

# MATTHEW

## 15:1-39

### Matthew 15:1-39

Taught by Simeon Forder on Sunday morning, 23rd March 2025 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

**Reading:** Revelation 2:2-4

### Introduction

We are reaching a tipping point in Matthew's gospel account, for we have seen the crowds follow Jesus, and many believe in Him. We have seen His disciples leave all to follow Him. But we have also seen the Pharisees and Sadducees grow increasingly hostile to Him, and the people in Nazareth and elsewhere reject Him. These contrasts will only grow in the chapters ahead, but even now this should very much prompt us to consider where we stand... Do we have hard hearts that are not willing to accept Jesus? Or will we also leave all to follow Him? For we have read Jesus say that "whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

This morning we are going to be studying chapter 15, and there is probably something here to offend everyone. And I'm not joking. At the very least we'll see that the Pharisees were offended by what Jesus said. And while I don't aim to be offensive in what I say or how I say it, I would not be faithful to God and His Word if I tried to please everyone either. So I'm going to read what is here, and I'm going to give the sense of what it is saying, to show how we should apply this to our lives. And that might not be comfortable for any of us. But let us all pray that it would be helpful. Let us pray that our hearts would be open to hearing God's Word, this morning, and willing to apply it in the days ahead.

### Overview of chapter fifteen

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- **v1-9** — Jesus deals with the Pharisees
- **v10-20** — Jesus teaches regarding our hearts
- **v21-28** — Jesus heals the gentile woman's daughter
- **v29-31** — Jesus heals multitudes
- **v32-39** — Jesus feeds the four thousand

In this chapter, then, we will first read about an encounter between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees — they will accuse Him of breaking their man made laws, while Jesus will point out they have been breaking God's laws. Jesus then continues in verses 10-20, teaching that our hearts are the heart of the problem, before in verses 21-28 we will read about a gentile woman whose daughter He healed — and there will be a valuable lesson for us there. In verses 29-31, we will yet again see Jesus heal multitudes of people that were sick, while in the final 7 verses we will read about Jesus feeding the *four* thousand — a similar, but distinct account of a distinct event to the feeding of the *five* thousand that we read in chapter 14.

## Chapter fifteen

So if you have your Bible's to hand, please turn, flip or scroll to chapter fifteen. We read in the opening two verses:

### Matthew 15:1-2

Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

And so we find that the scribes and Pharisees (the Jewish spiritual leaders of the day), had travelled all the way from Jerusalem to see Jesus — and that wasn't a short journey, for we *read* in chapter 14 that He and His disciples were now in the land of Gennesaret, which was on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, making this a 150-mile-plus-journey — like walking from here to beyond Guildford.

But this effort that they put in to find Jesus wasn't because they wanted to *listen* to Him, but to find *fault* with Him and His disciples, that they might condemn Him. And they picked on the issue of hand washing. And we read here that they tried pulling Jesus' disciples up for not holding fast to the tradition of the elders. What were those traditions? Well, it wasn't what was contained in the Bible, but rather the traditions passed down over the years, which they had actually come to value more than the scriptures (much like the Roman Catholic church believes and teaches that church tradition is more important than the Bible).

And again, they picked on the issue of hand washing, not for sanitary reasons, but because it had become a ceremonial task for them, with their traditions stating that hands should be washed in a certain way with a certain amount of water, not only *before* a meal, but *between every course* of every meal. And what they had done was place ritual above righteousness, for as we will see, they had put the washing of their hands above the cleansing of their hearts. That is, they were being self-righteous, thinking their works excused their sin. And in response to their accusation to Jesus that His disciples were breaking their *traditions*, we read:

### Matthew 15:3

He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"

You see, their traditions were causing them to go way off course. And this love of tradition over truth was a problem that the apostle Paul noted he himself had been caught up in, writing to the Galatians how he *"advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers."*

And it was a problem that he warned the Colossians about, writing *"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men"* and, writing to Titus regarding the responsibility of elders, he noted they would need to *"Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth"*.

Here, Jesus explained how they were not merely focussed on the *wrong* commandments, but were in fact using man-made tradition to excuse themselves from keeping God's commandments! We read:

### Matthew 15:4-6

For God commanded, saying, Honour your father and your mother'; and, He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God" —then he need not honour his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.

So then, what they were permitting was to allow their fellow Jews to avoid their responsibility to love and care for their own parents, by simply declaring that something of value they had was now dedicated to God, and that such-giving was *in lieu* of helping their parents. But here's the thing; they didn't even have to part with what they were offering. They could state that their house was dedicated to God, but they could still use it for their own benefit. So it cost them *nothing* to escape their responsibilities, and, as such, they disobeyed God's command to honour their parents — which wasn't *merely* about obedience as a child, but submitting to and supporting them in later years as well.

The apostle Paul wrote on this same topic to Timothy. We read in 1 Timothy 5:

### 1 Timothy 5:3-8

Honour widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. And these things command, that they may be blameless. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our parents. And more than gratitude, we should offer tangible and practical help to them such as they showed to us in the thousands of things they did for us as children. There should be no complaint on our part when needing to help our parents with their home, their health, or showing them how to do something with technology — for they literally taught us how to use a spoon, and how to use a potty. If it were not for them you'd still be eating yoghurt with your fingers and wearing nappies!

Simply put, and in a general sense, there is no Biblical reason you can give for not showing care toward your parents — in fact, it is a *commandment* of God to do so. Of course, we must acknowledge that because of sin, there are some exceedingly difficult parent/child relationships that may even lead to necessary and prudent separation. But where no such difficulty is present, you can't give your money or your time to the church and use that as an excuse or cover for neglecting to look after your parents, which is *your* responsibility.

Likewise, you must never let a love of money cause you to fail in your love for *them*. A Christian should not be scheming and planning how much they can get in inheritance from their parents, but rather seeking the best for their parents in every regard.

And Jesus didn't hold back in addressing this problem in the Pharisee's hearts, saying next:

#### **Matthew 15:7**

Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

And so, Jesus called them hypocrites, which word comes from the Greek word `hypokrites` (unsurprisingly!) that spoke of an actor or pretender — one who pretended to be something that they are not. And He quoted Isaiah 29:13, saying:

#### **Matthew 15:8-9**

'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honour Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' "

What a direct statement and rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees here! But lest we be self-righteous too, let us consider ourselves in light of what Jesus said. For it has been said that *"Christians don't tell lies. They just go to church and sing them."*

So, could that be true of us? Could it be true of you?

I ask this, because you and I stand here and sing *"Better is one day in your courts, better is one day in your house, than a thousand elsewhere"* yet many of you never show up for prayer meetings or mid-week meetings. We stand here and sing of *laying it all down, of surrendering all, of taking up our cross*, and then don't get involved in serving. And then we stand here and sing *"lead me in Your love to those around me"* and then walk into the hall and fail to do precisely that.

I could have cried last Sunday as I saw some of our newer friends here, standing on their own in the hall, and no-one was going up to them to talk. How is that possible? How can we fail to show love in that most basic of ways? I don't care about your nerves — I was the shy kid who wanted to sit at the back of the class, never ask questions, and never ever stand up in front of the class. I was the youth leader who tried to hide behind the PA equipment so I didn't have to talk to the youth — but I let God use me. And I had to put my fears to the side, so that I actually might love as I ought to.

The precious times of fellowship we have after our services are not simply there for a quick chit chat, to catch up on sports or pass the time. No, we should be ministering to one another, talking about the Lord, understanding how each other truly are, seeing how we might pray for and support one another, especially looking out for anyone standing on their own, that we might make them a priority. *That* is letting the Lord lead us in His love to those around us (or at least, part of it). Let us even pray that God would show us who *He* wants us to talk to.

Let me put it even more plainly — there should be no-one in this fellowship that you have not had a real conversation with by now. So is that the case? We're not a church of thousands, or even hundreds. We have no excuse for not talking to one another. Let us mean what we sing. And not only with regard to our times of fellowship. Let *all* the words we sing be words that we live, for if we don't, then we will be found to be hypocrites too!

Look, we can't sing *I'm giving You my heart, and all that is within...* and *All the world holds dear, I count it all as loss...* and then on Monday forget that and pursue everything this world has to offer. We can't sing of *laying down our rights*, and *giving God our dreams*, and of *surrendering all*, and then fail to read and study our Bibles, to commit ourselves to prayer, to actively pursue fellowship, or to passionately serve God. We can't sing *It will be my joy to say, your will, your way...* and *I will make room for You To do whatever You want to*, but then pursue relationships that are contrary to His Word and His will.

We must take note of what Jesus is saying here. And we must also take note of the other warnings we have in scripture. God spoke via the prophet Malachi to people of Israel, saying:

#### **Malachi 1:7-8**

You offer defiled food on My altar, But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, The table of the LORD is contemptible.' And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favourably?" Says the LORD of hosts.

You see, the people had grown cold in their love for the Lord. They were going through the motions of offering sacrifices, but their hearts were not in it, and they were offering blind, lame, and sick animals, rather than the best that had no blemish. And God said *try that with your governor, and see if he would be pleased with your half hearted efforts!*

Let me put it another way. Would your boss be pleased with you if you put as little into your job as your do into your walk with Jesus? Or would your spouse feel loved if you demonstrated your love to them to the same extent you do to Christ?

Think of it like this. Next month it will be mine and Siân's wedding anniversary. And picture for a moment how she might feel if I simply texted her to say, "*Hey, happy anni! Have a good one. See you this evening once I'm back from having pizza with the guys*". That wouldn't go down well. Nor should it. Instead, I'll take the day off work, I'll take her out for dinner, and I'll tell her that I love her. Because I do. But before I make your stomachs churn, how do *you* love God? How does that show up in your actions? Could Jesus say of us "*These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honour Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.*"?

Let us not be like the church in Ephesus, who Jesus wrote to in Revelation chapter 2, who had so much right, but whom He called out for having left their first love (that is, their love of Him).

Now, continuing in verse 10 we read:

#### **Matthew 15:10-11**

When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand: Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

That is, food that nourishes you does not defile you. But look at the problems caused by what comes *out* of your mouth, or the mouths of others! From, the suggestive comments that lead to affairs, to the arguments that lead to strained and broken friendships and relationships, to the disputes and disagreements that lead to wars. The tongue causes many problems. We read in chapter 3 of James' letter:

**James 3:2-10**

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

The principle that Jesus was teaching here, was that moral defilement is spiritual, not physical. That rather than being obsessed with the washing of hands, the Pharisees should have been concerned with the cleansing of the heart, the condition of which (as we'll see as we go on in this chapter), is the root cause of the problem. But first, we read:

**Matthew 15:12-14**

Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

Jesus was not worried about people being offended. He was worried about truth. And about hearts. And here He instructed His disciples' to not focus on the problems with the Pharisees, for they were refusing to see the truth. And like the tares amongst the wheat, God will deal with all such men, and all such religious systems that don't hold fast to His Word.

**Matthew 15:15-16**

Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us." So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding?"

And once again we should be grateful for Peter asking this, for sometimes we need to hear things twice, right? Jesus continued:

### Matthew 15:17-20

Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

So, Jesus made clear, once again, that the issue wasn't about hands, but about hearts. For as we read in Jeremiah "*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked;...*". Indeed, what is in the well of the heart will come up in the bucket of the mouth sooner or later.

Jesus notes here that out of our *hearts* come evil thoughts of our imagination and rebellion against God. Likewise murders (which as we learned in Jesus' *Sermon on The Mount*) includes all hate in our heart without cause. Adulteries and fornications not only speak of physical acts of sexual sin, such as sex outside of marriage or affairs, but all such lust within our hearts. The mention of thefts not only should warn us of the act of stealing, but of having hearts filled with covetousness too. And Jesus warns too of false witness, of telling lies, of misrepresenting the truth, of circulating false reports, of sharing social media posts without ever checking out if they are true. And of speaking blasphemies, or speaking anything against our wonderful God.

Since these things come out of our hearts, how we ought to guard our hearts! And since our hearts are prone to such wickedness, how we ought *not* to follow them — that's a sure way to ruin your life!

We need to be oh so careful, for this world wants to lead our hearts astray. It wants us to click, to lust, to objectify, to covet, to spend our lives trying to obtain. And it wants to fill our hearts with everything that is not godly. We need to be very, very, careful in what we watch, what we listen to, and what we read. Oh be careful little eyes what you see! While we should not be legalistic, I think it is fair to say that if you are comfortable watching everything you did 5 or 10 years ago, then you ought to question if you are actually growing closer to God at all. There *should* be growth in our lives. And we can't grow closer to the Son without moving away from the earth.

Psalms 1 has a great warning for us. We read in the first two verses:

### Psalms 1:1-2

Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Note that there is a progression here. The opposite of the man who is blessed, is the one who walks in the counsel of the ungodly, then stands in the path of sinners, then sits in the seat of the scornful. And this world will slow you down in your walk with the Lord, until you are comfortable propping up the bar, or sat watching filth in the cinema or on your own TV screen. It doesn't happen overnight, but it does happen every night. Bit by bit. Until the man of God acts like a child of the devil.

I beg you — guard your hearts. Be diligent in choosing what you feed them. And parents, be very protective of what goes into your children's hearts. On this point, noting what Jesus had said about washing of the hands, one commentator observed:

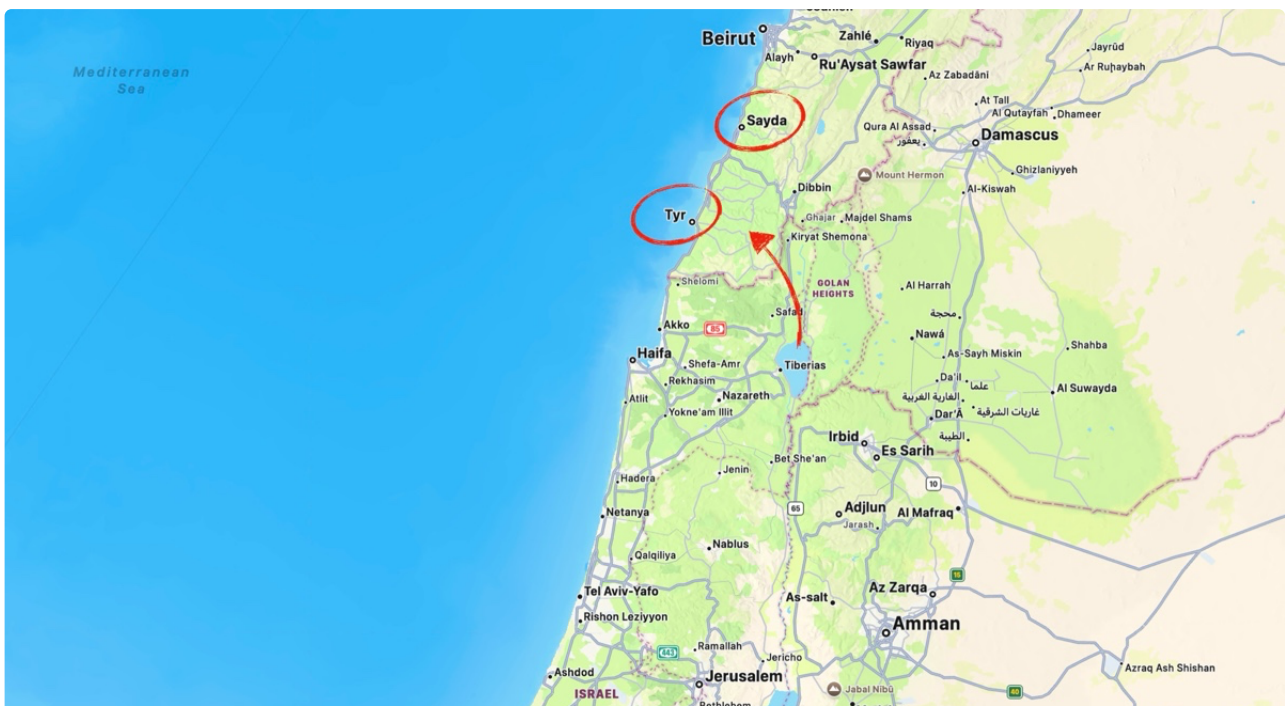
*Parents say to their children, “You wash your hands before you come to the table,” but they pay no attention to what their children see on television, which is the thing that is damaging the heart. Oh, of course, children should wash their hands, but what is on the inside is far more important.*

Parents — we need to care greatly about what our children see on our TV screens, on their phones, on their computers and games consoles, and in the magazines and books they read. For what this world will gladly serve up to them ranges from the damaging to the utterly depraved.

Continuing in this chapter we read:

### Matthew 15:21

Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.



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And so, Jesus ventured into the area near these two cities, which remain to some extent, in what is modern day Lebanon, as you can see here (north of Israel and the north-east of the Sea of Galilee).

### Matthew 15:22

And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.”

So, this woman (whom we learn from Mark was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth) came to see Jesus. But the choice of words she uses is interesting, for though she was a Gentile, she uses a term that not only spoke of Jesus' earthly lineage, but specifically that He was *the* descendant of David that would reign forever — that is, the Messiah. Why did she use this term to address Him? Well, a conclusion that makes sense is that she had heard others addressing Jesus this way, and so borrowed the phrase from them.

**Matthew 15:23**

But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

Now, we've seen His disciples offer less than stellar advice in the past, right? So it is perhaps not a shock to see their response. But why did Jesus not say anything to her? Well, let's read on...

**Matthew 15:24**

But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

So Jesus reminds His disciples that He had been sent to Israel. Indeed, He was born a Jew, as King of the Jews, was crucified with *King of the Jews* written above His head, and will one day return to rule as King of the Jews. And while the gospel would indeed go unto the ends of the earth — at Jesus' instruction no less — that time was not yet, and His ministry was to the Jews.

But this woman persisted, and we see a valuable lesson. We read in verse 25:

**Matthew 15:25**

Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

That is, she worshipped Him, and acknowledge Him as Lord. And Finnis Dake notes that her prayer was short, humble, fervent, desperate, rational, respectful, worshipful, persevering, determined, and full of faith in Christ. There's good lesson in that for us! But something Jon Courson noted about this really stood out to me. He said:

*Sometimes when we're going through tough times, we hear how someone else prays, and we think, That must be the key. King James English is what moves the hand of God. So we pray, "Father, I thankst Thee that Thou beholdest the cries of all of Thy creation. Now, Father, in Thy magnificence and benevolence, have mercy upon me in my situation." And nothing happens. Or we hear someone share how they lifted their hand to the Lord, and He reached down and pulled them out of their depression. And we say, "Now how high did you hold your hand? Was it your right hand or your left hand?" This Canaanite woman was in that same situation. She had the formula, but she failed miserably until she threw her formula aside and came in brokenness and openness to worship Jesus.*

While as a Gentile she had no claim on Him as the Son of David, when she came to Him in worship, and calling Him Lord, she then received help. But, first Jesus tested her faith. We read:

**Matthew 15:26**

But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."

First pointing to Himself as the bread of life, but secondly using the Greek word for a pet dog, He was referring to the Gentiles, in a way that was a common for the day (so less offensive than we might find it to be):

**Matthew 15:27**

And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

And so she didn't complain, just explained. Didn't say "how dare you call me a dog!" but rather persisted in her request, because she believed in Him, that He alone was able to help her.

#### **Matthew 15:28**

Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire."  
And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

And what a picture we have of the Gentiles coming to Christ in sincere faith, in that her faith was required, but it wasn't her faith that healed her daughter, for it was Jesus who healed in His power and strength. And immediately so. May we also note how it wasn't her borrowing or repetition of phrases that changed anything, but rather it was her worship and acknowledgement of Jesus as Lord that led to this moment.

Now, in verse 29 onwards we read:

#### **Matthew 15:29-31**

Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. So the multitude marvelled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

So once again, many found healing at the feet of Jesus, leaving no doubt as to whether He did these things, for there were too many eye witnesses to deny it. So many, that if Matthew had made this up, then his gospel account would have been disputed from the moment it was first written.

And note the response of the multitudes... that they glorified God. Such should be the response to *any* work of God. So watch out when people have healing ministries or such which glorify *them*, for that is not the pattern Jesus set before us here. Simply put, acts of God should glorify God. And you can spot acts of man, as they have more than a tendency to glorify man.

#### **Matthew 15:32**

Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way."

And so, seeing that the multitudes had run out of food, Jesus showed compassion once more. But His disciples, seemingly forgetting all He had so recently done in feeding the five thousand, look to themselves for a solution:

#### **Matthew 15:33**

Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?"

And I can't help but chuckle at their choice of words here, for they knew God had provided manna and quail in another wilderness for 2 million plus people, every day, for almost 40 years! How easily they, and how easily we forget all that God has already done, and can't see beyond our own efforts, skills or resources. The only comfort in this is realising the disciples were as slow to learn as we are!

**Matthew 15:34**

Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few little fish."

And some have erroneously suggested that this is a repeat of the details of the feeding of the 5000, but remember that Matthew (who wrote this record down) was a tax collector — that is, he was a man who was good at numbers and making records of them!

And we read on:

**Matthew 15:35-36**

So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude.

So once again, we have this picture of the bread of life (so to speak) being given by Jesus to His disciples, who in turn gave to others.

Which is exactly what should happen with the Word of God, our daily bread, today. That what you hear, you would pass on to others. For I am not teaching my opinion, but I am teaching the Bible, having sat under the teaching ministry of others. And *your* responsibility is to teach it to others also — whether that be to your children, to your grandchildren, to each other, to our youth group, or to the little ones at our Livewires club and at Sunday School. The context in which you teach may vary, but your responsibility is to pass on what you have learned.

Here, the disciples carried out Jesus' instruction, and we read:

**Matthew 15:37**

So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left.

And that's not to say they were messy eaters and there were lots of crumbs to clean up, but rather there was more than this crowd could eat. And we read:

**Matthew 15:38**

Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

Which if we assume, as we did before, that there was, on average, at least 1 woman and 1 child with every man — then Jesus fed over 12,000 people here, with just seven loaves and few small fish. And we worry about what God can do with the little we have! Make us look kind of silly, right?!

In closing we read:

**Matthew 15:39**

And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.

So the multitude were sent away full, and Jesus (and presumably his disciples too) sailed over the Sea of Galilee to the region of Magdala, Magdala being the town that it is believed Mary Magdalene came from, around 10 miles south of Capernaum.

And next week, as we study chapter sixteen, we will see Matthew record that the Pharisees *and* Sadducees next came here to test Jesus further. So please do read ahead, and start considering what is recorded there for our learning.

## Application questions

Now, as we close this morning, let me gently remind you that what we have written in the Bible isn't for our *education* (though it is a great education it gives us), but rather what is written there is for our *transformation*. That as the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, and of failure to honour God in all we do, that we might be changed through Jesus living in us, and through us.

But the question again is, will you have a hard heart, or will you forsake all to follow Him? If you try and have one foot in the world and one foot in the things of the Lord, then you'll end up doing the spiritual splits, and it will hurt (a lot)! For just as Charles Spurgeon said, "A little sin, like a little pebble in the shoe, will make a traveller to heaven walk very wearily."

So then, please, please consider, discuss, and act on these four questions this morning:

- Are you showing the love and care toward your parents that you should?
  - Are you living out in the week what you sing on a Sunday? What would others say?
  - Are you guarding your heart from sin? If Satan wanted to trip you up, how would he do it?
  - Are you guarding your children's hearts as much as you wash their hands?
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