

GREATLY ASTONISHED

Our lesson text is taken from Mark's account of Jesus walking on water following the feeding of the 5000.

We will study the background passage to our lesson text by the following four homiletical points (Mark 6:45-52).

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| • Send away | (Mark 6:45-46) | trip by boat |
| • Storm at sea | (Mark 6:46-47) | tested in the boat |
| • Saw Jesus walking on water | (Mark 6:49-50) | terrified in the boat |
| • Still searching for the truth | (Mark 6:51-52) | trouble-some heart |

This lesson will focus on three parts of the following statement: “And they were greatly astonished, for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.” (Mark 6:51b-52)

Mark says that the disciples were “greatly astonished” when Jesus calmed the stormy wind. Mark explains that they were “greatly astonished” because they had not gained spiritual insight from the loaves incident of the feeding of the 5000 (Mark 6:52).

Mark says they missed the spiritual significance of the miracle at sea because their hearts had become hardened by the miracle of feeding of the 5000.

REQUEST: Can you explain how this happened to the disciples?

This lesson will study SIX aspects of the disciples being “greatly astonished” by Jesus’ miracle at sea.

1. “Greatly astonished” shows that the disciples were not expecting Jesus to perform the miracle at sea.

Mark 6:51-52 reveals that they still haven't gained spiritual insight into what it meant for Jesus to be the messianic Savior of the world even after several types of messianic miracles (Luke 4:16-21; 1 Cor.1:22).

Jesus addressed the same spiritual struggle after the feeding of the 5000 with 12 baskets of left-over loaves as well as after the 4000 with 7 baskets of loaves (Matt.15:32-39; 16:5-12).

2. Jesus warned that one big reason for their struggle with the truth was the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

(Matt.16:5-12) “Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” (Matt.16:12; Rom.3:28; Gal.2:16).

It was at this time that He asks them, “Who do people say I am?” (Matt.16:13-16). They offered all sorts of answers. Then Jesus asks them, “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matt.16:16). Peter's answer brings a compliment from Jesus (Matt.16:17-20).

- Where did Peter acquire what he believed about the coming of Christ into the world?
- Why were Peter's beliefs in conflict with what Jesus was teaching?
- Was Peter more in line with the messianic teachings of Jesus or more with the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees

3. Peter gave Jesus the elementary (101) doctrinal messianic answer. However, it lacked the necessary doctrinal details of messianic content (Matt.16:16-18).

What did Jesus do about their doctrinal problem? “From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.” (Matt.16:21; 1 Cor.15:3-4)

What these disciples must do to spiritually correct their belief problem, will be to put off Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus thinking (OMCD) (leaven / false teaching of Pharisees) and to put on New Man Divine Viewpoint thinking (NMDV) (true Scriptural teachings of Jesus) (Eph.4:22-24; Rom.12:2; 1 Cor.15:3-4).

How did Peter respond to the doctrinal details of the content related to his declaration – “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God?” (Matt.16:16) Peter’s response will show how difficult it can be to get rid of OMCD core beliefs as long as they are in conflict with the doctrinal truth of God’s will.

4. Peter felt confident enough, within his beliefs to rebuke Jesus on His teachings regarding the doctrinal details of the mission of Christ to the world. (Matt.16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; 26:1-2).

Peter and the disciples didn’t reject Jesus’ teaching just once but many times before they finally came to the bitter end of their personal struggle and accepted it as the truth of God’s will.

Why were they resisting believing Jesus’ teaching regarding God’s purpose for sending Him into the world? It was because of the leaven of false teachings of the Pharisees that resulted in OMCD regarding the mission of Christ to the world. What enemy would be behind this distortion of truth? (John 8:32, 40-45, 59) Satan! (2 Cor.2:11; 4:3-4; 11:3-4)

“By this is the love of God was manifested in us that God sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (1 John 4:9-10; 1 Tim.1:15)

“And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.” (1 John 4:14; John 3:16-18)

5. Peter put himself through denial, betrayal and desertion of Jesus Christ before coming to the bitter end of OMCD thinking (Matt.27:75).

One reason that Peter and the disciples had to come to the bitter end of OMCD was because of hardness of hearts regarding this doctrinal detail of truth regarding God’s will: “For they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, BUT THEIR HEART WAS HARDENED.” (Mark 6:52)

“Concerning him we have much to say and it is hard to explain since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, I have need to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.” (Heb.5:11-12; 3:12-15)

6. It took Peter 40 days after coming to bitter end of his OMCD followed by an intense Bible study by the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ to replace OMCD conformity with NMDV transformation.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Rom.12:2)

If you can see the important changes in beliefs between Matt.16:16 and Acts 2:36-41, then you can understand the work of spiritual transformation “by the renewing of your minds” (Rom.12:2).