let's pick up in our passage and we're going to look at verse 10. Look at verse 10 with me...what it says there. The word of the Lord says this:

"And immediately He entered" He (Jesus) entered "the boat with His disciples and came to the district of Dalmanutha."

Now, if you remember from last week, Jesus has been in the region of Decapolis, He was in the region of Decapolis, which is full of, who? Gentiles, right? That was a Gentile region. Jesus was there with all of these Gentiles who have come out to listen to Him preach and they were there for three days and they're hungry.

And so what does Jesus do? He feeds them. He feeds 4,000 men, including their wives and their children. Lot of people there. A lot of Gentiles in this region and they are out in the wilderness of Decapolis. Well, in verse 10 we see that Jesus leaves that region, and it says "*he entered the boat with His disciples and came to this district of Dalmanutha.*" Now in Matthew's account it identifies this as the region of Magadan. Magadan.

Now here's the thing. We don't know exactly where this location is, but some say it was upon the northwestern shoreline of the Sea of Galilee. And so if you were to look at a map there of where Jesus was ministering and you were to look at a map of the Sea of Galilee, it would be up on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. We know that it wasn't down on the southeastern part of the Sea of Galilee because that was Gentile region. That was where Jesus was, right? That's where He had left from. And it wouldn't have been down there. We know that Jesus wouldn't have been in that region. How do we know?

Because look at what it says in verse 11. Look who shows up in verse 11. Who is it? It's the Pharisees, right? The Pharisees show up. There is no way that these Pharisees would have ever been seen in Gentile territory. They wouldn't have come to this region down where Jesus was feeding the 4,000. So we know Jesus is not there in this Gentile territory, but He's back up in Galilee in this Jewish region. And as He's there, He comes into a confrontation with these Pharisees and they begin to challenge Him and put Him to the test.

Which leads to our first point, point number one this morning is the Spiritual Blindness of the Pharisees.

1. Spiritual Blindness of the Pharisees.

Look at verse 11.

"The Pharisees came out and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, to test Him. Sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly, I

say to you, no sign will be given to this generation. Leaving them, He again embarked and went away to the other side."

Now Jesus has just been spending some time in this Gentile region with a bunch of Gentiles caring for them. And what did they do? How did they receive Jesus? They welcomed Him, right? They wanted Him there. They wanted to hear Jesus preach and teach, and they come out to listen to Jesus as He's out there in the wilderness, preaching for them. But as soon as He gets back to the Jewish region, back up in Galilee. He doesn't have a welcome back party.

What's He met with? Confrontation. A conflict. The Pharisees are there, and Matthew tells us even that the Sadducees are there with Him, and they come out to confront Jesus. And the Pharisees and the Sadducees team-up together as a team to come and confront Jesus as He shows back up into this region.

Now, here's the thing to know about Pharisees and Sadducees. Pharisees and Sadducees didn't always get along. They weren't united as a team. Although they were both a religious ruling class, they were at odds with each other, both religiously and politically. There were odds, they're at odds with each other. The Pharisees and the Sadducees. What did they believe?

- Well, the **Pharisees** were a *more liberal group* when it came to interpreting the scripture. And they gave oral tradition equal weight to that of the scriptures, as oral tradition was passed down throughout the rabbis. They gave that teaching equal weight with the scriptures of the Old Testament. That's what the Pharisees believe.
- But the **Sadducees** were *more of a conservative group*, and they insisted more on a literal interpretation of the scriptures. Now that doesn't mean the Sadducees always got it right. The Sadducees obviously they had their issues too, although they had a more literal interpretation of the scriptures. Acts 23:8 says *"for the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all."*

So even though the Sadducees had a more literal interpretation, there were still some things that they didn't believe about the scriptures. There were things that they got wrong. One of their biggest ones was the resurrection. They didn't believe in the resurrection. The Sadducees were also more concerned with political issues of the day, and they were friendlier to Rome than the Pharisees were. The Pharisees did not like Rome. But the Sadducees, they were content with Rome, they were OK with them. And so these guys, the Pharisees, and Sadducees, they have their differences with one another.

But when it comes to the truth of who Jesus is, what do they do? They unite. They unite. Why? Why do they unite? Because they are both spiritually blind. They are a spiritually blind people. They both denied and rejected Christ. And at this point, they're willing to lay aside their differences and come together so that they could attack Christ.

And what do they do? Look what it says in verse 11 they began to argue with Him. They began to argue with Him. Why would they begin to argue with Christ? Because they're what? Spiritually blind. They are spiritually blind. They don't believe in Him. And what's their ultimate goal as they come to argue with Jesus, what do they want to do? Well, look at what it says. What do they want to do?

They want to put Him to the test. They want to put Jesus to the test. Interesting, if you study the Greek word here for *test*. This word *test* here is the same word that's used back in Matthew 4 when Jesus was

tempted by Satan. They come to test Him to tempt Him, just as Satan did out in the wilderness with Jesus, to tempt Him to put Him to the test. It's the same word there. These guys are trying to trap Jesus, and show the people that He's not the Messiah because they didn't believe in Him. They're spiritually blind. And so they're trying to put...put Him into a trap, trap Him so that they can show to all the people that this is not the Messiah -- Jesus is not the promised one -- He's not the Prophet that we've been waiting for.

But notice what they're seeking as they put Him to a test. They're seeking a sign. But a sign from where? Where is the sign from? From heaven. They're not just seeking a sign, they're seeking a sign from heaven. The signs that Jesus did on Earth, such as casting out demons, creating food, healing the sick, even bringing a dead little girl back to life, wasn't for them. Wasn't enough for these spiritually blind men. And they want to sign to come down from heaven. Maybe some fire, or a voice from heaven or something that they could see up in the moon or the sun, or the stars. Something from up there. They want to see a sign come down from heaven.

But how does Jesus respond to them? Look at what He says in verse 12. How does Jesus respond?

“He sighs deeply in His spirit.”

He sighs deeply in His spirit. This is an inner groaning from Jesus as He's frustrated at the spiritual blindness of these spiritual leaders. These Pharisees and Sadducees are the spiritual leaders of the day, and yet they are spiritually blind. They don't even know the truth that they're claiming to believe. Jesus isn't all only frustrated with these guys, but He's even saddened for them. His heart breaks for these guys. They're spiritually blind.

Think about all the signs that He's already performed for the masses. For 5,000 people -- feeding them; and then 4,000 people and feeding them. All of the things that Jesus has done. And yet they're spiritually blind. They're seeking for another one. As if the next one is going to cause their spiritual blinders to come off. “Look, Jesus, if we can just see a sign from heaven, well, then we'll believe.” Will they? No, they won't. They won't, because they're blind.

Jesus responds and He says to them,

“Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.”

Now Jesus says this not because He couldn't perform another sign... of course He could. Right? He's Jesus... He could have performed another sign, but because they don't even receive the signs that are right in front of their very eyes, Jesus says I'm not going to give you another sign. I've already given you plenty. You should know by now that I am the Messiah, but you're blind.

Over in Matthew's account, Matthew tells us that Jesus said a sign would be given to this generation. And what was the sign that Matthew told us about? Jesus says that a sign would be given to it and it would be the sign of Jonah. The sign of Jonah.

What is Jesus referring to, this sign of Jonah? He's referring to the resurrection. That's what He's talking about there. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, so the son of man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Look, you're going to see after three days

and three nights that I am the Messiah. A sign will be given to you. You seek for a sign. I'm not going to give you one, but one's coming, because I'm going to come back from the dead. I'm going to rise again.

Jesus is talking about His resurrection -- and that sign that would declare that He is the Messiah. Because no one could raise themselves from the dead, right? But Jesus did. How? Because He's the Messiah. He's the one that they've been waiting for. And yet, because of their spiritual blindness, even after all of that happens, even after the resurrection of Christ, will they still believe? Will they believe at that point? Will their hardened hearts all of a sudden change and go "Wow, He really is the Messiah." They wouldn't. They wouldn't.

They wouldn't believe even after seeing the resurrection of Christ, and that's the result of people who are spiritually blind. The spiritually blind harden their hearts towards God. They're antagonistic towards God and they're antagonistic toward the people of God, right? Which is what these Pharisees would eventually do.

Who would they go after? The apostles and whom Jesus sent out. They would go after them, why? Because they are spiritually blind. And instead of coming in repentance and faith to Christ, they fight against Him.

And so what does Jesus do with them? Look at what it says in verse 13. This is actually really sad. He left them. He left these guys. He wouldn't cast His pearl before swine. And He left these unbelieving Jews. He's out of there. And what does He do? He goes to the other side of the sea. But during this confrontation, His disciples are there and they're watching, and they're listening. And Jesus is continuing to teach His guys. Remember He's spending a lot of time with them and He's continuing to teach these guys. And what does Jesus do as He's teaching them? He cautions them about the Pharisees, which leads to our second point. Not only do we see the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees, but point #2, we're going to see the spiritual warning from Jesus.

2. The Spiritual Warning from Jesus.

Look at verse 14 -

"and they had forgotten to take bread and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them."

These guys get over to the other side of the sea, on the northeastern shore, now of the Sea of Galilee. Remember they were up on the northwestern... now they make their way over to the northeastern shore, but they forgot to take bread with them. All they had was one small loaf. That was it. And as we've talked about before, it was basically just a small biscuit, right? Small biscuit-size -- that's all they've got. One little piece of bread with them, for these twelve guys. And Jesus gave them orders in verse 15.

"Watch out!" (He said) "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

Now, does Jesus know that these guys are talking about bread, that they forgot their bread? Of course He does. He knows that, but notice Jesus doesn't say "Oh well, let's go back and get the bread for you guys. We'll paddle back over to the other side of the sea....we'll get you guys some bread?" Notice Jesus doesn't say "Oh well. Go into the local marketplace and we'll get you guys some bread -- you guys forgot

it -- you should have taken it with you, but you forgot it. Let's go get you guys some bread." He doesn't say that.

Why? He's not concerned with the bread. He's not concerned with the bread. What does He say?

"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees"

Now these guys have just seen this confrontation happen between Jesus and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And what does He say? *"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees."* Jesus wasn't concerned with their lack of food at this point, although they were concerned, right? They're very concerned. We forgot...what are we going to eat? These guys are concerned, but what is Jesus concerned with?

He's concerned about **their spiritual need**. He's concerned with their spiritual need. Now, if you cook with leaven or yeast, you understand the effect here. You understand what Jesus is teaching at this point. A little bit of leaven will cause the whole lump of dough to rise, right? You cook with that, you bake with it you know, and you understand, a little bit of yeast in there, a little bit of leaven, and that will cause an effect on the entire lump of dough.

And Jesus is telling them that the teaching of these Pharisees is like this leaven. They have a self-righteous system that is leading lots and lots of people to... where? Hell. They're headed towards hell. That's where these Pharisees are leading these people. And why would Jesus warn them like this? Think about the influence that the Pharisees have at this time. It's a very influential bunch, very influential guys. The Pharisees, both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, are influential. But their influence was...what? Dangerous. They were dangerous guys.

These are dangerous men and Jesus is telling them to stay away from them. Look, these Pharisees and these Sadducees – they're hypocritical false teachers. And their teaching is poisonous. Stay away from those guys. Don't go near them. There are a bunch of blind men who are leading the blind. And they're leading them right off a cliff. That's where they're all headed.

He wanted to make sure that these guys stayed away from the influence of the Pharisees, but notice not just the Pharisees, but also, who? The influence of Herod. Now interesting that Jesus would all of a sudden bring Herod into the equation. He's had a confrontation with the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but then all of a sudden He brings Herod into this. Why would He bring Herod into the conversation?

What is Jesus talking about here?

Well, the Herodians (those people that followed after Herod) they represented the immoral and worldly behavior, while the Pharisees represented the religious and legalistic system. So you've got these worldly bunch of people and you've got these religious people who are false teachers. And Jesus says, beware of both of them.

He doesn't only warn them about false religion, but even about worldly influences. Be careful guys...some bad worldly influences out there...you need to stay away from these guys.

Herod had great power and influence. And it can be an easy trap for teachers to fall into. Especially when the future of these men was not fame and fortune, right? They're not going to be famous men who were going out preaching the gospel. Now we consider them famous, but they weren't famous

then. What did they want to do? People wanted to kill them, right? For the message they were preaching.

Their future would be hard. They're going to have hardships and hurdles. They weren't going to be delivering a popular message and be famous with the people, but Jesus warns them against this because... He warns them against these guys because He cares about them spiritually. He has care for them.

But notice how the disciples respond to Jesus at this time as He warns them about the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod. Notice how they respond in verse 16

"They began to discuss with one another the fact that they had no bread."

"But Jesus, we don't have any bread, and we got one little loaf here." These guys are focused on actual bread and they don't understand the spiritual truth that Jesus is giving them. And although they don't get it at this point...because they have faith in Jesus, they will grow and they will be sanctified. Which leads to our third and final point.

3. The Spiritual Growth of the Disciples.

The spiritual growth of the disciples. Look at verse 17.

17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart?"

Now think about all of the teaching that Jesus has done with these guys up to this point -- a lot of teaching, right? After all of this teaching, after showing them all of these miracles -- these guys saw all of the miracles that Jesus has done. Remember the 120-mile-long walk? That walking seminar that Jesus had with them, all of the time that Jesus was spending with these guys, and teaching them, and teaching them and teaching them. And what happens here? He's teaching them again. And do they get it?

They don't. Their response is "We don't have bread Jesus, we want bread, we're hungry. We want some bread, but we don't have any. We forgot it. We forgot to take it with us."

But notice how Jesus responds. Jesus responds with questions for these guys. He responds with questions. And Jesus' response to these guys shows that He expected more out of them. But He gives them questions. Why? Because He cares for them.

Look at what He says in verses 17 through 18. He gives 5 questions here. Let's work through these questions real quick.

1. The first question that He gives in verse 17 is He says *"Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread?"* Jesus is pointing out that they have missed the spiritual point of what He's teaching them. Guys, why are you concerned about bread, physical bread? They're concerned with material things instead of spiritual matters.

Jesus isn't concerned with food at this point. I mean, look what He's done. He's just fed thousands of people, right? Tens of thousands of people. Is Jesus concerned about food? Of course He's not.

If you were to go back into Matthew's account in Matthew 6:25, Jesus says, *"don't worry about what you will eat or drink."* That is, Jesus has already taught these guys things not to worry about. Don't worry about what you're going to eat or drink guys, but what are they concerned with? What to eat and drink. They're concerned with bread. But Jesus was concerned for their spiritual well-being, not for their physical well-being.

2. Second question He asked. *"Is do you not yet see or understand?"* Now Jesus is pointing out the lack of spiritual insight for these guys. Just like they didn't understand the parables back in Mark chapter 4. Remember the parable back in Mark chapter 4 is the parable of the Seed and the Sower, right? And there were the different types of grounds that were there. You're casting out the seed on these different grounds. Back in Mark chapter 4.

And at that point what do they do? They come to Jesus, and they go. "Hey, what was that parable all about? Can you teach it to us?" What does Jesus do? He teaches them. Oh, you guys let Me teach this to you and He sits down and He teaches these guys what the parable is all about.

You think at this point they would have some spiritual understanding, right? At least more spiritual understanding than what they do have. But Jesus is pointing out here when He says, *"do you not yet see or understand?"* He's pointing out that they still show a lack of spiritual understanding.

3. Jesus, then asks the third question. *"Do you have a hardened heart?"* verse 17. *"Do you have a hardened heart?"* What Jesus is saying here is, have you become like the Pharisees? Have you become like those guys that we just had a confrontation with? Have you hardened your heart? Are you turning away from the revealed truth that I've given to you?

I love what one commentator says. He says this. "An ignorant heart cannot harden itself. Only a knowing heart can harden itself." You see, the Pharisees had it revealed to them. And it was before them. The knowledge of God's truth was given to them, the knowledge of who Christ was right before their very eyes. And what did they do? They hardened their hearts.

And what is Jesus saying to these disciples? Have you become like them? Have you become like these Pharisees, guys? Don't become like them. Don't become like those Pharisees.

4. Then He asked another question. Question #4 *"having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?"* Jesus quotes here Ezekiel 12:2 when God spoke to Ezekiel telling him that he lived amongst a bunch of rebellious Israelites. Ezekiel -- back in Ezekiel -- was a Prophet who was sent to the Israelites to call them to turn from their sin and come to God.

But what did the Israelites do? They were rebellious. A bunch of rebellious people. They have eyes, but do not see, they have ears, but do not hear. "Are you guys, you 12 right here, are you guys like those rebellious people in Ezekiel? Have you become like them?"

Jesus also said this about those who could not understand His parable back in Mark chapter 4 -- the Parable of the Seed and the Sowers, Jesus said this very words to them. *"They have eyes but don't see, they have ears, but they don't hear."* They don't get the spiritual truth. Are you guys like those people? Really guys? Have you become like them?

5. And then He says a fifth question. He gives them a fifth question in verse 18 *“and do you not remember?”* Don't you guys remember? And Jesus goes on to talk about the two different times He created bread in verses 19 and 20. He tells them about the feeding of the 5,000 and about the feeding of the 4,000 and He's asking them don't you believe that I can provide for you?

“What are you guys concerned with? Bread? Really. I just fed 5,000 and 4,000 and you're concerned about bread? Really guys? Don't you remember what I've just done? Why are you so concerned about physical bread? I am giving you spiritual truth. That's what you need to be concerned with. What's wrong with these guys?”

I love what one commentator says regarding these questions -- “while the situation is grave, it is by no means hopeless.” The fact that Jesus addresses the disciples with questions, rather than pronouncements, as He did with the Pharisees, confirms that their future is still open...(hmmm)...He *cares* for them. And He cares about their spiritual well-being. And He asked them questions because He loves them, and because He wants them to grow.

“Have you become like ... don't become like the Pharisees, who continued to harden their heart towards Me? No guys, you need to grow.” There's hope for these guys. As Jesus asked these questions to them. He cares for them. And then He finishes up the conversation with one last question. Look what it says in verse 21. *“And He was saying to them, “Do you not yet understand?”*”

At this point, it's clear that when Jesus was talking about the leaven of the Pharisees, He was not talking about physical bread, He was talking about spiritual matters. That's what He's after with these guys. Now some people take these questions here as a rebuke to the disciples, and in fact this very question in verse 21 *“Do you not yet understand?”* Some people see that Jesus is rebuking the disciples here, but I think that this should be better taken as an appeal to them to search their hearts.

“Guys. You need to search your heart. Do you not yet understand? Do you long to know the truth? Do you not yet understand what I am telling you guys?” And what is Jesus revealing to these guys? What is He revealing to them at this point? He's revealing them the truth about the mystery of the Kingdom, because remember, that's what He came to teach them. It was all about the mystery of the Kingdom.

That's what they're going to go and proclaim. The gospel of the kingdom. They're going to go and proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God to everyone. And Jesus is telling them “look, you guys need to understand and know the mystery of the kingdom. Have you not yet realized and understand what I am teaching to you? I'm giving you this spiritual truth.”

Back in Mark chapter 4, verse 11, let me just read what Jesus said to the disciples there it says this,

And He was saying to them, “To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, 12 so that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN.”

What is Jesus saying here? “Look guys, I've revealed the mystery of the kingdom to you and you're concerned with bread? Really guys, that's where you're at in your spiritual walk? Come on guys, you need to understand. Those guys over there... they don't get the mystery of the kingdom of God because

they're outside... the Pharisees, the Sadducees there outside of the kingdom. Why? Because they deny Me as Messiah. They don't believe in me, but you guys do. Have you become like them? Don't become like them."

Jesus is revealing the mystery of the kingdom to these guys. He's giving them spiritual truth. And even though there is a not-yet-reality to their understanding at this point, there is still what? Hope. There's still hope for these guys.

That's why Jesus answers with questions for them. Because He's saying there is still hope for you guys that you will understand everything that I am teaching you. In fact, eventually they will right? Because who will be given to them? The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will be given to them to remind them of everything that Jesus taught them. There's hope for these guys. But right now, at this moment it doesn't look good for these guys, right? It doesn't look good for them if Jesus is questioning you like this, it doesn't look good guys. And some might say, well, these guys are no different than the Pharisees who didn't understand Jesus' teaching. But they aren't.

How do we know? Turn over to Matthew chapter 16. Matthew chapter 16. This is Matthew's account of this very event. And in Matthew chapter 16, Matthew finishes up this account, and notice what he says in verse 12...in Matthew 16:12 Matthew tells us this.

"Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

What happens with these guys? There is spiritual growth. They get it. They were questioned. But they get it. It might be small, it might be small growth, but it's growth. These guys understand and they realize, "Oh, He's not talking about physical bread. He's talking about spiritual realities."

Look, there is sanctification with these guys at this moment here. These guys are being sanctified. They're growing because they have faith in Christ. It might be small fruit, but it's fruit indeed, right? And their eyes are open to see spiritual truth that Jesus is teaching them at this moment. Now, it doesn't mean that they're not going to have tough days ahead because as we'll see, they will, right? They're going to have some things that they still need to learn. It's not that they get it all at this moment.

But what's going on with these guys? There's growth, little by little, there's growth. You see these guys' response is completely different from that of the Pharisees and Sadducees. What did the Pharisees and Sadducees do? Continued to harden their heart and continued in their blindness towards Christ.

But what do these guys do? They desire to know the truth. They want to know it.

The Pharisees are going to go on to plot the death of Christ. But the disciples are going to continue to cling to Jesus because they want to know Him more, and they want to know His truth more.

Listen are you growing in Christ? Are you growing each and every day? This passage right here causes us to examine ourselves.

Where is your heart at? Are you deceiving yourself thinking that you are a Christian and really aren't? Or do you desire the things of God? Do you desire to know God more through His Word? Because that is what happens when someone puts their faith in Jesus. They desire to know Him

more. Some of you may be here this morning going, "Yah, I have no desire." And I would call you to repent of your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ, as you examine your own heart.

If you don't have a desire for Christ, then you are not saved. You should desire Christ. True believers desire Christ and long to know Him more and desire to become more conformed to Him. That's the result of being a true believer. Examine yourself. Are you being sanctified daily? Are you becoming more like Christ in your walk with Him? That's what true believers do. You cannot have salvation without sanctification. Doesn't work that way.

In closing I want to read to you what Charles Spurgeon said about this. Charles Spurgeon said this. "Had it been possible for you to have had salvation without sanctification, it would have been a curse to you instead of a blessing. If such thing were possible, I cannot conceive of a more lamentable condition than for a man to have the happiness of salvation without the holiness of it." But He continues on and He says, "Happily it is not possible."

It's not possible. You cannot have salvation without sanctification. We have to examine ourselves. Are we growing in Christ-likeness? Are we desiring to be more like Him? That's the sign of a true Christian. And that's what we need to do. It might be small steps. But we need to be growing in Christ.

Let's pray. Father, this is one of those passages that causes us to really examine where we're at before You. Lord, you know the heart of every one of us in this place this morning. Father, I pray that if there is anyone who is here that does not desire You, who is not saved, we pray that You would grant them the gift of repentance and faith in You. And You, Father, would change their heart... that You would draw them to Yourself. And that they would desire You, that they would grow in You -- that they would be sanctified, the first step of sanctification, and then that they would go on to the second step of sanctification -- of progressive sanctification -- and that daily they would desire You and Your Word and to grow to be more like Christ. Father, we thank You for Your Word that is truth. Your Word that feeds us. It feeds us spiritually. Your Word that gives us life - eternal life. Father, I pray that we would hunger for it more, that we would desire it, and that we would be sanctified in our lives. Not so that we could be like the Pharisees and Sadducees and stand before people to try and show people how holy and righteous we are, but so that we might live to glorify and honor You. Father help us to do that. May we be a people who continue to grow daily in our walk with You and hunger and thirst for righteousness, for the truth of Your Word, we pray all of this in the name of our Savior. Amen.