

## Introduction

Have you ever had a conversation with someone where you were on two different wave lengths? I have had some of those conversations. For example, I might tell Karen that I am on my way home, and then ask her if she needs me to pick something up at the store. She might respond by saying that she has been cooking and standing on her feet all day, and needs to sit down. I am thinking that she has not heard me at all. I am talking about picking up any items that she might need from the grocery store, and she is not responding to what I said at all. Her mind is on how she feels at that moment. She is tired from being on her feet, and needs to sit down and get her feet up. We call that being in different rooms of the house. She and I, conversationally speaking, were in different rooms of the house, or on different wave lengths. I might end our conversation by telling her to text me if she needs anything. I don't think this is something particular to Karen and I; I think that all couples have to work at communication. We have different emotional make-ups, personalities, and lives, and are often in our own separate world. We respond about what is on our minds, not necessarily what the other person is saying.

In our text today, Jesus is in one room and His disciples are in a completely separate room of the house. They were all in the same small boat, but they were definitely in two different places in their trends of thought. Jesus was in His library thinking about His conversation with the Pharisees. They had come to Him, arguing and demanding a sign in order to test Him. They were always trying to test Him. They had purposed in their mind to destroy Him in any way they could. We know that they had become so furious at Jesus that they joined up with the Herodians, and both groups were trying to destroy Jesus. So, Jesus told them that no sign would be given them, and He got up with His disciples and they got into their boat and started to cross over to go to Bethsaida. Now, they are in the boat, and He is recapping in His mind all that has just taken place. Then, He tells His disciples, "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

But the disciples were not in that room of the house. They were in the kitchen, wondering where their next meal was going to come from. They had forgotten to bring food with them, and they had looked into the pantry, only to find that they had only one loaf of bread with them. They are not thinking about the Pharisees and Herodians; they are thinking about their next meal. They are thinking about an empty pantry, and wishing they had picked up some things before getting into the boat to cross over to the other side. When Jesus mentioned the word, leaven, that triggered another thought about bread. Since they had been thinking about bread, Jesus must be in the kitchen also, and He must have found an ingredient to make some bread. Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." So, they continued their discussion about the fact that they had no bread. The disciples were on the same boat with Jesus, but they were in different rooms of the conversational house; they were on different wave lengths.

Our text says that Jesus was aware of this, and so He goes into their room. He begins to ask them a number of questions. In fact, in this short passage, Jesus asked them eight different questions? His purpose in asking all these questions was to help them gain understanding. Their discussion about a lack of bread revealed that they had not yet learned a lesson that Jesus has been trying to teach them.

This morning, I want to talk about three rooms in the house, or three lessons. I want to talk about the Lesson of Leaven. Second, I want to talk about the Lesson of Loaves. Third, I want to talk about the Lesson of Learning. Let's read our passage together.

## Do You Not Yet Understand?

1. Lesson of Leaven
2. Lesson of Loaves
3. Lesson of Learning

(Mark 8:14-21) “And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. {15} And He was giving orders to them, saying, “Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.” {16} They *began* to discuss with one another *the fact* that they had no bread. {17} And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you discuss *the fact* that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart? {18} “HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR? And do you not remember, {19} when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?” They said to Him, “Twelve.” {20} “When *I broke* the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?” And they said to Him, “Seven.” {21} And He was saying to them, ‘Do you not yet understand?’”

### 1. Lesson of Leaven

Jesus warned His disciples of two things, the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. In our passage, Jesus does not expound on the leaven of either one of them. The disciples were not tracking with Him, and so He did not go any further with the conversation. But, I would like to quickly talk about both of these leavens.

(Mark 8:14-15) “And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. {15} And He was giving orders to them, saying, ‘Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.’”

This week I was asked what my message was about, and I gave the outline. Asher asked me what leaven means. I told him that leaven was yeast. It is used to make bread rise. I was partially correct. Yeast is a leaven, but not all leaven is yeast. There are several types of leaven. In addition to yeast, baking powder is a very common leaven that is used to make bread rise. Leaven spreads and when you put it in some flour, all of it will become leavened. In Matthew 13:33, Jesus gave a parable about leaven, saying that the kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened. The kingdom of God is going to spread throughout the earth. Isaiah said there is no end to the increase of God’s government. It is like leaven which will spread. In our text today, the mention of leaven is in the negative sense. The leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod were something to watch out for and to beware of. These were dangerous things that could spread and the disciples needed to be aware of this and be on guard.

(Matt 13:33) “He spoke another parable to them, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.’”

(Is 9:7) “There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”

There are several interpretations of what the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod is, so I want to discuss that. The first interpretation starts in Mark 3, where Jesus healed a man's withered hand on the Sabbath. The Pharisees were so angry with Jesus about healing this man on the Sabbath that they went out and began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy them. It could be that Jesus is talking about the leaven of the Pharisees and the Herodians. Both groups were conspiring against Him. Both groups were trying to destroy Him. The Pharisees wanted power and control, and they were threatened by Jesus' ministry.

(Mark 3:6) "The Pharisees went out and immediately *began* conspiring with the Herodians against Him, *as to* how they might destroy Him."

In John 11, after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, we gain more insight into the chief priests and Pharisees. John records that they were concerned that all men would believe in Him, and the Romans would come and take away them and their nation. They had some power and clout with the Romans, and Jesus was a threat to that. Therefore, they planned together to kill Him.

(John 11:47-53) "Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. {48} If we let Him *go on* like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation...{53} So from that day on they planned together to kill Him."

The Herodians had similar interests. They wanted control and power. They were willing to participate in pagan worship and worldly ways if it helped them gain political power. Both the Pharisees and the Herodians did not want Jesus gaining popularity and power; Jesus was a threat to both of them. The leaven of the Pharisees and the Herodians could mean that we must be careful around unprincipled people with selfish ambition. They will do anything to achieve their selfish ambitions.

In James 3, God tells us that bitter jealousy and selfish ambition do not come from above, but are earthly, natural, and demonic. Where there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and every evil thing. The Pharisees and Herodians were both jealous and had selfish ambition. Jesus warned His disciples to watch out and to beware of the leaven that comes from both of these groups.

(James 3:14-16) "But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth. {15} This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. {16} For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing."

We find an example of these two groups plotting together and trying to trap Jesus in Matthew 22. The Pharisees and the Herodians went to Jesus and asked Him about whether it was lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar. Jesus perceived their malice and asked them why they were testing Him. He also tells them that they are hypocrites. Then, He told them to show Him a coin used for the poll-tax. He asked them whose inscription was on the denarius, and they replied, "Caesar's." Then He told them to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. He outwitted them and did not stumble in the trap they had set. Jesus warned His disciples to beware and watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and Herodians. They were trying to destroy Jesus in any way they could and they would do the same to the apostles.

(Matt 22:15-22) "Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. {16} And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. {17} "Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" {18} But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? {19} "Show Me the coin *used* for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius. {20} And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" {21} They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." {22} And hearing *this*, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away."

Some scholars tell us that the leaven of Herod refers to Herod himself. Herod was an evil ruler, and he was all about power. He had John the Baptist put to death because he did not want to appear weak in front of his birthday guests. He liked to listen to John the Baptist, but he had not heeded the warnings that John gave him. When Pilate turned Jesus over to him in Luke 23, we find that Herod was very glad to see Jesus, for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. Herod was not interested in seeing a sign that affirmed that Jesus was the Son of the God, and the Messiah. He was not interested in repenting and turning his life over to God. He wanted to see a sign for the sake of seeing a sign. It was entertainment.

(Luke 23:8) "Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him."

The Pharisees had just demanded a sign from Jesus. They wanted a sign to tempt Him. They wanted Him to do something that they could later use against him. Herod wanted a sign for entertainment. He enjoyed listening to John, but He was not interested in surrendering his life to God. Both Herod and the Pharisees wanted signs, and neither of them wanted signs for the right reasons. Jesus said to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. We need to beware of people that want things that appear religious, but are rooted in selfish ambition and wrong desires.

A third explanation of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod is found in the parallel account in Matthew 16. We read that the disciples came to the other side of the sea and they had forgotten to bring any bread. Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Some scholars say that the Herodians were a group that came out of the Sadducees. These were "supposedly religious leaders" who had become very worldly for the sake of political power. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

(Matt 16:5-6) "And the disciples came to the other side *of the sea*, but they had forgotten to bring *any* bread. {6} And Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

We find in Mark 12:18-24 that the Sadducees were also out to get Jesus. They came testing him about whose wife a woman will be in the resurrection if she had married all seven brothers. Jesus knew that they were being deceitful and testing Him, because they did not even believe in the resurrection. So, Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?" Then, He went on to explain that in heaven we

are like angels and are not married. In this case the leaven of the Sadducees may be that they do not believe in the power of God. The resurrection is an essential doctrine.

(Mark 12:18-24) “Some Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection) came to Jesus, and began questioning Him, saying, {19} "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES and leaves behind a wife AND LEAVES NO CHILD, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER. {20} "There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and died leaving no children. {21} "The second one married her, and died leaving behind no children; and the third likewise; {22} and so all seven left no children. Last of all the woman died also. {23} "In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her." {24} Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?"

I want to discuss one more passage in regard to the leaven of the Pharisees. We find that passage in Luke 12:1-7. Jesus told His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. The Pharisees taught people to do things that they were not willing to do themselves. Jesus came down hard on hypocrisy.

(Luke 12:1) “Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, He began saying to His disciples first *of all*, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”

In Matthew 23, Jesus came down very hard on the Pharisees. He gave eight woes.

- (Matt 23:13) “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...”
- (Matt 23:14) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...” (prayers)
- (Matt 23:15) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...” (their followers)
- (Matt 23:23) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...” (tithes but neglect weightier provisions of the law like justice and mercy)
- (Matt 23:25) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...” (clean outside, filthy inside)
- (Matt 23:27) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...” (outward appearance beautiful, inward dead men’s bones)
- (Matt 23:29) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...” (put to death prophets and righteous)

In the church, we need to be careful about the leaven of hypocrisy. The world hates hypocrites. A recent survey by Lifeway showed that 72% of non-Christians believe the church is full of hypocrites. One of the things that the world ridicules the church about is hypocrisy. They say the church is full of hypocrites. The world is looking for ways to criticize and reject the gospel, and hypocrisy is an exposed area in our armor. God does not want us to be hypocrites. He wants us to live holy lives. He wants us to practice what we preach. He wants us to be lights set on a hill. He wants us to be lamps set on a lampstand. He wants us to be examples to the world. How do we beware and be on guard for hypocrisy? I believe we need to do what James tells us to do. We need to look intently at the word of God like a mirror. We need to examine ourselves as we read and meditate on God’s word. We need to be doers of the word. We also need to speak truth to one another. When I mess up, I need to be open to correction. Many people in the church are not open to receive correction. We need to welcome correction from the Holy Spirit and others.

## 2. Lesson of Loaves

The bulk of the passage is about the lesson of the loaves. The disciples had forgotten to take any bread with them. They began to discuss this when Jesus started talking to them about leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. Jesus was aware that they did not have any bread, and what they were discussing. Rather than spend time explaining the leaven of the Pharisees, like I just did, He focused on the lesson of loaves. Jesus then begins to ask them a series of questions. The first question was, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread?" Mark does not give us a response to His question. It seems that these questions were asked quickly one after another. I think it was in the form of a question, but it was really a statement. It was like He really said, "You should not be discussing the fact that you have no bread." Then, He asked a second question. "Do you not yet see or understand?" Again, there is no answer given. Then, He asked a third question, "Do you have a hardened heart?" Jesus was always looking at the heart. He was tracing their lack of understanding to a hardened heart.

(Mark 8:16-17) "They *began* to discuss with one another *the fact* that they had no bread.  
{17} And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss *the fact* that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart?"

In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus calls all the weary and heavy-laden to come to Him and learn from Him. He said that He is gentle and humble in heart. A humble heart can learn. The opposite is also true. A hardened heart is not able to grasp what is being taught. Jesus asked them if they had a hardened heart because they had not understood or learned from the feeding of the five thousand and the feeding of the four thousand.

(Matt 11:28-29) "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.  
{29} Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS."

Then, Jesus asked two more questions. "Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?" This is a quote from Jeremiah 5:21 or Ezekiel 12:2. I believe Jesus is referencing Jeremiah 5:21, because the prophet references those who are foolish or senseless. In Ezekiel 12:2, the prophet addresses those who are rebellious. I do not believe the disciples were rebellious. I think they were more senseless at this moment.

(Mark 8:18) "HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR?"

(Jer 5:21) "Now hear this, O foolish and senseless people, Who have eyes but do not see; Who have ears but do not hear."

(Ez 12:2) "Son of man, you live in the midst of the rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear; for they are a rebellious house."

Then, Jesus asked them to remember how many baskets of broken pieces they picked up after He broke the five loaves for the five thousand. They answered correctly, "Twelve." Then, He asked them how many baskets of broken pieces they picked up after He had fed the four thousand. They responded, "Seven." Then, He asked them an eighth question, "Do you not yet

understand?" This is the second time that Jesus asked this question, and I believe that this is the key verse and question of the passage.

(Mark 8:18b-21) "And do you not remember, {19} when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?" They \*said to Him, "Twelve." {20} "When *I broke* the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?" And they \*said to Him, "Seven." {21} And He was saying to them, 'Do you not yet understand?'"

There were different lessons taught at the two feedings. In the first feeding, the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus was teaching them about shepherding. In Ezekiel 34, the shepherds had been feeding themselves and not the flock. The disciples had wanted to send them away hungry and let them fend for themselves. Jesus told them, "You feed them." He wanted them to see that it was their responsibility. But that was not the only lesson He wanted them to gain understanding about.

Another important lesson was for them to learn about trusting God for provision. When Jesus told the disciples to feed them, they asked if they should go spend two hundred denarii to give them something to eat. They were looking at the resources it would take rather than looking at God to supernaturally provide. Then, Jesus asked the disciples how much they had, they said five loaves and two fish. Then, Jesus took what they had, blessed it and began giving it to them to distribute. God miraculously multiplied what they had and everyone ate and was satisfied.

(Mark 6:41-44) "And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed *the food* and broke the loaves and He kept giving *them* to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. {42} They all ate and were satisfied, {43} and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. {44} There were five thousand men who ate the loaves."

The key thing that Jesus had wanted the disciples to understand when He fed the four thousand Gentiles was compassion. He wanted them to be aware of the need and to think about the needs of others. Compassion requires unselfish thoughtfulness. Compassion also requires action. Being aware of the needs of others and thinking about them is not enough. It was the good Samaritan that displayed love and compassion to his neighbor.

When Jesus brought up the two feedings and asked them if they were still without understanding, I believe that all of these lessons were things that He had tried to teach them. However, in our text today, there is no crowd to feed or show compassion to. There were no sheep to shepherd or feed. The primary lesson of the loaves was that Jesus is the Bread of Life. He is our Provider. We need to look to God to meet our needs, rather than just at our own resources.

Let me mention a caution. There is a balance. If someone does not have the resources to buy something, that does not mean that we can go buy it with debt and presume upon God to pay off that debt. God's provision is one way that He leads. When Karen was pregnant with Amy, a traveling evangelist by the name of Sam Cathey came to preach at the First Baptist Church of Orlando. He stayed at our campground on 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and we got to know him. He said he was getting ready to trade in his 40-foot 5<sup>th</sup> wheel for a new one. He suggested that we contact the dealer and see if we could trade in our 35-footer for the 40-footer. The 40-footer had two bedrooms and that would help us out. At that time, I did not have money, and I figured that the

trade-in difference would be fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. I prayed that if this was God's will that the dealer would make a trade for ten thousand dollars. That was a specific sign for me to know that this was God's will. When I spoke with the dealer, he said he would take our trailer and ten thousand. I put down a deposit and then trusted God to give us the money that we would need to buy that trailer. In the next two weeks, even though I was playing very poorly, I won over \$15,000 dollars. We had the necessary money to buy the trailer and I did not lose my deposit. We did not go into debt over the purchase. We did not have the resources and we trusted God to meet that need. Be careful about debt. Trusting in God does not mean that you have the green light to go borrow money. You need to hear from God before you do something like that.

### 3. Lesson of Learning

As we wrap up this morning, I want to talk about the lesson of learning. The first lesson of learning is that it often requires repetition. Jesus fed the five thousand. Then, Jesus fed the four thousand. The disciples still did not understand the lessons that Jesus was teaching them. Sometimes, it may take a few times before we really understand it.

There are a few things that I learned and caught on quickly. However, there are some things that it takes me a little while to catch on. We have different aptitudes and I think that certain things come easier for some than others. That is okay. We often learn by inculcation, which is a big word that means by repetition. The disciples did not get it the first or second time, so God graciously gave them a third time to learn the lesson.

Second, learning is better with a soft, humble heart. In our passage the disciples were not understanding and Jesus asked them if they had hard hearts. Jesus said that we have to become like children, and I believe it is because their hearts are soft and tender. If we are the student, we should ask God to soften our hearts. Repentance and fasting soften our hearts. Spending time in the word and in prayer, soaking in His presence, softens our hearts. Ask God to soften your heart so that you can understand what God is teaching you.

A third lesson is patience. If you are the student, be patient with yourself. Don't beat yourself up if you don't get it the first time. Learning is a process, so be patient. If you are the teacher, be patient with those you are teaching. Realize that it may take a few times before they really get it.

A fourth lesson about learning is about reflection. Jesus asked the disciples to reflect on the feeding of the five thousand. Then, He asked them to reflect on the feeding of the four thousand. Reflecting on the things that God has done in our lives and is doing in our lives helps us to gain understanding. Journaling is a great way of reflecting on what you have read and what you sense God is saying to you. Take time to reflect.

A fifth lesson of learning is application. I have found that acting upon that knowledge and using what I am learning helps me to learn. In Psalm 111:10, God tells us, "a good understanding have all those who do His commandments." We gain understanding by doing things. There are different learning styles. Some are visual learners, like me. I need to see things. Others are auditory learners. My sons, Chad and Bill, were auditory learners. There are others who are kinesthetic learners, which mean they learn by doing it. Most of us are a combination of those learning styles, which means that we learn by hearing and doing, or hearing and seeing, or seeing and doing, or hearing, seeing, and doing. Be a doer of God's word, not merely a hearer, and you will gain more understanding.

(Ps 111:10) “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*; His praise endures forever.”

(James 1:22) “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

### Conclusion and Applications

There are three lessons in our text, the lesson of the leaven, the lesson of the loaves, and the lesson of learning. What has God been speaking to you about this morning? I was reminded last week about the lesson of the leaven when I was watching the reports about Jerry Falwell, Jr. His wife had to call 911 to come to their house. Jerry had fallen down the stairs and cut himself. He had been drinking. At Liberty University, where he had been serving as President alcohol was not allowed on campus. However, Jerry struggled with alcohol. He was preaching one thing and living something different. God wants our word message to match our life message. How is your message?

We looked at the lesson of the loaves. God wants us to look to Him for our provision. He can and He will provide for us. In the wilderness, God provided for the Israelites for forty years. He fed them manna every day. He wanted them to know that He was their provider. In 1 Kings 17:4, God used a raven to provide for Elijah. He does not want us worrying about provision; He wants us to trust in Him. How is your trust in God for His provision? Are you focused on your resources or in God’s resources? God has had to deal with me on many occasions about this. One year, we were driving from Springfield, Missouri to Texarkana, Arkansas to play in the Texarkana Open. I had not been making any money and I was watching our bank account shrivel up. As we were driving in our 15-passenger van, the Holy Spirit convicted me of trusting in my own resources instead of God. I told Karen that I felt like pulling over and building an altar. I repented. I had a great finish that week and God replenished our operating funds. How about you? Are you trusting in the loaves that you have or in God’s provision in your lives?

We looked at the lesson of learning. Is your heart humble and receptive to the things that God is wanting to teach you? Are you learning quickly, or are you learning the same lessons again and again? Are you taking time to reflect and meditate on the things God is teaching you? Are you taking time to journal? Are you applying what you are learning? Are you looking for opportunities to apply and put into practice what you are learning? These are all part of the lessons of learning? How is your learning going?

Let’s pray. “Father God, thank You for being patient with us as we learn more about You and Your kingdom. Father, we want to be good representatives of Your kingdom. Help us to beware and watch out for hypocrisy in our lives. Help us to be authentic and sincere in our faith. Father, increase our faith, and help us to trust You for everything that we need in life. Finally, Father, help us to grow in our knowledge and understanding of You and Your kingdom. Help us to be quick learners and to be doers of Your word. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

**Introduction** (Mark 8:14-21)

1. **Lesson of Leaven** (Mark 8:14-15, 3:6, Matt 13:33, Is 9:7, John 11:47-53, James 3:14-16, Matt 22:15-22, Luke 23:8, Matt 16:5-6, Mark 12:18-24, Luke 12:1, Matt 23:1-29)
  
2. **Lesson of Loaves** (Mark 8:16-17, Matt 11:28-29, Mark 8:18, Jer 5:21, Ez 12:2, Mark 8:18-21, 6:41-44)
  
3. **Lesson of Learning** (Ps 111:10, James 1:22)

**Conclusion and Applications**

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