DON’T MISS THE SIGNS

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**TEXT: Mark 8:10-13**

**INTRODUCTION**

A truck driver was taking his load to a new destination. As he drove, he was intently watching the signs leading to his exit. In his effort to find the right exit, he missed the signs warning him of a low overpass ahead. To his astonishment, his truck became stuck under the overpass. He could not go forward and he could not back up. Traffic began to back up and tempers began to flare. The police were called, wreckers were summoned and an effort began to free the stuck truck. They tried tow trucks, winches, grease, pulleys, wedges and anything else anyone suggested. Nothing worked. The time passed and the truck remained just as stuck as ever. By now a considerable crowd had gathered to watch the workers in their attempts to free the truck. In that crowd was a little boy who was riding his bicycle over the overpass. He had stopped to watch the show, and after a few minutes, he called out to one of the policemen below. He said, “*Hey officer, I know how to get that truck out from under that bridge.*” The policeman looked up, but ignored the little boy. The boy, wanting to help, cried out louder, “*Hey officer, I know how to get that truck out from under that bridge.*” With a hint of irritation in his voice, the police officer said, “*Okay young man, tell me how.*” Without a pause, the little boy said, “*Let the air out of the tires.*” That's what they did and the truck was able to pull free.

I don't know if that story is true, either way the story does teach a couple of important truths

First, *it's easy to overlook the obvious, even when it is staring us right in the face*

Second, *wise people learn to pay attention to all the signs*

Signs are important in this physical world

I have missed a few turns because I missed a road sign

I have been caught speeding because I missed a sign that told me to slow down

Signs help us to know where we are and what we are supposed to be doing

Signs serve a valuable purpose in our lives

Just as there are signs in the physical realm, there are also signs in the spiritual realm

Those signs are even more important than the signs in the physical world

We can miss a sign or two here and there and things will probably turn out OK

But, if we miss too many spiritual signs, we may end up in deep double or missing the will of God

And if we’re not already saved, we might end up in Hell

This passage tells us about a group of people who missed all the signs and got themselves into big trouble with the Lord

Let's watch what happens when we miss the spiritual signs the Lord has prepared for us

I want us to see these truths in this passage as I Teach on this thought

**“Don't Miss the Signs”**

This is a warning that many should take to heart

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. THE “STERN DEMAND” – v. 11**

***“And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with Him, seeking of Him a sign from heaven, tempting Him”***

Jesus has just finished one of the greatest miracles of His ministry

The Feeding of the 4000

And the Bible tells us when the meal was over, the disciples collected seven baskets filled with leftovers

Then, according to **v. 10**, Jesus and His men immediately left by ship to go to another part of Israel

**v. 11** - As soon as they arrive there, they are met by the Pharisees

You may remember that the Pharisees were the religious conservatives of their day

They were very legalistic and they hated Jesus because He refused to do things the way they said things were supposed to be done

When Jesus arrives in their neck of the woods, they came out to meet Him

I’m sure it was ***“noised abroad that He was in the house”***

The Bible says, in **v. 11**, that they **“*began to question with Him*”**

The word **“*question*”** means *to dispute or argue*

And the word is in a tense that suggests they wouldn't shut up

They kept on trying to drag Jesus into a theological argument

We are told What they were trying to get Jesus to do

They wanted Him to show them **“*a sign from Heaven*”**

The Bible says **“*tempting Him*”**

That is, they were putting Him to the test

They were trying to get Jesus to prove His authority and the source of His Power

(Not like He hasn’t done that already?)

**A. What they were Looking For**

Certainly, if Jesus was who He said He was

Then surely, He could do some wonder in the sky to prove it

Other men of God had done similar things in Israel's past

**1.** Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and it obeyed

**Joshua 10:12-14**

**2.** Samuel prayed when they were under attack and the Lord answered with loud thunder which discomforted their enemies

**I Samuel 7:10**

**3.** Elijah prayed and it didn’t rain for 3 ½ yrs.

**I Kings 17:1**

He prayed again and it rained,

[**I Kings 18:41-45**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Ki+18%3A41-45)

Elijah also called down fire from the heavens which consumed a sacrifice and the altar it lay upon

**I Kings 18:36-38**

There are many other examples in the Bible of God using men to do great miracles

What these men were really trying to do was to get Jesus to promise more than He could deliver

They heard about all the things He had done

They were trying to get Him to attempt a miracle and fail, so that they could denounce Him as a false prophet

They were also saying that all the things Jesus had already done in the power of God were insufficient to prove that He was the Messiah

They knew the things He had done, but they wanted more!

Think about all the miracles the Jews had already witnessed or were aware of

-- Jesus had healed the sick

-- He had raised the dead

-- He had delivered people from the bondage of demon possession

-- Jesus had walked on water

-- Jesus had calmed storms

-- Jesus had twice multiplied a meager amount of food and fed vast multitudes with it

-- Jesus had opened the Word of God, preached it clearly and made the meaning of the Scriptures plain to all who heard Him

When the people talked about Him …

They said things like **“*We never saw it on this fashion*”,** ***“He hath done all things well”*** ***“Never man spake like this man”***

The Pharisees had heard enough Gospel to save the world

They had seen enough proof to convince the most stubborn of skeptics

Their problem was simply that they did not want to believe Jesus!

They did not want Him to be their Messiah

They refused to bow to Him as their Saviour!

He didn’t meet their Expectations

**What they were Looking For**

**B. What has Already Been Shown**

We still have the Pharisees with us today

Just called by different names

We still have the people who demand to see something sensational before they will commit to following Jesus

People thrive on the sensational

Why do you think someone like Benny Hinn has such a following? It isn't the hair!

People flock to people like him because they promise them the sensational

Far too many people are waiting on some supernatural event to prove the existence of God

The fact is, God has already proven that He exists!

While the world is looking for a sign, God tells us that He is visible in the ordinary things of this world

**Romans 1:19, 20 – *“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them” “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”***

The things we take for granted every day are the very things that prove God is real

Let me share a few with you

**1.** Consider the Universe

**Psalm 19:1-4 – *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork” “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge” “There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard” “Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world…”***

God tells us that the heavens declare His Glory

First, I want you to consider the Vast Speed of the Heavens

-- The earth is traveling on its axis at 1000 m.p.h.

-- The earth moves around the sun at 67,000 m.p.h.

-- The Earth is carried by the sun across our galaxy at a speed of 64,000 m.p.h.

-- The sun moves in orbit around our galaxy at 481,000 m.p.h.

-- Our Galaxy travels through space at 1,350,000 m.p.h.

-- Every twenty-four hours we cover 57,360,000 miles

-- Each year we travel 20,936,400,000 miles across empty space

-- And every movement in the billions of galaxies in the universe occurs with precise, split-second timing

Next, I want you to think of the Vast Size of the Heavens

It is so vast that it takes a beam of light, (which travels some 700 million miles per hour, or 186,411 miles per second!), over 100,000 years just to cover the length of our galaxy, the Milky Way

And, our galaxy is only one among many billions in the known universe

Think of it this way …

-- An orange would represent the sun

-- A grain of sand is the earth, circling the orange at a distance of 30’

-- Pluto (most remote planet in our solar system) is another grain of sand, circling the orange at about a mile down the road

-- Alpha Centauri (the nearest star) is 1300 miles away from the orange (Denver, Colorado)

**2.** Now Consider how Small the Universe is

All matter in the universe is made up of atoms

There are so many atoms on the head of a Ball Point Pen … that if an army marched past four abreast, every soldier carrying one atom, it would take that army 20,000 years to go by

That’s how many Atoms on the point of a Pen

**3.** Consider the marvel of the human body

David said in **Psalm 139:14** that we are **“*fearfully and wonderfully made*”**

Just two tiny Cells unite together to produce life

How small is a Human cell?

Some cells are visible to the unaided eye

The smallest objects that the unaided human eye can see are about 0.1 mm long

That means that under the right conditions, you might be able to see an amoeba, a human egg, or a paramecium without using magnification

Out of our tiny cells comes Human life

No two people in the world are exactly alike

No two fingerprints are alike

Consider the marvel of DNA

Every one of the 7.5 trillion of cells in your body contains the genetic material to make another you

And, your DNA is unique to you!

You are difference from every other person who has ever lived

All of these things scream that there is a God!

What more of a sign do we need?

The fact is, these signs and many more, are proof positive of God's existence

To reject God and His Word while they claim to be waiting for a sign is nothing more than rebellion against God

If you are looking for a sign today, look no farther than Calvary!

The cross stands as an eternal sign of the love of God for lost sinners, (Look and Live)

**Romans 5:8 – *“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”***

If you are looking for a sign, look to the empty tomb

It is the eternal sign that our Saviour is alive forever,

**Revelation 1:18 - *“I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death”***

If you need a sign pointing the way to God, look at the Bible!

It has survived the attacks of all the enemies of God and it still clearly points the way of salvation,

**Acts 16:31 – *“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house”***

If someone is looking for a sign to prove the claims of the Bible and of the Lord being real, just look around

Changed lives are all the proof a person should ever need for faith in Jesus!

The Pharisees didn't believe because they didn't want to believe

Their request for a sign was a smokescreen

Even if Jesus had rent the heavens, they still wouldn’t have believed in Him

They rejected Him because He wasn't what they were expecting

What's other excuses will people make?

**THE “STERN DEMAND”**

**II. THE “SOLEMN DECLARATION” – v. 12**

***“And He sighed deeply in His spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation”***

When Jesus hears their demand, He is grieved in His heart

His Sigh is one of frustration and perhaps even anger

His question, **“*Why doth this generation seek after a sign*”** was a question born out of amazement!

After all, that generation had the greatest sign of all, right in their midst

They had the Messiah, God in the flesh walking among them and they did not even recognize Him

They were looking for a heavenly sign and Heaven had taken up residence among them and they missed it!

Jesus said, **“*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*”**

But, when men looked at Jesus, they didn't see the Father, they saw the devil,

**Mark 3:22 – *“And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils”***

That generation had all the signs and they could not see the truth that was standing right in front of their eyes

John described it this way in **John 1:1-14 …**

That generation had all the signs and they failed to see the truth

Thus, Jesus told them they would not be given a Sign, but the Sign of the prophet Jonah,

**Matthew 12:39, 40 – *“But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:” “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”***

The only Sign they would be given would be Christ's resurrection from the dead

When that Sign came to pass just as Jesus had said it would, they also rejected it

**Matthew 28:11-15 …**

That generation refused to believe because they didn't want to believe!

Jesus knew their condition and He refused to play their game

He told them that He wasn't in the Sign business

There are two basic problems with Signs

**A. When a Sign is Given, another Sign is Desired**

One sign is never enough!

No matter what Jesus did, these men would have never believed!

He could have opened the heavens and caused 1000’s of angels to appear,

But they would have wanted to see more

He could have done any number of signs and wonders in the heavens above and they still would not have received Him!

They would have always wanted one more miracle

The same is true today!

People are never satisfied

If they come because of the sensational, they will require more and more of the same

**B. Signs don't Save, Faith does!**

Which is actually the total opposite

Jesus could have done all the Signs imaginable and it would never have saved a single soul,

Unless that soul reached out to Him in simple, childlike faith!

It isn't the miracles that save souls, it’s faith

When Faith touches Grace the greatest miracle of all, the salvation of a human soul, takes place

Jesus isn't in the Sign business!

He’s in the Salvation business!

If someone is waiting for a Damascus Road experience before they come to Jesus, they will probably be waiting a long time

God’s normal way of salvation is for a person to hear the Word of God preached, be convicted of their sin, and turn to Jesus

If someone is waiting on a Sign, they might just go to Hell while they wait

Again, the greatest Sign of all has already been given!

Look to Calvary, and see a crucified Savior

Look to the tomb and see Him resurrected from the dead

If someone can believe those two events and take them at face value, they then can be saved,

**Romans 10:9 – *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved”***

Here is what the Lord is trying to tell us today

**“*There shall no sign be given to this generation*”**

If we are waiting on a Sign, we are waiting on something that isn't coming!

People need to come to Jesus now and be saved while they still can!

**THE “STERN DEMAND”**

**THE “SOLEMN DECLARATION”**

**III. THE “SORROWFUL DEPARTURE” – v. 13**

The words of **v. 13** are among the saddest in all the Gospel record, **“*And He left them…*”**

There was nothing more to say and nothing more that could be done

They refused to believe, and He abandoned them to their choice

Those men experienced God's abandonment

He left them to their own way and left them in their darkness!

What a horrible thought, but that’s how it works

**Romans 1:18-28 …**

He will not deal with us forever,

**Genesis 6:3 – *“And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, …”***

There will come a point when He will stop dealing with someone (That is a scary place to be)

If God has been speaking to someone about being saved, they need to heed His voice!

There will come a day when He will stop speaking to someone’s heart

When will that day be?

It could be today; it could be tomorrow; the fact is, that day will come

We can’t always bet on tomorrow

**Proverbs 27:1 – *“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth”***

**II Corinthians 6:2 - “*Today is the day of salvation, behold now is the accepted time*”**

No one goes to Hell because God sends them there

People go to Hell because they refuse to turn from their sins and believe on Jesus

People go to Hell because they **“*love darkness rather than Light*”**

People go to Hell because God is a God of love Who does not force Himself on anyone against their will

People go to Hell because God allows them to have their own way

I am not trying to scare anybody

I can't scare someone into salvation

Someone can only be saved, and will only be saved, …

… As the Spirit of God is drawing them to Jesus,

**John 6:44 *– “No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day”***

If I could scare someone to Jesus, I would not hesitate to do just that

There is coming a day when we will ***“depart to the other side”***

And it is going to be to late to tell anyone the Truth

Don’t you think it would be a good time to start today?

**CONCLUSION**

Are we still looking for a sign?

There are many more signs, if you are interested, and every single one of them is found right here in the Bible

We need to Heed the signs

Ignore the signs and someone is headed for a tragic ending