

Weekly Bible Study for Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

Bible Month #3 "Eyes Opened" by Kathy Mathew for 20th June 2021.

The Pharisees are hostile to Jesus' ministry. They watched him like a hawk and found every excuse to blame him or argue with him in public. In this passage of scripture the sceptical Pharisees demand a miraculous proof of Jesus messianic claims, not content with the countless miracles he has performed. They were seeking from him a sign from heaven, a dramatic sign from the sky something similar to Elijah's fire from heaven (1Kings18:38). They are testing Him. The word *tested* could be translated as *tempted*. They were tempting Jesus but he refused.

Q 1 Why do you think the Pharisees want to see a sign? Why did he not give them a sign?

Q 2 People are still asking for signs today! Why are the signs Jesus did, not sufficient?

Q 3 What would you say to the non-Christian who says "if God shows himself right now I'd believe? What is the greatest sign around today?"

As a further expression of his indignation, Jesus abruptly gets into the boat and leaves the Pharisees behind. Possibly in their haste to keep up with Jesus, the disciples forgot to bring bread on board. Jesus then warned them of the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod both of whom were allied against him. The disciples have missed the point totally.

Q 4 What does Jesus mean when he says, "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." Why were the disciples fussing about bread and what was the point of Jesus' response?

Jesus reminds the disciples of the time he recently fed 5,000 people on five loaves and two fishes and queries why they do not understand. Could they have done better? Could they have understood more if they applied themselves more. Could we have a better understanding if we applied ourselves more?

Q 5 What do you think the tone of Jesus voice would have been? Was he confronting them in anger, concern or frustration or in love? What are your thoughts on this?

Q 6 We too, often forget and discount the significance of Jesus presence, or his provision or healing in the past—and we get worried afresh as if what was in the past hasn't happened. How can we learn the lessons of the past and so much more readily trust him in the future?

In recounting the healing of the blind man who is brought by his friends to Jesus it would seem that their faith in Jesus' healing touch provides us with the only record of this miracle. In some ways, it is the most curious of all Jesus' miraculous signs. The story is simply told, but not as easily understood This is the only miracle that was done in stages as well as the only one where the person healed was asked if he had been cured. This healing is another example of the variety of healings that Jesus used

Q 7 Can you think of a reason why Jesus would choose this method at this time? Why take the blind man out of the village?

For you and I it could be that God's work within us is often received little by little and for most Christians growth happens this way. There are times when many of us show spiritual blindness

The blind man's life would never be the same again and he would never forget the compassion of Jesus and his touch which gave him his sight. In this passage of scripture Jesus seeks to *open our eyes* to the power and goodness of a loving God and the grace that we have received. He completely transforms peoples lives just as the blind man's sight was restored and his life would never be the same again

Q 8 If you are able to, tell the group of a time when "your eyes were opened" and you took a step towards a closer relationship with God and a greater understanding and a deeper faith.

Spend time in prayer with your own thoughts or sharing and listening to others.

Read together Hymn *We cannot measure how you heal.....*StF 655.