



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 113 - Time to Take a Closer Look (Mark 8)

Second Feeding

Have you ever considered what it was like to be in the crowd that came to hear Jesus? People got so excited, so caught up in His words they completely lost track of time and even the basic needs like eating.

- Describe an event or activity where you became so absorbed you completely lost track of time.

Sometimes we may get the impression Jesus was only truly concerned with our spiritual needs of forgiveness and salvation. This account makes clear that Jesus cared about the whole person—body and soul. Read Mark 8:2-3. Notice Jesus' awareness of the length of time the people in the crowd have stayed to hear Him and the concern He shows for their physical well-being.

- What nagging physical or earthly needs do you have that seem too unimportant to bother Jesus with as you pray?
- Share some other passages which show Jesus' concern for seemingly unimportant details concerning our body and earthly life? (See Matthew 6:25-34; 17:24-27.)
- How can you use this miracle feeding to reassure someone who thinks God has too many big problems to solve that He doesn't have time for their problems?

A Two-Stage Healing

This is one of the strangest accounts you will find in the Gospels, especially in Mark's Gospel where so many people are healed "instantly" and "immediately." For the first time Jesus heals a blind man, but the first try isn't enough to fully restore his sight.

- What questions would that raise in your mind if you were one of the disciples witnessing this miracle?

Jesus laid His hands on his eyes a second time, and then his vision was completely restored. Doing this miracle in two stages wasn't really for the benefit of the blind man, but it was a powerful message for the disciples. In the days ahead they will see strange and fearful things and they will misunderstand, especially when they witness Jesus being tried, condemned and crucified. But they will see clearly when Jesus rises and explains to them why He had to suffer and die.

- Describe what you first thought being a Christian meant.
- How has your understanding of your life in Jesus changed over the years?

Peter's Home Run and Strike Out

Peter is a lot like us. We have our brilliant moments of faith, and then the next thing we know we've stepped knee deep into it—again. Like the blind man whose sight was only partially restored the first time Jesus touched him, Peter could see that Jesus was God's Son, the promised Christ. But he was still blind to the true purpose of Jesus' mission and strongly objected to the suffering and death Jesus predicted.

- Jesus warmly praised Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ, God's Son. Why do you think He reacted so strongly against Peter's refusal to accept His future suffering?
- Describe a former understanding you had of Jesus that you now see was incorrect. How did you come to that recognition?
- How can we find certainty in our faith yet still be willing to examine our basic assumptions and interpretations?