

## Mark 8:1-21

### *Do You Still Not Understand?*

*"By nature we are deaf and blind to the things of God. Our hearts are recalcitrant, having no pulse for Him, so that the Word of God bounces off our hearts as if they were made of stone. Until the Holy Spirit opens our eyes and ears, we are impervious to the truth of God. The disciples were in this state. They were fallen creatures just like you and me. But Jesus saw the possibility of a change of heart for them.*

*How is your hearing? How is your perception of the things of God? How is your heart? Does the truth of God bounce off it? Or is your heart softened, so that God's truth penetrates and sinks in? We all need to examine ourselves in the light of God's Word to be sure the deadly leaven of the Pharisees is not working in us, blinding us to the light and making us deaf to the life-giving Word." Sproul*

- I. To receive mercy and grace freely through faith in God's Son is to receive the greatest gift He has to offer. Our introduction to it began at salvation and its unending flow will carry us throughout eternity. The attributes of God's mercy and grace flow from his heart into ours. Their very nature shows an intense understanding our need for them in a fallen world where Satan's character epitomizes the heart of man. *"In Him there is a boundless store of mercy and grace laid up for the use of all His believing members and ready to be bestowed on all who ask in prayer." Ryle*

Mark 8:1-10

Matt. 15:26-28

2 Cor. 3:18

Heb. 10:10,14

Heb. 5:13-14

Matt. 15:29-31

2 Cor. 1:3-4

**ἔλεος éleos** = mercy: kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them.

**χάρις chárís** = grace, good will, loving-kindness, favour of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues

**Hebrews 4:16** Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

- II. Pride is one of the greatest hindrances to receiving mercy and grace that exists in the heart of mankind. The spirit behind pride is the unbelief that someone is superior to the one blinded by it. It puts up a wall that blinds the person to seeing the value of giving mercy and grace to others without expecting something in return. There's no understanding of dying to self, esteeming others above self, agape loving others, or bowing down to Jesus Christ in humble submission to his Lordship. Humility is an absolute necessity for receiving the salvation the Lord Jesus Christ offers to all who ask. That is why Jesus says in Matthew 7:13, *You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way* " NLT.

Mark 8:11-13

*"Legalism and pride are always bereft of the nature of true love, grace and mercy. In fact, anyone enslaved by them doesn't even know what love, grace and mercy looks like in the eyes of Christ."*

- III. The Lord has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true. We are in Christ and have been given his mind to enable us to understand all that we've been given through His mercy and grace. We are warned to keep the leaven of unbelief and pride from making us stupid and unfruitful toward living in ways that bring him honor and glory. The days are short, and the times are becoming increasingly more wicked. Therefore, we must be watchful for His return with a determination to keep our minds and hearts steadfast toward him.

Mark 8:14-21

1 Cor. 2:12-16

Rom. 12:1-2

**1 Jn. 5:20** *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*