



The Mercy of Jesus Pt 3: Guarding against Forgetfulness!

May 2, 2021

Holy Text: Matthew 15:32-39

A Simple Exposition

1. After healing the great multitudes, those who were “lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others,” (Matt 15:30), Jesus continued to have compassion upon them.
2. As we have mentioned before, the word for compassion is a Greek word that means “up from the bowels.” The word denotes a very deep love and concern arising from the innermost part of one’s being.
3. Apparently, they had been with our LORD three days in “the wilderness” and had not eaten. They were hungry.
4. Not just content to minister to their ailments, Jesus also understood and cared about their need for nourishment!
5. The disciples had seven loaves and “a few” fish. The LORD asked the people to sit. He gave thanks for the good the Father had seen fit to give, and miraculously, feed four thousand men (plus women and children)!
6. Not only did Jesus feed them, but there were seven baskets of food left over!
7. Our LORD then departed by boat to Magdala. According to Easton’s Bible Dictionary, Magdala was, “A tower, a town in Galilee, mentioned only in [Mat 15:39](#). In the parallel passage in [Mar 8:10](#) this place is called Dalmanutha. It was the birthplace of Mary called the Magdalen, or Mary Magdalene.”

An Obvious Comparison

1. In January, we preached on *The Compassion of Jesus* from Matthew 14:13-21. What a similar situation!
2. There, we learn so much. For example, from Matthew 14:15, we said:
 - At first glance, the disciples’ response to the late hour (between 3-6pm or so) seems completely reasonable. Many people, and no food. Makes sense.
 - However, they forgot (as we often do) that things are different when Jesus is around!
 - They looked with their natural eyes (as we do), and approached the situation logically (as we do!). Jesus had another plan!
 - Here is the lesson here: let us walk by faith and not by sight! (2 Cor 5:7)
 - May we realize that sometimes God wants to do something that only He could get the glory for; sometimes God wants to demonstrate His power!
 - Sadly beloved, sometimes we walk around as if God is incapable of moving...like He is unable to call those things that be not as though they were. (Rom 4:17)
 - Yes I know this is a narrative, and yes I know that God does not have to perform miracles. In fact our faith is not based in current miracles, but in the Word of God!
 - Point to consider: Let us balance those truths with the equally potent truth that we serve an all powerful God!
3. We also saw Jesus command the disciples: “Give ye them to eat.” (Matt 14:16) We said:

- I'd imagine Jesus knew that this command would befuddle His disciples. "Look at all these people LORD!"
 - Have you figured out yet that our LORD will often command and lead us to do things or into situations that are impossible without His help?
 - Point to consider: our LORD requires faith; He wants us to trust Him!
4. When comparing the two miracles, some make mention of the locations: the 5000 being in Jewish territory (Bethsaida, Luke 9:10) and the 4000 in a Gentile area (through the coasts of the Decapolis, Mark 7:31).
 5. **But what jumps out out me is the disciples question...**

An Incredulous Question

- **Matthew 15:33 (KJV)** *And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?*
- **Matthew 15:33 (NLT)** *The disciples replied, "Where would we get enough food here in the wilderness for such a huge crowd?"*

C'mon Fellas!

The previous miracle could not have occurred to long from the current need. Days? Weeks They asked the question like they weren't there at the feeding of the 5000! "We cannot find food for 4000 men Jesus! What are we doing to do LORD?" Were they insecure? Did they still lack faith? Did they forget what Jesus JUST did in Chapter 14? Maybe it was a combination of all these things.

I'd like to encourage you, CRC, by wrapping all these possible issues up in the term "Forgetfulness."

Warnings against Forgetfulness in Scripture

Deuteronomy 4:23-25 (KJV) *Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee. 24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God. 25 When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger:*

Deuteronomy 6:5-12 (KJV) *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. 10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, 11 And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which*

thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; **12** *Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.*

Deuteronomy 8:10-18 (KJV) *When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. **11** Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: **12** Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; **13** And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; **14** Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; **15** Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; **16** Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; **17** And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. **18** But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.*

Psalms 50:22 (KJV) *Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

What is Forgetting so easy for us?

Jeremiah 2:32 (KJV) *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.*

1. Because we are easily distracted.
2. Because our priorities are often misplaced.
3. Because of our disdain for authority.

Proverbs 4:1-2 (KJV) *Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. **2** For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.*

Proverbs 4:4-6 (KJV) *He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. **5** Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not: neither decline from the words of my mouth. **6** Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.*

4. Because of the flesh, the world, and the devil.
5. Because we do not typically “practice” remembering.

What can Forgetfulness cause?

1. A loss of hope...which can lead to rebellion.

Psalms 78:1-8 (KJV) Maschil of Asaph. *Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. **2** I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: **3** Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. **4** We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. **5** For he established a*

testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: **6** That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: **7** That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: **8** And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

2. An acceptance of erroneous doctrine

Galatians 3:1-3 (KJV) O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? **2** This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? **3** Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

3. A lack of knowledge and its consequences

Hosea 4:6 (KJV) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

4. Backsliding

Ezekiel 23:35-39 (KJV) Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms. **36** The LORD said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah? yea, declare unto them their abominations; **37** That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them. **38** Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths. **39** For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.

5. Judgement and calamity

Psalms 9:17 (KJV) The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Jeremiah 18:15-17 (KJV) Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up; **16** To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head. **17** I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

The whole book of Judges!

What can we do to guard against it...to practice Remembering?

1. Repent. A repentant posture cultivates appreciation and remembering.

Revelation 2:5 (KJV) *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

2. Return. Make a decision to remember.

Jeremiah 3:21-22 (KJV) *A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the LORD their God. **22** Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God.*

3. Read, meditate upon, and delight in the Scriptures.

Psalms 119:15-16 (KJV) *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. **16** I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.*

Psalms 119:11 (KJV) *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

Psalms 119:92-93 (KJV) *Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction. **93** I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.*

4. Sing the Scriptures.

- It is easy to forget that the Psalms are songs! Music is powerful. One of its attributes is ease of remembering! Some Psalms were written for the purpose helping God's people remember what He did on their behalf! (Ps 78, 105, 106, 135, 136)

5. Be faithful the Local Church; it is designed to spark remembrance!

Acts 20:27-31 (KJV) *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. **28** Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. **29** For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. **30** Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. **31** Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

1 Corinthians 11:23-24 (KJV) *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: **24** And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, **Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.***

Hebrews 13:7 (KJV) *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

6. Appreciate and Utilize Special or "Memorial" Days.

Exodus 12:12-14 (KJV) **12** For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. **13** And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. **14** And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

7. Use some form of Ebenezer, a help to remember.

1 Samuel 7:12 (KJV) Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

Joshua 4:1-7 (KJV) And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, **2** Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, **3** And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night. **4** Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: **5** And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: **6** That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? **7** Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

8. Testify!

Psalms 71:17-18 (KJV) O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. **18** Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

Revelation 12:10-11 (KJV) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. **11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

OH LORD, help us be a people that remembers Thee and Thy Word!

2 Peter 3:1-2 (KJV) This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: **2** That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.

Amen!