

**Series:** I Have Decided

**Sermon Text:** Mark 8.11-26 Sermon | **Title:** He's Right Here

**Date:** 8.23.2020

MPT: The patient and powerful love of Jesus is available to his disciples at all times

MPS: He is in the boat. | He's Right Here

### **Intro Option 1**

Good morning Mercy. It's so good to be preaching to you again. Loved last week and excited for more this week. The Lord has given me greater anticipation about what he's up to. It's a hard time for me because I don't see everyone like I did but that makes it a great time to put MORE trust in the Lord to care for his church. So I wake up anticipating the day. I'm like bouncing out of my prayer time like LET'S GO. I feel God has taught me some really good truth from his word and I'm pumped to share it with you.

The other day I was trying to get out of the house to get to the office and write it down and I couldn't find my keys. MAN, is anything so frustrating? Maybe losing your phone. But I couldn't go anywhere without my keys. I'm looking everywhere. I'm getting frustrated. I'm thinking about my schedule and how this is going to set me back all day. And I'm starting to blame others. Bet those kids tried to joy ride or something. Dog took em. I went from excited to frustrated & angry & conspiracies in no time. And then...don't you both love and hate this feeling...I patted my right pocket...

NOW, I've made a scene out of this search. I gotta figure out how to exit the scene without total shame brought on me. Impossible. So I say "ok guys I'm gonna head out." "YOU FOUND YOUR KEYS?" Ummm...Yeah. "Where were they?" And I could even tell in her tone she knew that they must have been in an obvious place. Cause I misplace things a lot. Always have. Oh...doesn't matter. Where were they?

They were right here. Today we are in Mark 8. And we are going to see the disciples in a boat with Jesus. And they are going to have a collective moment of amnesia where they forget who they are in the boat with. They forget to bring food into the boat and they start worrying. Start trying to problem solve. And they forget He's right here. And I know the analogy is a little bit cheesy but the point goes deep and that's why I think Mark records it for us. Because the same Jesus they forget is in the boat is the same Jesus we forget is with us RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW and until the very end of the age.

The title of the sermon today is the main point: He's Right Here. We've got some weary starving souls among us who need to be fed by the bread of life. He's right here. We've got some wounded souls who need the great healer and the good news is...he's right here. I think God has so much good for us today so let's get into the boat with the disciples and see what Jesus has for us.

14 The disciples had forgotten to take bread and had only one loaf with them in the boat.

They forgot the bread. Bread is going to be an important image for us again today. RIGHT there is a massive clue right? The disciples had only one loaf of bread. Not much. They sense a hunger problem. I'm thankful God is so kind to us to keep using bread to teach. He is keeping the cookies on the bottom shelf for his closest followers. And he's doing the same for us. 12 hungry guys and only one loaf.

15 Then he gave them strict orders: "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

This leaven. Well, it's the leaven of the couple of verses right before they got in the boat.

11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, demanding of him a sign from heaven to test him. 12 Sighing deeply in his spirit, he said, "Why does this generation demand a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." -- Mark 8:11-12 (CSB)

The leaven the pharisees and herod share is this demand for a sign from God to validate the identity of Jesus.. And Jesus is warning them against the shared unbelief that Jesus is the son of God. That they NEED a miracle to believe Jesus is who he says he is. That isn't faith. Faith is the certainty of things UNSEEN. Only by faith can they recognize Jesus as God the son.

And it's leaven because...it only takes a little bit of it to ruin everything else. That's why he is so diligent against it. The disciples have NO IDEA how dangerous a little need for a sign

can be. It's a deadly cancer that will eat away at their trust in Christ. It's so subtle but so dangerous that Jesus says it ends up turning God's servants into his enemies...maybe without realizing it.

Is this not a word of caution to us? If the disciples are not immune to doubting the true identity of Christ...to doubting the power of Christ...to demanding a SIGN from God in order to believe in God...neither are we.

- Listen it's not that signs & wonders are bad. In fact, its ok to ask God for him to intervene. What did we look at last week – we looked at Jesus perform a miracle. He's gonna do another one today. So is it ok to want God to give us a sign?
- Well what we see is its all about the motivation for asking. The pharisees were motivated to take Jesus down. Their request wasn't honest. It was testing Jesus. Which is the very thing Satan did in the wilderness with Jesus. The test of an enemy v the request of a child.-
- Sometimes we negotiate with God like this. God if you will do \_\_\_\_\_, then I will follow you. Get me out of this jam, and we'll talk. But until you do, I don't believe. As if God is supposed to bow to our standards. As if God is going to negotiate with us.

That's very different than the request of a child to a father. The child believes the father can provide because the child has seen the father provide. And whether or not the father says yes does not change the status of the father in the eyes of a child.

- And maybe today is our time in the boat to be reminded we do NOT need another sign of Jesus' power to believe in his resurrection. THEN we can go to Jesus as a child and pray like Jesus taught us to "Our father in heaven...hallowed be YOUR name, your kingdom come, YOUR will be done." "father let this cup pass from me yet not my WILL but YOURS."
- THE provision of our deepest need was met by our heavenly father in the death and resurrection of Christ. The need of salvation from our sin. So we CAN go to him confident in his love and trust him with the outcome.

16 They were discussing among themselves that they did not have any bread.

- Now this little comment from mark is great isn't it? They weren't discussing that they had one loaf. They were discussing how they didn't have **any bread**. In This little note God reminded me of something so true of me. See when I focus on myself and on my situation and forget the one who is with me...what little I have seems like NOTHING.

when I stress in a church strategy session with my white board discussing how we move forward in the COVID era and I forget to invite into the conversation the one who owns the cattle on a thousand hills...then what little we have will seem like nothing.

Parents...what little energy I have...and now I have to be a school supervisor...when I forget he's right here that little energy can seem like nothing

- What little I have, when I forget he's right here, it seems like nothing. What little NORMAL I have. Remember normal? Normal creates comfort. Lose normal, lose comfort. And when we try to go through huge change and forget the steady presence of Christ, we crumble under the weight of change. What little I have, when I forget he's right here, it seems like nothing
- FATHERS – many of you feel overwhelmed and maybe even defeated. You are supposed to be a spiritual leader in your home and you are like...I DON'T KNOW what to do! And you forget the ONE who is right here. Who loves your family more than you do. What little I have, when I forget he's right here, it seems like nothing.

And because the problem SEEMS to big and your resources seem to small...Since you can't solve the problem you will try to escape from it.

- Netflix and Oreos. Quarantine 15.
- Porn, Alcohol, Work, Self-Harm

BUT THE GREAT NEWS IS...THE SOLUTION ISN'T FIGURING OUT HOW TO USE YOUR LIMITED RESOURCES. THE SOLUTION IS TO REMEMBER HE'S RIGHT HERE. BUT if we will yield to his power and expect him to work among us...well then our limited resources will be SO SUFFICIENT there will be baskets left

over. HE is the God who multiplies the faith of the few to bless the needs of the many.

17 Aware of this, he said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact you have no bread? Don't you understand or comprehend? Do you have hardened hearts? 18 Do you have eyes and not see; do you have ears and not hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of leftovers did you collect? "

"Twelve," they told him. 20 "When I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many baskets full of pieces did you collect? " "Seven," they said. 21 And he said to them, "Don't you understand yet?"

Mathematical probability says if he fed 4k with 7 loaves then he could feed 12 with one loaf. Not that Jesus is even limited to that capacity because a couple chapters earlier he fed 5 thousand on 5 loaves and in the wilderness he fed his people for 40 years with manna from heaven and they had exactly zero loaves. He's the creator of the wheat fields. He is the bread of life! All Jesus needs to feed us is his own voice. Jesus never needed the bread to feed his people. The miracles of multiplying the bread was just grace so their weak eyes of faith could see first hand who HE is. And the disciples had been there for that right? Not only were they witnesses to these miracles...they were his agents of distributing the bread he created. As person after person received from their hands they got to see awe on these faces. These are people who had

A LOT of experience feeding people with the bread of Jesus.

By Mark 8 they had seen him heal sick people, raise dead people, cast out demons, walk on water, they'd seen him shout down a storm, and so much more that Mark just starts summarizing. He was in Capernaum and ya'll he just healed a bunch of people. Then he went to Genneserat and everybody who was sick was healed. Mark isn't the kind of author who wants to use a lot of words. Mark likes to summarize. AND...there were so many healings & miracles that even JOHN...who is very verbose says in his very last verse that there were many other things Jesus did and I suppose not even the world itself could contain the books that would be written. AND THE DISCIPLES are the ones who shared all of it with these authors.

By God's grace...we've seen King Jesus move among us. I look at our church and I see lost sheep found. I see broken sheep mended. I see weak sheep strengthened. I see the flock growing. And I see King Jesus at the center of it all.. He's MOVING. I've listened through tears as people have shared with me the blessing our church has been in their lives. And YET I can get caught up in my moment of crisis or in a difficult decision and I can try and think & plan my way out of it and somehow still FORGET who I am in the boat with!

AND THAT is the main point of today's sermon: It's a STATEMENT OF CONVICTION & BELIEF: HE'S RIGHT HERE!

One question in the 7 he asks there I want to pause on – Do you have a hardened heart? I just want you to think for a second about that. And I want to say that to you if you are experiencing any bitterness towards God. Any doubt that he is still there for you. Maybe its circumstantial or something else. The way you get overwhelmed by your circumstances...is you forget who you are in the boat with. You take your eyes off him...and then you start to doubt either his power to help you or his desire to. You base your faith in him on a sign from him...and your heart starts to harden when you feel he doesn't answer.

We come to him demanding a sign. We want to see a revelation and what he offers us is his presence. He's WITH you. **He is in the boat!** In fact...IT'S HIS BOAT! You are in HIS BOAT.  
\*\*\*AND YOU...YOU YOURSELF...BELONG TO HIM

Now, there is one other question he asks that leads to some really cool grace. Notice how he says do you have eyes and not see? This is the set up for what happens next. See Jesus does not condemn the disciples the same way he condemns the pharisees. He sees their weak, unstable faith and says ok let me help you out a little...

22 They came to Bethsaida. They brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. 23 He took the blind man by the hand and brought him out of the village. Spitting on his eyes and laying his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" 24 He looked up and said, "I see people — they look like trees walking."

25 Again Jesus placed his hands on the man's eyes. The man looked intently and his sight was restored and he saw everything clearly. 26 Then he sent him home, saying, "Don't even go into the village." -- Mark 8:14-26 (CSB)

This is the only time Jesus heals in stages. It's on purpose. This healing is for the disciples. And its for us. That's why mark puts it back to back without any editorial commentary between them. To show us the POWERFUL grace of Christ FOR US.

A lot of scholars look at these two back to back and say...Ok you see the lingering blindness of the blindman? That's illustrating the lingering blindness of the disciples. And the only way it can be healed is by the continual touch of Jesus. His healing from failed sight, to partial sight, to complete sight comes solely from the repeated touch of Jesus. The disciples move through these same 3 stages. They are going about their way spiritually blind, then Jesus calls them and they seem to believe and follow, but still seem to not really get it. That's all over this chapter. They see but don't see. And then at the resurrection they seem to everything clearly.

I want to take a second and celebrate with you that Jesus does not write you and I off when we forget him. That our salvation has secured for us a standing as sons and daughters and in his grace...he helps us along. Praise God his love is as patient as it is powerful. Let's talk about how we can remember HE'S RIGHT HERE.

1. **Spend time with Jesus.** YOU MUST carve out time to look at Jesus. the King and Savior of the world. Look at the one you are in the boat with. Meet with him. It is really possible to slip into religious routines and forget that the God of the universe is right here with us in Christ.

Are you so familiar with Jesus routines that you've actually lost sight of who he really is? Here's how you know...you are looking at situations and circumstances...you are looking at the one loaf and thinking you have no bread. Is it possible you are stressing out over it and you've not even ACKNOWLEDGED Jesus in your process?

Is it possible you haven't brought Jesus into your marriage problems? Into your conflicts? Into your decisions? Into your loneliness? Into your apathy? is it possible you are overwhelmed by your life right now...all the while in the boat with Jesus but forgetting he's there?

- What situation is overwhelming you right now? Like you cannot seem to figure out the answer? Maybe he's just calling you to stop and remember who is in the boat with you. I know that isn't the answer. But sometimes we want answers and Christ offers us his presence. And says let that be enough for a second.
- This is what God has called me to for several weeks. To stopping and looking at Jesus. And not solving the problem. And you know what happened? Everything slowed down. It was incredible. Has been incredible. Truthfully a little surreal. But in that I've had a fresh reminder of how GREAT Christ is. How powerful he is. How kind he is to his forgetful children. How loving.

I've just taken some time to sit in the boat and look at Jesus.

Jesus is the bread of life brothers and sisters. Look at him. Spend time with him. And invite him in. **Stop concentrating at what you don't have...and look at WHO you do have.**

2. **Recount the grace of Christ in your life.** SHOULD I USE THE JAR OF STONES? We forget the work of Christ so easily in our lives. We look ahead to what is next and we forget to pause and celebrate what he's doing and what he's done. There needs to be a regular conversation among us...DID YOU SEE WHAT GOD DID? "Hey I see God working right here." WE need to collectively encourage one another with what God is doing or we will get collective amnesia.

3. **Walk in the hope that he has more to do in you.** He's still got some work to do. I want you to know that you are not the person you will be. And Jesus loves you where you are right now and he wants to help you see him even more clearly in the years ahead. Like a parent he is going to walk with you as you grow. I'm not the disciple I was at 17 or 27.

- I've got way more patience now with messy discipleship. That's not me being lazy, its just me recognizing that I was a stubborn black & white rule follower for a long time. And it took a while to soften those edges so I could be more tender with people. And I HOPE I am more caring and Christ like at 47 than 37. I hope he smoothes the edges further.
- I'm more confident in the faithful sovereignty of God...and more in need of it. Because I've experienced my smallness and my lack of control. The fragility of

life. 2020 is a crash course in this. But I'm also experiencing my physical limitations. At 27 I could stay up all night working on a project. Now, my writing ability shuts down at 10. I write nonsense. And I could see this as a loss of capacity or I could see it as an increased capacity to trust Christ. I can watch him do more with my decreased capacity.

The great news of the gospel is when we ran away from God, God did not abandon us. He came after us. He didn't make us take a long, difficult journey back to him. No he looked at sinful people and offered his presence in our place.

CLOSING INTO COMMUNION