

The Patience of Jesus

Jesus said, *“Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod”* (Mark 8:15). It is hard to believe how quickly we tend to forget things – sometimes, very important things; sometimes, things with eternal consequence. The disciple misunderstood Christ’s statement, thinking that He was referring to actual bread, and the frustration Jesus felt became all too evident when He stated: *“Why do you reason because you have no bread?”* (v. 17). He then continued the reprimand by reminding them of the miracles of feeding the thousands and how disappointed He was with their shallow thinking.

This event serves as one of the many times Jesus was unsuccessful in reaching the dulled mind of humanity with a Divine truth, and a microcosm of the patience of Jesus; it never ceases to amaze. One might think, looking at the pitiful shape in which our communities, our country and even our world reside, that the patience of Christ is obvious and abundant (Matthew 23:37-39). And, that might be true, but the application is just as valid today, considering the patience Jesus has with you and me personally, just as He was with His disciples. And, is it not amazing that He maintains that patience even today?

Yes, you know you better than anyone, save God. I can’t speak for anyone else but, too often, it is not very impressive. We slip and fall into the same old problems and habits and sins that we have sworn countless times we will never do or say again. Then, about the time we think we have a handle on things, the entire handle comes off and some new temptation rears its ugly head, catching us unprepared as we cave in to sin with indefensible cowardice. The frustrations and challenges of harnessing this old body can be burdensome, to say the least (Romans 7:19-24).

Of course, the object of this article is not to beat a Christian down; we get down enough by ourselves, thank you! No, this is just a reminder to be thankful that we serve a God who is *“longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9). Jesus exhibited this patience over and over again. We are breathing because God is still waiting. We are living examples of the patience of Jesus.