

**“Everyone Eats”**

**Matt 15:29-39**

**Scripture Ref: John 3:16; Rev 21-22**

- 1. Last week we looked at a woman that came to Jesus, but...**
  - a. Her gender was against her;**
  - b. Her race was against her;**
  - c. Her religion was against her;**
  - d. And, because she had a daughter that was demon-possessed, she would have been stigmatized.**
- 2. We saw that in the process of meeting her need, the Lord brought her to a new understanding...**
  - a. Everything in your life may be wrong, but you can come to Jesus, and make it right!**
  - b. That it's not about the process, it's about the relationship!**
  - c. Don't try and earn it – you can't**
  - d. Don't try to “fake it till you make it” – it doesn't work**
  - e. Just come before Jesus, and worship Him as Lord!**
- 3. Here we find Jesus – moving on into the area of Decapolis**

**Jesus Heals Great Multitudes**

29 Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. 30 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.

- 4. This area that Jesus goes into is called Decapolis and area just south of the Sea of Galilee.**
  - a. It was an area of about ten cities that were permitted by the Romans mint their own coins, run their own courts, and field their own armies.**
  - b. It was a predominantly Gentile area that was advanced, prosperous, and worldly. Giant statues of Zeus and other Roman gods dotted the landscape.**
  - c. In other words, it was a place that a self-righteous Jewish religious leader would never go to actually minister to people!**
- 5. Yet Jesus went there, and the people flocked to him**
  - a. Even in the midst of prosperity – there were masses of people with problems that their money could not fix, and so they came to Jesus.**
  - b. I think the key verse here is verse 31:**

31 "So the multitude marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel"

- 6. In other words – these people saw Jesus, saw what He did, and then recognized that it was the God of Israel at work. And they glorified the God of Israel!**
  - a. These people were not the Jews who had the experience of God revealing Himself to them,**
  - b. Who had been brought out of Egypt by God**
  - c. Who had been given the law, the prophets,**
  - d. People who were waiting for the Messiah!**
  - e. They didn't have or care about any of these things, they were just stoked about what God was doing in their midst!**
- 7. And these people have been following Him around for three days...**

#### **Feeding the Four Thousand**

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." 33 Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?" 34 Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few little fish." 35 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. 36 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. 37 So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. 38 Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. 39 And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.

- 8. Some scholars say that this event is a re-telling of the big picnic we covered a little earlier, and the disciples just changed the facts a little.**
  - a. But I don't believe that for a minute – specifically because in the next chapter Jesus refers to both events separately.**
- 9. So Jesus is with these people, and just like the woman –**
  - a. They are not Jewish,**
  - b. They are from a predominantly worldly area,**
  - c. They are probably steeped in sin and superstition**
  - d. And yet Jesus is there, healing away – blessing their socks off!**
  - e. Imagine what the Pharisees would say about that!**
- 10. This should tell you something about the heart of God –**
  - a. You can get the idea sometimes, talking to Christians, that God loves you... if you're good!**

- b. But those wicked people, the ones who do all the bad stuff, God couldn't love them....
  - c. That is simply not true – God loves everyone! John 3:16 tells us, “for God so loved the world”
  - d. Its not “for God so loved the good Christians who go to church and don't drink or smoke and everyone else is a *sinner!*”
  - e. It's “God so loved the world” – that would be everyone!
11. Now – to clarify – that does not mean that everyone goes to heaven
- a. God loves us – that's why He sent His Son to take the bullet for us – to offer us a free gift – salvation – eternal life!
  - b. If you had a child that was a crack addict and stole from everyone around, you would love that child – but not invite them into your home.
  - c. But say you offered them a free gift of 90 days in treatment, and they got cleaned up, come out a new person, totally different story!
  - d. The point I am making is that heaven is eternal – we'll be there forever.
  - e. If I am going to be somewhere forever, I would like to not have to experience all the problems of this world!
  - f. I don't want thieves running around looting my mansion, causing trouble.
  - g. See, there will be NO SIN in heaven. (how do I know? Just go read Revelation 21-22, it is described in great detail!)
12. But – I should get back on point – the heart of God is that He saw these people needed food, and He had compassion for them.
- a. They didn't ask for it, they weren't expecting it – yet Jesus gave it to them – exactly what they needed!
  - b. Honestly – that is my kind of Savior! He see's my need, and He wants to respond to it...
  - c. Even when I am not asking for it, Even when I might not be in the best situation or circumstances... He sees my situation, and He wants to bless me!
13. You know what I find interesting? The disciple's response: *“Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?”*
- a. Wait a minute; didn't Jesus just feed 5000 men (plus women and children) just a little while ago?
  - b. And now you're wondering where you'll get bread for this crowd?
  - c. Talk about short-term memory loss, this is like ‘group amnesia!’
  - d. ...or is it?

14. Let me ask you a question: How many times have you been in a situation that was “God sized”.
- a. And you knew God *could* do something...
  - b. But you didn’t think God *would* do something?
  - c. You think “*well I haven’t been praying as much as I should, I haven’t been reading my bible as much as I should, I skipped church last week to go fishing, Gods not going to do anything for me.*”
  - d. Or maybe “*I put myself into this situation; God is not going to get me out of it.*”
  - e. We have ALL thought that – I have thought that way.
  - f. Here is the thing – when we think that way, we are being just like the disciples... “*this is Decapolis, these people are gentiles, He’s not going to feed them.*”
15. But what we see is - just the opposite is true -
- a. Jesus isn’t concerned about where these people came from, what they did last night, whether they had correct doctrine, or whether they deserved for Him to provide for them!
  - b. Jesus saw these people and had compassion on them.
  - c. In the same way Jesus looks out at humanity, you and me, our church, our families, and He has compassion – and He wants to do something awesome!
16. But here is the key: If we want to be blessed and healed and provided for, we need to do like the multitude – come to Jesus!
- a. Last week I talked about the folks who hung out at the bar next door, whenever I saw that place I felt really sad for those folks
  - b. Because they were missing out on the blessings – spiritual, relational, occupational, financial blessings - of being in the presence of the Lord!
17. These people of Decapolis, they came out of sin and superstition, but where they came *from* is not as important as where they came *to* –
- a. They came to Jesus – and everyone ate!

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