

Released

& Remembering God Is in Control

Wednesday Bible Class | Praying in the Homes

“Do you not remember, when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?” They said, ‘Twelve.’”

Mark 8:19 (AMP) • Study text: Mark 8:11–21

Key Truth: Being released is not about you, it is about God. We must remember who is in the boat with us.

Opening the Class

On Sunday we finished the Released series with a question Jesus asked His own disciples: “Do you still not understand?” He asked it of the people who had picked up the baskets with their own hands. Tonight we take that question home with us, into our houses and onto our streets, because remembering is something we practice out loud and together.

Opening question: When your household runs short, what is the first thing you reach for, and what is the last thing you reach for? Where does prayer usually fall in that order?

Read Together: Mark 8:11–21

Read the passage aloud twice. The first time, listen for what the disciples were worried about. The second time, listen for what Jesus kept asking them.

- Verses 11 and 12: the Pharisees demand a sign and Jesus sighs deeply in His spirit.
- Verse 13: He leaves them and gets back in the boat.
- Verses 14 through 16: one loaf, a warning about leaven, and an argument about lunch.
- Verses 17 through 21: hard hearts, eyes that do not see, and two sets of baskets counted out loud.

Digging Deeper

1. The two leavens. Jesus warned about the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. One is religious hypocrisy, the appearance of faith without the substance of it (Luke 12:1). The other is political power protecting itself, the kind of power that killed John the Baptist to save face at a dinner party (Mark 6:21–27). Yeast is small and quiet, and it changes the whole loaf.

- Which of these two leavens is easier for a church to catch, and why do we rarely notice either one until it has spread?
- Where do you see the appearance of faith being valued over the substance of it, in the wider church and in your own habits?

2. A metaphor became a menu. Jesus gave a spiritual warning and the disciples heard a complaint about bread. They were so consumed by what was missing that they could not hear what the Master was actually saying.

- What has your shortage been so loud about lately that it drowned out something God was trying to say?
- How do you tell the difference between a real need and a distraction dressed up as a need?

3. He produced memory, not bread. Jesus never fed them in this passage. He made them say the numbers out loud, twelve and seven, until they testified against their own worry. Their problem was never a bread problem. It was a memory problem.

- Why do you think Jesus made them answer instead of simply reminding them Himself?
- What does it say about us that we can watch God provide and still forget by the next crisis?

4. Who was in the boat. The One who fed five thousand and four thousand was sitting right there while they argued. God is all knowing, so nothing about your situation is news to Him. He is all powerful, so nothing is too hard. He is always present, so He is not on the shore giving instructions, He is in the boat (Psalm 139:1–10; Matthew 28:20).

- Which of those three is hardest for you to believe on a difficult day, and what does that reveal?
- If God is present in the boat, what changes about how we pray in our homes?

The Three Practices, Taken Home

- **Crowd control.** We are released for God's will, not for group comfort. Restraint is power under assignment. Where is your household performing for people instead of obeying God?
- **Self-control.** We are released into uncomfortable spaces, so expect discomfort. Comfort was never in the invitation. What comfort has your family chosen over the calling?
- **God is in control.** He wants your righteousness more than your rightness. Jesus never assigns blame, He assigns memory. What promises has God kept that you need to recall? How are you counting your baskets?

Praying in the Homes

A house is a boat. It is where the shortage shows up first, where the arguing starts, and where the fault-finding lives. So, it is also where the remembering has to begin. Praying in the homes is simple work. You do not need a program, a robe, or a rehearsed speech. You need to show up, open your mouth, and speak life over the place where people actually live.

A simple order for praying in a home:

1. **Ask permission and ask what is needed.** Say plainly why you came. Ask each household present "what they want God to touch," then listen without fixing.
2. **Read a short word.** Mark 8:19 works well. So do Psalm 46:10 and Matthew 28:20. Keep it brief and let the Scripture set the room.
3. **Count the baskets out loud.** Ask each person to name two times God already came through for them. Let them say it before you pray, so the prayer stands on remembered ground.
4. **Pray for each household and the people in it.** Pray for peace at the table, protection at the door, provision for the month, and healing in the relationships under that roof.
5. **Bless and commit.** Speak a blessing over each household present, tell them the church is with them, and set a time to check back. Do not leave without leaving hope behind.

A prayer to pray in a home: *Lord, thank You for this house and for every person under this roof. You already know what is short here, so we are not going to pretend. We are going to remember instead. You have fed this family before and You will do it again. Bring peace to this table, protection to this door, and healing to these relationships. Remind this household that You are not standing outside giving instructions, You are here in the middle of it. Amen.*

Questions for Deeper Discussion

- What keeps us from praying out loud in our own homes, and what would have to change for it to become normal?
- Who in your life has a house that needs somebody to come and pray in it? What is stopping you from going?
- When we pray in someone's home, we are locating ourselves with them. What does that cost, and what does it give?
- How do we pray with a household without becoming another crowd demanding a sign?
- What would it look like for this group to cover every home represented in this room within the next month?

Before We Gather Again

- Pray out loud in your own home at least three times this week, even if it is short and even if you are the only one there.
- Write down your twelve and your seven, two times God provided, and put the list where you will see it.
- Ask one household for permission to come and pray with them, then go.
- Bring back one testimony to share when we meet next.

Count your baskets. God is with us, has been with us, and will be with us. Your soul is rested, refined, rooted, and released.