

“The Follow Jesus Project”

Monday, July 6

Scriptures to read: Matthew 9:27-34, Isaiah 35:5-6

Thoughts to consider:

As Jesus became better known, He was always being followed. Two blind men begged, “Have mercy on us, Son of David.” This was a popular title for the Messiah. They recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Notice the persistence of these two blind men. They actually seemed rude as they invaded Jesus’ privacy. Jesus asked if they believed in His ability to give them sight. When we ask anything of Jesus, we must be fully assured that He is able to do it. Immediately after Jesus healed the blind men, a man who was under the power of the devil was brought to Him. Jesus’ power was instantaneous. Contrast the effect of this power on the multitudes who were amazed and the Pharisees who blasphemed. Since they could not deny the healings, they attributed them to the devil.

Tuesday, July 7

Scriptures to read: Matthew 13:53-58, Mark 6:1-6

Thoughts to consider:

Jesus made Capernaum the headquarters for His ministry. However, Nazareth was His hometown where He had spent His boyhood. He often used the synagogue as His place of teaching on the Sabbath. Even though the people recognized Jesus’ wisdom and miraculous powers, they didn’t honor Him with a parade! Instead they could not separate Him from His background as a humble carpenter. They knew the members of His family; they were normal, ordinary people. How could this account for His superhuman ability?! It was not that Jesus was unable to work miracles in Nazareth, but their lack of faith kept Him from it. Two uses of the word “amazed” are used in this passage. Are you amazed by Jesus’ greatness and power? Or is He amazed at your lack of faith?

Wednesday, July 8

Scriptures to read: Mark 6:6-13, Luke 9:1-6, Matthew 10:1-42 (optional)

Thoughts to consider:

Up until this time the apostles had been “apprentices” of Jesus. After their preparation, He sent them out to preach, teach, and heal. They were His ambassadors, sent under His authority. Jesus sent them out two by two. There are several possible reasons for pairing them: 1) they would provide mutual support during this training period; 2) it would have lent credibility to their witness; 3) they could have encouraged each other. The apostles were told to trust God to provide for their needs. Matthew gives a broader description of this particular commission. Our commission is given at the close of Jesus’ ministry. Although today’s society makes it less practical to go out into the community two by two, we must find other ways of leading others to repentance.

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Thursday, July 9

Scriptures to read: Matthew 14:13-14, Mark 6:30-34, Luke 9:10-11
John 6:1-4

Thoughts to consider:

Jesus knew the importance of rest in the midst of a demanding campaign. He and the apostles crossed the Sea of Galilee. However, the crowds saw them leave and hurried around the north end of the sea on foot. As they walked (or ran) along, more and more people joined the crowd. When Jesus landed, there was a huge crowd there. Did Jesus ignore the crowd? Of course not; He healed their sick and began teaching them. The enthusiastic crowd assembled in a grassy, deserted area overlooking the Sea of Galilee. Later in these chapters we will read about the feeding of the 5000. This account is recorded by all four gospel writers, each including different details. Do you ever become so busy—so burdened down—that you fail to take time to rest? Our bodies, our minds, our emotions, and our spirits require rest. May we never become so busy that we fail to have our Quiet Time with the Lord and be refreshed.

Friday, July 10

Scriptures to read: Matthew 14:15-17, Mark 6:35-38, Luke 9:12-15
John 6:5-10

Thoughts to consider:

After Jesus had spent the day teaching and healing, it was getting late. People were hungry. This was an isolated place — no McDonalds or Taco Bell. Contrast the disciples' solution: "Send the crowd away;" with that of Jesus: "You give them something to eat." Even if they had enough money to buy food, the nearest place where it could be purchased was miles away. Andrew found one boy among the masses who had a lunch which his mother had probably packed for him. He had five small barley loaves (probably no larger than a biscuit), each to be divided between a thousand people. He had two small fishes (probably about the size of a sardine), each to be shared by 2500 men! Was this an impossible dilemma? Or the opportunity for a great miracle?

Saturday, July 11

Scriptures to read: Matthew 14:16-21, Mark 6:35-44, Luke 9:12-17
John 6:10-15

Thoughts to consider:

After the five loaves and two fish had been brought to Jesus, He had the people seated in hundreds and fifties. This organization of the crowd would have facilitated the distribution of the food. It also made it easy to count the crowd. Five thousand men plus women and children was a huge crowd. The neighboring towns of Capernaum and Bethsaida probably had no more than a population of 3000 each. When Jesus took the loaves and fish, He gave thanks, and then began breaking them into pieces, which kept multiplying until all the people were fed. The remainder of food was gathered up. This was an example of avoiding wastefulness and a demonstration that everyone had been adequately fed. It would do us well to remember this the next time we scrape all the leftovers into the disposer. This miracle was awesome but no more awesome than creating the seeds in the ground to grow the grain and making the fish in the lakes and streams.

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