

**Sunday, 08 June 2008**

**[Matthew 16:1-12](#)**

**Mat 16:1-12** Some Pharisees and Sadducees who came to Jesus wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle for them, to show that God approved of him. But Jesus answered, "When the sun is setting, you say, 'We are going to have fine weather, because the sky is red.' And early in the morning you say, 'It is going to rain, because the sky is red and dark.' You can predict the weather by looking at the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs concerning these times! How evil and godless are the people of this day! You ask me for a miracle? No! The only miracle you will be given is the miracle of Jonah." So he left them and went away. When the disciples crossed over to the other side of the lake, they forgot to take any bread. Jesus said to them, "Take care; be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They started discussing among themselves, "He says this because we didn't bring any bread." Jesus knew what they were saying, so he asked them, "Why are you discussing among yourselves about not having any bread? What little faith you have! Don't you understand yet? Don't you remember when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand men? How many baskets did you fill? And what about the seven loaves for the four thousand men? How many baskets did you fill? How is it that you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? Guard yourselves from the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!" Then the disciples understood that he was not warning them to guard themselves from the yeast used in bread but from the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

### **Listening to understand.**

Mostly, we are just like the disciples. We only hear what we want to, and understand only the things that make us feel that comfortable in our situation. So often we will go looking for scripture, just to prove a point, no matter how badly out of context we bend the scripture, just as long as it suits our argument. Just like the disciples, we prefer not to learn a lesson, or look for the real meaning of God's word. We think we can simply limit the meaning to our current situation and we fail to make the time to ask God what the real and true meaning of the words may be. Too often we attend church and listen to a sermon, taking everything that is said at face value, and not searching for God's personal message to us. Sad, but true... Often the words spoken from a pulpit might have been misinterpreted and yet preached as the truth, but because we ignore God's voice and His will, we accept what we hear as being true. The question is, "Do you know God? Do you know His will and understand His heart?"

My friends, God is reminding us to make time to get to know Him. Maybe He would also have to rebuke us today as He did with the disciples, asking us if we have learned nothing, because we allow ourselves to read and to be told things about Him that are simply not true or a part of His nature. If we really knew Him, we would not stand for such false teachings and beliefs. Spend time with God and He will teach you His heart. Read the Bible and know His will and then go into the world, not ignorant of false teachings - and searching for signs, but experiencing God all around us.

\* Should you wish to write me, and are in need of someone who would listen and pray with you... Please do. [david@davidniebuhr.com](mailto:david@davidniebuhr.com)

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