

Today's Quick Word Mark 8:15-17

By Bruce Christian

MARK 8:15-17 “Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.” They discussed this with one another and said, “It is because we have no bread.” Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?”

When Jesus, at the beginning of his earthly ministry, was tempted by Satan to turn stones to bread to satisfy his physical appetite, he responded by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 - ‘Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ In the Deuteronomy context, God, through Moses, was impressing on the Israelites the significance of his ‘supernatural’ provision of the manna in the wilderness: he wanted them to be more concerned about the spiritual side of their being and less obsessed with just meeting their physical needs. After all, Man’s unique SPIRITUAL ‘design feature’ was the one thing that differentiated him from the animal kingdom whose physical environment he shared. Contrary to the claims of ‘science’ (claims that noted Evolutionist, Sir Arthur Keith, admits are ‘unproven and unprovable’), we did Not ‘evolve’ from the animal kingdom, but were created from the ‘dust of

the ground’ in the ‘image and likeness of God’ (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7, cf 1 Corinthians 15:47). Sadly, our own materialistic society has rejected God’s Word of Truth, and identifies itself so closely with the animal kingdom that it is obsessed with the instant satisfaction of every physical longing: food, drink, possessions, sex, etc. Moreover, even as Christians we are impacted with this culture 24/7; and it is too often part of our fallen nature in Adam to give in to this pressure at the expense of our spiritual welfare. This is what is behind Jesus’ frustration with his disciples in today’s verses. On at least two fairly recent occasions they had witnessed first hand his sensitive compassion and divine power to provide ‘bread from heaven’ as God had done through Moses for 40 years in the desert; but when he wanted to use physical realities to teach important spiritual truths they couldn’t get their minds off their stomachs! In our daily routine, how much attention do we give to our spiritual health and nourishment compared with satisfying our physical desires? Is our time spent in reading and meditating on God’s Word, and in prayer, more ‘negotiable’ and ‘optional’ than breakfast, toiletry, or our favourite TV program?