

Chapter Fifteen

Jesus Feeds Four Thousand

I. Introduction

II. Lesson

A. Jesus Condemns the Keeping of Traditions Instead of the Commandments of God (15:1-9)

1. Traditions of men
 - a. Passed down to from authorities, even religious authorities
 - b. The “ _____ ”
 - c. Roman Catholicism relies heavily on “ _____ ” instead of the authority of the written Scriptures
 - d. God limited the words of His prophets to the written _____ (Isa 8:20). If their words crossed with any of what was written, it was a lie! The same goes with modern religious leaders. There is NO oral law – only what has been written!
2. Elders would be very respected rabbis and teachers
3. Concept of “ _____ ”
 - a. There was a Biblical command relating to touching dead things
 - b. A health issue – washing hands, tables, eating ware (Mark 7:4)
 - c. All food had to be washed before it could be eaten
4. Jesus responds with a question (15:3-7)
 - a. Why do you violate God’s _____ with man’s traditions?
 - b. Both were in conflict
 - c. Example given
 - 1) Honour your parents is a commandment – financially as well as with praise, respect and obedience
 - 2) God backed up His commandment with the _____ (Ex 21:17)
 - 3) Yet, “YE” say...
 - a) It is okay to ignore the needs of your parents
 - b) IF your money has been GIVEN to the Temple
 - c) It was called “ _____ ” (Mark 7:11,12)
 - d. God’s commands are infinitely superior to ALL of man’s ideas of laws (Mk 7:11; Pr 28:24; Dt 14:22-26; Pr 25:27)
 - e. Cf _____ to see that simple obedience to God’s word is better than ALL religious efforts!
5. Jesus soundly rebukes the Pharisees (15:8-9)
 - a. Calls them all “ _____ ”
 - b. They had only an outward form of worship
 - c. No heart
 - d. Vain worship
 - e. They had replaced God’s commandments with traditions like:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) See 1 Timothy 4:1-5

B. Jesus Explains How People Become Defiled (15:10-20)

1. Defilement means _____ - Unclean means unhealthy, filthy
2. Unclean foods

- a. God reveals which animals—including fish and birds—are suitable and unsuitable for human consumption in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. He reveals guidelines for recognizing animals that are acceptable for food.
 - 1) _____-chewing animals with split hooves can be eaten (Leviticus 11:3; Deuteronomy 14:6).
 - a) Cattle, sheep, goat, deer and gazelle families (Deuteronomy 14:4-5).
 - b) But, camels, rabbits and pigs as being unclean, or unfit to eat (Leviticus 11:4-8).
 - c) "Creeping things" as moles, mice and lizards as unfit to eat (verses 29-31),
 - d) Four-footed animals with paws (cats, dogs, bears, lions, tigers, etc.) are unclean (verse 27).
 - 2) Salt and freshwater fish with **fins** and **scales** may be eaten (verses 9-12), but water creatures without fins and scales should not be eaten (catfish, lobsters, crabs, shrimp, mussels, clams, oysters, squid, octopi, etc.).
 - 3) Birds and other flying creatures that are generally **unclean** for consumption (verses 13-19).
 - a) That includes carrion eaters and birds of prey as unclean, plus ostriches, storks, herons and bats.
 - b) Birds such as chickens, turkeys and pheasants are not on the unclean list and therefore can be eaten.
 - 4) Insects, with the exception of locusts, crickets and grasshoppers, are listed as unclean (verses 20-23). See John the Baptist eating them (Matt 3:4)
- b. Why does God identify some animals as suitable for human consumption and others as unsuitable? God didn't give laws to arbitrarily assert control over people. He gave His laws (including those of which meats are clean or unclean) "that it might be well" with those who seek to obey Him (Deuteronomy 5:29).
 - 1) Old Testament Dietary Laws were strict, but for good reason!
 - 2) Although God did not reveal the specific _____ some animals may be eaten and others must be avoided, we can make generalized conclusions based on the animals included in the two categories.
 - 3) Some foods were forbidden, NOT because they were evil, but because they were unclean, or unhealthy
 - a) God forbids the consumption of scavengers and carrion eaters, which devour other animals for their food.
 - b) Animals such as pigs, bears, vultures and raptors can eat (and thrive) on decaying flesh. Predatory animals such as wolves, lions, leopards and cheetahs most often prey on the weakest (and at times the diseased) in animal herds.
 - c) When it comes to sea creatures, bottom dwellers such as lobsters and crabs scavenge for dead animals on the sea floor. Shellfish such as oysters, clams and mussels similarly consume decaying organic matter that sinks to the sea floor, including sewage.
 - 4) A common denominator of many of the animals God designates as unclean is that they routinely eat flesh that would sicken or kill human beings. When we eat such animals we partake of a food chain that includes things harmful to people.
 - 5) As nutritionist David Meinz observes: "Could it be that God, in His wisdom, created certain creatures whose sole purpose is to clean up after the others? Their entire 'calling' may be to act exclusively as the sanitation workers of our ecology. God may simply be telling us that it's better for us believers not to consume the meat of these trash collectors" (Eating by the Book, 1999, p. 225).
- c. In the Old Testament, violating health and diet laws defiled the soul and the relationship with God
 - 1) Daniel was NOT to eat "the king's meat" because it was offered first to idols
 - 2) Can't touch a dead bodies (Lev 21:11)
 - 3) Touching a dead person or animal can affect the soul (Lev 5:2)
 - 4) Anyone who was defiled, had to be separated from everyone else (Num 5:2)
 - 5) Uncleanness lasts until sundown (Lev 22:5-8)

- 6) Israel has always been protected from diet-related diseases throughout history
- d. In the New Covenant, that is not the case
 - 1) What we eat, goes through our digestive tract, and then OUT into the dump!
 - 2) So, forget Catholicism!!!
 - 3) But, What you eat CAN affect your emotions! Because emotions are affected by chemicals in foods and the environment
3. Unclean words
 - a. What comes OUT of our mouth, THAT ruins us (see James 3)
 - b. What comes out of the mouth originated first in us – sin nature is in ALL of us (Rom 7:14-18) – it is never eradicated!
 - c. MY spirit when uncontrolled, always sins (James 4:5-6). But thankfully, God gives more grace!
 - d. Unclean words come from unclean thoughts, that ultimately originate from an unclean HEART
4. Explanation of this truth (15:12-20)
 - a. To “offend” is to _____ – should we worry about upsetting the religious people?
 - 1) God ordains pressure – to reveal our nature, our roots
 - 2) God exposes and uproots all frauds!
 - b. Let the religious addicts alone!
 - 1) They are blind
 - 2) Their followers are blind as well
 - 3) Both are headed for a fall
 - 4) Preach the Gospel – let light be seen so that people SEE the difference
 - c. What comes INTO your body, _____ ruin you spiritually
 - 1) The food itself doesn’t hurt you spiritually
 - 2) There are THREE distinct parts to YOU (1Thes 5:23) with SOME overlapping
 - 3) DISOBEDIENCE – THAT affects you spiritually (see Adam and Eve)
 - d. What goes OUT of the mouth, THAT can ruin you (Mk 7:21-23):
 - 1) Evil Thoughts
 - 2) Murders
 - 3) Adulteries
 - 4) Fornications
 - 5) Thefts
 - 6) False Witness
 - 7) Blasphemies
 - 8) All begin in the heart, and FIRST are talked about, and then DONE!
 - 9) Mark adds the Following:
 - a) Covetousness
 - b) Wickedness
 - c) Deceit
 - d) Lasciviousness
 - e) An evil eye
 - f) Pride
 - g) Foolishness
 - 10) That’s quite a list!
 - 11) Mar 7:23 says, “All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”
 - e. People need to worry MORE about the condition of their HEART (submission to God, and softness towards His ways) than the food they may be eating!
 - f. The need is for people to get their _____ changed/converted, and their sins covered (Dt 10:16; Rom 2:28,29; Col 2:11)!
 - g. Good health comes from good food, but a right spirit comes from a right relationship with God

C. Jesus Teaches About REAL Humble Faith (15:21-28)

1. Up deep into the northern limits of Galilee – actually, probably out of the Jewish limits
2. A woman of Caanan – a black woman – approaches Jesus (she has heard of Jesus)
 - a. Mark 7:26 says, “The woman was a Greek, a _____ by nation”
 - b. Caananites were of _____ from Noah
 - c. Ham is from Egypt in _____ (Ps 105:23,27; 106:22)
 - d. This woman is lower than the Samaritans to a Jew!
3. She begs Jesus to heal her daughter – possessed of a demon
 - a. She calls Jesus by His _____ title (21:9)!
 - b. Jesus ignores her
 - c. She continued to interfere with Jesus and His disciples – like the widow of Luke 18
 - d. The disciples demand that Jesus get rid of her
 - e. Jesus answered the disciples, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” – He is going to only heal and help the Jews
 - f. She then falls down and WORSHIPS Jesus and cries out what Peter cried in Mt 14:30
 - g. Jesus answers that what He offers is for the CHILDREN and should NOT be given to DOGS!
 - h. She catches Jesus in His words – she accomplishes what NONE of the greatest minds of all time could not do! She _____ God’s Son (Cf Mk 12:13)
 - i. She accepts her condition (as a Gentile DOG), and will accept whatever He would give her!
 - 1) She will accept what no one else wants - crumbs
 - 2) That’s why Gentiles get in on the Gospel – because it was NOT wanted by the Jews at first (Rom 9:30,31; 11:11-13)
 - j. Jesus rewards her faith with great praise and the answer she sought!
4. There is a wonderful set of truths about prayer here
 - a. God often turns our requests down to see how _____ we are
 - b. He turns us down to show us just how _____ we are without Him
 - c. God will often turn us down until we get the _____ out of our prayers
 - d. A refusal by God is not always a _____ thing
 - e. Continuing in prayer actually _____ our faith
 - f. Crumbs are better than nothing! Be _____ for God’s grace towards sinners such as we are

D. Jesus Continues to Heal (15:29-31)

1. Back south again to the Sea of Galilee – evidently, Jesus went up to the region of Tyre and Sidon JUST to meet that black, untouchable woman!!!! Thank God He came looking for YOU and ME!
2. He sat down on a mountain
3. Large numbers of people gathered to Him, bringing the sick, and He healed them all
4. The lame, blind, dumb, maimed are not capable of faking their sickness, nor of faking their healing – true miracles!
5. It took 3 days for everyone to be ministered to
6. Everyone was amazed and glorified GOD, not Jesus yet!

E. Jesus Feeds _____ People (15:32-39)

1. Jesus worries about people’s _____ – He had compassion on the crowds who were standing around for THREE days!
2. The people had all their sicknesses healed
3. The people now had a need for food!
4. The disciples wonder how to meet the need! Strange to wonder such a thing when you have been watching countless thousands of miracles of healing, and then get depressed about no food!
5. Jesus had to ask how many loaves of bread the disciples had
6. All they had were _____ loaves and a few LITTLE fishes – they have no faith – not even thinking by faith, much less living by faith!
7. Jesus takes command of the situation
 - a. Everyone sit down – just like in chapter 14

- b. He took the bread and fish
 - c. Gave thanks
 - d. Brake both
 - e. Gave the fragments to His disciples in baskets full
 - f. They then gave the food to the crowd
 - g. Absolutely EVERYONE (4,000+) ate, and were FILLED
 - h. There were _____ baskets full leftover – to show what Jesus can do with SEVEN small loaves.
I wonder what he could do with OUR little that we have?
8. Jesus sends everyone away, and then gets in a ship to travel to Magdala