

The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ, Part 20

As He entered the year of opposition, Jesus sent out His disciples with His authority and power. He instructed them to preach repentance and perform miracles. During this time, Jesus also fed the five thousand, demonstrating His compassion and divine provision. After feeding the multitude, Jesus sent His disciples ahead across the sea of Galilee. Once again they encountered a severe storm and Jesus came walking on the water to them. Peter stepped out of the boat and walked to Jesus on the water until he became afraid, then the Lord stretched out His hand and caught him. After rescuing Peter, Jesus said, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matthew 14:29) It appears that Jesus expected Peter to be able to walk on the water by faith.

Many Miracles Performed - Matthew 14:34-36; Mark 6:53-56

Matthew 14:34–36 NKJV When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. ³⁵ And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched *it* were made perfectly well.

Pay attention to these words: “*as many as touched it were made perfectly well.*” This is the same thing that happened with the woman with an issue of blood. Mark gives a similar account of this event.

Mark 6:56 NKJV Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

Why were they healed when they touched His garment? Was there power in the garment? We saw the answer to this in the story of the woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years.

Mark 5:30 NKJV And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?”

Two things are said in Mark 5 that shows why they were healed and what happened. Jesus’ first response was “power had gone out of Him” and He asked “Who touched Me?” This power was the anointing or unction of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was operating under the full authority and power of the Holy Spirit. The anointing surged out of Jesus into the woman. Then in Mark 5:30, Jesus said, “your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.” The second major power that was in action was faith.

Matthew 14:35–36 NKJV.... brought to Him all who were sick, and begged

Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched *it* were made perfectly well.

The power to heal was not in His garment, but in the act of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. As many as touched the hem of His garment were healed, (Matthew 14:36). So far, Jesus was demonstrating the power of faith and how miracles and healing can happen when we believe. In John 6:22-25, the multitudes were perplexed when they saw Jesus on the other side of the sea. They saw the boat the disciples entered. They knew He had not entered the boat with them. They wanted to know how He got there. Jesus did not tell them that He walked on the water. His answer referred to their natural human needs. Jesus said, *“You ate of the loaves and were filled.”*

Discourse on the Bread of Life - John 6:25-59

John 6:26 NKJV Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”

John 6:27 NKJV Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

This response leads to the greater reason for the signs, wonders and miracles that are done. Remember what Jesus said in Luke 4:18.

Luke 4:18 NKJV The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

Why did Jesus do all of these things? He came to bring relief, but there is more to His ministry and reason for coming than the temporary relief of giving them bread and healing their bodies.

John 6:29 NKJV Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

John 6:30–31 NKJV Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, *‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’*”

They just witnessed everyone who touched Him being healed and saw 5,000 men plus women and children fed with the loaves and fish. Now they want some kind of sign before they will believe that He is the One sent from the Father.

John 6:32–33 NKJV Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives

you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

This “Bread of God that comes down from heaven” is the source of spiritual life. The crowd did not understand what Jesus was saying. They wanted the Lord to give them the bread that would give life to the world.

They were still thinking about manna and probably the loaves and fish.

Jesus was talking about Himself.

John 6:35–36 NKJV And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

John 6:37–38 NKJV All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:39–40 NKJV This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Why did they complain about Him and His words, “I am the bread which came down from heaven”? Although they were willing to eat the fish and loaves and receive His healings and miracles, when they looked at Jesus all they could see was the carpenter’s son.

John 6:42 NKJV And they said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”

John 6:47–49 NKJV Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

John 6:50–51 NKJV This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

What Jesus said was probably some of the most offensive words that He spoke. “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world?” Then the Lord took this to the next level.

John 6:53–54 NKJV Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to

you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:55–56 NKJV For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

John 6:57–58 NKJV As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.

What is Jesus talking about? These statements give insight into the Lord's supper or communion and much more. It would be good at this time to remember that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus is referring to taking in the Word of God and it's having a substantial impact on us. He is also talking about having faith in Him as the Christ. He is showing us that His body and blood is the propitiation and atonement for our sins. As there is life in the living Word of God, so there is life in Jesus Christ, the Word of God manifest in the flesh. When we partake of communion, we are celebrating this fellowship with Christ. After Jesus spoke about eating His flesh and drinking His blood and abiding in Him, many of His disciples walked away and followed Him no more.

Defection of Some of the Disciples - John 6:60-71

John 6:60 NKJV Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

John 6:66 NKJV From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

What was happening? They could accept an earthly Messiah, Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother they knew, John 6:42. They found it incredible that Jesus was the Son of God and that He came down from heaven. Their unbelief was a refusal to accept the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their denial did in no way remove the fact that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who humbled Himself and came down to save us from our sins.

John 6:61–62 NKJV When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?"

John 6:63–64 NKJV "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing.

The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.

We considered briefly how Jesus humbled Himself to take on the form of a man. His being found in the form of a man in no way took away from His eternal sonship. His being both God and man was most difficult for many of His disciples to receive.

John 6:65 NKJV And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

Compare this verse with John 6:40.

John 6:40 NKJV And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

These two verses show God’s initiative and human response. This message is repeated in John 6:44 and 47.

John 6:67-69 NKJV Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

It is important to keep these events in context. Jesus had just fed the multitude of 5,000 men plus women and children. He had crossed over the Sea of Galilee to Gennesaret and as many as touched His garment were healed. He gave the message to all of His disciples about His being the Son of God and the Bread of Life. Many of His disciples defected and turned from following Him. Now he confronts the pharisees over their traditions.

The Pharisees Rebuked - Matthew 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13

Mark 7:3 NKJV For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash *their* hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders.

This section refers to the scribes and Pharisees holding the traditions of the elders above obedience to God from the heart. Their traditions became more important than God’s word, Mark 7:13.

Mark 7:6-7 NKJV He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their *lips*, But their heart is far from Me. *And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*’

Mark 7:8-9 NKJV For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other

such things you do.” He said to them, “*All too well* you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.”

Two questions are important for us to ask at this time. First, how can we be saved and then, why are traditions or rituals not able to save and make a person righteous? Jesus was referring to the many activities of washings, abstaining from eating certain foods, and from doing certain things. Those things cannot make a person righteous.

What defiles a person?

The word ‘defile’ comes from the Greek word *koinoo* which means, defile, unclean, pollute, to render profane or count as unclean.

Mark 7:15 NKJV There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

Mark 7:20–23 NKJV And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

Mark 7:6 NKJV He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their *lips*, But their heart is far from Me.’

How can we not be defiled and be made righteous? If traditions, rituals, and works of the flesh cannot accomplish righteousness, what can?

There is only one way a person can be saved. They must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and confess Him as their Lord and Savior. His body and blood provide the only means of salvation.