

Be Reformed – Open the bible: study, dig and ask what the main point of the passage is

Be Charismatic – Expect the Holy Spirit: ask God to speak, minister, build up and lead us to maturity

Be Community – Love God's people: share vulnerably, apply, pray and build each other up

Be Missional – Win the world: apply lessons to outreach, make content accessible to non-Christians

Matthew 16:1-17

1 And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' 3 And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. 4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.

5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. 6 Jesus said to them, "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 7 And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." 8 But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? 9 Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the

five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 10 Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 11 How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 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.

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

Study Guide 15 July 2012 – Who Do You Say That I Am?



Summary

In this passage Jesus speaks to 3 different groups of people; the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the disciples. He challenges the Pharisees and Sadducees on their refusal to believe that He is the Christ. They are full of unbelief and their testing is a sign of their refusal to believe in Jesus. Jesus calls them an adulterous people.

Next, Jesus warns the disciples that this unbelief of these Pharisees and Sadducees is infecting them, leading them to become people of little faith. The disciples demonstrate their lack of faith in their failure to understand that Jesus is able to provide for them.

All of this is contrasted with Jesus' demonstration of what true strong faith is, a robust belief that Jesus Christ Himself is the Son of God and the long awaited Messiah. In this passage therefore we are challenged to consider how the true faith of belief in Jesus Christ contrasts with the legalistic self-righteous unbelief of the Pharisees and the licentious liberal way of life of the Sadducees and the weak faith of the disciples.

Key points

True faith is founded in the person of Jesus Christ.

Questions

>> Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and Sadducees with an example of reading the weather. What things are we wise in and what things are we ignorant of today?

>> How does the disciples' forgetfulness relate to the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees?

>> How can we watch against the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees today?

Final thoughts

It is neither legalism nor liberalism that saves, but Jesus Christ alone.