

The Danger of Doubt!
Mark 8:10-21
Series Christ Our Focus

1. Introduction:

- a. Today we are going to compare and contrast the disciples and the Pharisees.
 - i. Specifically – we are going to compare how dangerous doubt is for the unbeliever and to the believer.
 - ii. For the unbeliever it damns them
 - iii. For the believer it destroys their confidence in God and cause spiritual amnesia –
 - 1. We are to soon forgetful of the great deeds of our Lord
 - 2. It causes the doubting Christian to lead a defeated spiritual life.

2. Verse 10-11 – Dal-ma-nu-tha

- a. The Pharisees accost Jesus asking for a sign from heaven to prove His messiahship.
 - i. The Greek came – **Exelthon** – means to come out in ranks like the military.
 - ii. The Greek – **syzetein** – argue – oppose or dispute
 - iii. The Greek – asked – **zetein** – means to attempt to gain control of
 - iv. The Greek word – test – **peirazein** – does not mean an objective test but an obstacle or stumbling block to discredit.
- b. A sign is not a miracle – Jesus has performed scores of them
 - i. They remained unbelievers
 - ii. They want a confirmation of God himself attesting to the validity of the ministry of Christ as Messiah
 - 1. **Matthew 3:16-17** And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; (17) and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."
- c. The Jews were always seeking after signs

- i. **1 Corinthians 1:22-24** For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, (23) but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, (24) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
 - d. Many people are like these Pharisees today.
 - i. They ignore all that God has done and all the lives that they have seen transformed. They want God to come down to them and perform for them some sort of sign
3. Verse 12 – sighed
- a. This sigh is a groaning in his spirit
 - b. Not anger but dismay
 - i. He comes to them
 - ii. They accost him
 - iii. The gentiles had not behaved this way.
 - c. This Generation – They are just like the ancient Israelites
 - i. This generation signals that the Pharisees unwillingness to come by the preaching was equivalent to all the past generations of Israel that had done the same.
 - 1. **Deuteronomy 32:5-6** They have dealt corruptly with him; they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation. (6) ***Do you thus repay the LORD,*** you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you?
4. Verse 13 – To reject the Lord is foolishness
- a. Jesus leaves them – parting ways with this group of Pharisees
 - i. Stubborn unbelief is a sin that damns to hell
 - ii. They are abandoned in their refusal to listen to the word and take into account the work that he had done.
 - b. Their attempt at a sign is a way of gaining through empirical means what can only be gained through faith and trust.
 - i. Faith that depends on proofs is veiled doubt.
 - ii. **Hebrews 11:1-2** Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (2) For by it the people of old received their commendation.

5. Verses 14-15 – Bread and Leaven
 - a. Verse 14 – they had forgotten
 - b. Verse 15 – Christ warns against the leaven of the Pharisees and Herodians – leaven is the teaching; doctrine
 - i. These two were natural enemy but they shared something in common; their teaching would lead anyone to hell
 1. **Matthew 16:12** Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
 - ii. To be warned is to be commanded to refrain from.
 1. Knowing God right causes you to love God right.
 2. God, today, warns us to stay away from teaching that is leavened –
 - a. TBS is not sound
 - b. Examples of solid teaching – Slide at the end
 - iii. Christ makes it abundantly clear that doctrine does matter:
 1. **1 Timothy 4:16** Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.
 2. **1 John 4:1-3** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. (2) By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, (3) and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.
6. Verse 16 – the besetting sin of unbelief
 - a. The disciples are unaware of their actual condition. They quibble about the meaning of “bread” without realizing that they are being infected by a deadly cancer.
 - b. Their proximity to Jesus must grow into understanding and understanding into faith, or else, like Judas, it will in the end inoculate them to the meaning of the person and work of Christ.
 - i. **Hebrews 4:1-2** Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should

seem to have failed to reach it. (2) For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened... **Hebrews 4:11** Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

- ii. Doubt is deadly and it can manifest itself in so many ways.

7. Verses 17-21

- a. The Lord censures doubt and all besetting sins for Christians
 - i. Do you not yet perceive or understand?
 - ii. Are your hearts hardened?
 - iii. Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?
 - iv. And do you not remember?
 - v. And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"
- b. Christ has to remind their ever-forgetful minds of what he had just done.
 - i. Does Christ need to remind you of his grace demonstrated so amply?
- c. What was multiplying bread from one loaf to our Lord God?
- d. Failure to deal with doubt can lead to a hardness of heart
- e. They are chastised because they had experienced so much and yet remained doubtful.
- f. The hardened heart is a problem for religious and moral people
 - i. **Romans 2:5** But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.
 - ii. Here the Pharisees and the Disciples stand together—in grave danger

8. A further word –

- a. The gospel frees us and by the power of Christ we can conquer any sin in our lives; even the sin of doubt.
- b. Unbelievers must repent and turn to Jesus in saving faith.
- c. The believer has Christ in his corner. The Holy Spirit is at his disposal in the work of sanctification.
 - i. That we would be holy is always in the will of God.
 - ii. We are in need in prayer

9. Benediction –

- a. **Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
(2) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.