

# Have ye understyood all these things

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Donald Macdonald

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Let us now for a few minutes turn to the Gospel according to Matthew and chapter 13.
- And in Matthew chapter 13 you have nothing but parables.
- You have the parable of the sword and the parable of the tail and so on. And many other parables besides. Jesus spoke to the people in parables.
- Now at verse 51, Matthew 13 verse 51, Jesus said unto his disciples and to them, Had ye understood all these things?
- They said unto him, Yea, Lord. That's a tremendously important question for us all concerning the things we hear, preached to us in the Gospel by the servants of the Lord, and the things which we read in the Word of God, say, Have ye understood all these things?
- [ 1 : 47 ]     After the communion it's a common question for people to say, Did you enjoy the communion?
- Well now it's quite possible to join. Services to enjoy the Word without understanding the Word or the services.
- It's a pleasant thing to enjoy. It may be profitable and it may not be. But it's always a profitable thing to understand.
- And the question for us all today is, Did we understand? Do we understand?
- Not do we enjoy, but do we understand these things? And our fear should be that we enjoy without understanding.
- [ 3 : 07 ]     There's a terrible danger of plight in that. But how much then have we understood? When our Lord asked this question, He did not mean, Do you understand these things intellectually?
- His meaning was far deeper than that. It's possible to understand the Bible and the doctrines of the Bible intellectually.
- They don't be touched at all in our hearts. The intelligence or the understanding is not the most important thing at all in religion.
- The heart is. When the two disciples were going to Emmaus, And the Lord came in with them.
- He opened up to them the scriptures, beginning with Moses, And going over the prophets and the Psalms. And he expel'd to them the things concerning himself.
- [ 4 : 30 ]     And they definitely understood, Tremendously more, That before he came into their company. But when they spoke to one another after he left them, They didn't say, Don't we know a lot?
- More than we did when we set out from Jerusalem. We never saw these things in the Bible. We never knew that these things meant what they do mean.
- What he told us to do. But what they said was, Did not our heart burn within us?

You see, their understanding was open. But they laid emphasis on their heart. So then, what our Lord means here is not, Do you intelligently grasp these things?

But what he meant was, Do these things go with power to your heart? Now friends, that is the main question, With regard to the Gospel.

[ 5 : 54 ] And its truths. Do they go with power to your hearts? There are people, I knew people in the island of Lewis, In my young days.

And their lives evidenced, That they hadn't a spark of grace. Meaning that by the fruits he shall know them, They did not pretend to have grace.

And they lived gracelessly. But for an intellectual grasp of the doctrines of the Bible, I dare say that not one of us would hold a candle to them.

They knew it all. They were able to grasp intelligently, Everything the Minnesota said.

But they never said the power of them. No noise. Now what our Lord here means is, Did you feel or do you feel the power of these things?

[ 7 : 04 ] In your hearts? And they said, Yes, Lord. The power of the truth. Now, When we understand in that sense, When we have an inward experience of the power of the truth, That is something we will never forget.

Whenever we get it, Or however we get it, However we get it, We will never forget it. As long as we live. You have heard, Probably like myself, You have heard many sermons, That were most illuminating, They opened up avenues for you, Of understandings.

You saw things that you never saw before. And you could have listened all day. That was my experience, And I am sure it was you too.

I have listened to every man. And they just left that flood of light, Into my understanding.

They revealed things, Showed me things, Discovered things to me, That I never knew before. But I never thought of. And there were marvellous things, From the time.

[ 8 : 44 ] But these are not the sermons, That I remember most at all. I know of the rest of the way. But the sermons that touched my heart, Deepest.

The sermons that set me at fast, Consciously, With love to Christ. See, on a mount of transfiguration, Peter didn't understand, Very much, He didn't understand anything at all, Really, Of what he saw.

He saw Christ, Transfigured, Moses and Elijah speaking to him. But he didn't know what it was all about.

But his heart, Was affected and he said, Let us stay here all the time. Now, These, Are the experiences, That affect this most, And stay most with us, When you feel the inward power of the truth, In your own heart.

You can apply this also to your private experience. I suppose every one of the Lord's people here today, Would remember some time, Or times, In their experience.

[ 10 : 22 ] And, For some reason or another, Maybe because of joy, Or because of sorrow, They got up early in the morning.

Or they didn't go to bed, Or the rest of the family did at night. Or it might have been during the day. They got the Bible.

They began reading it. And then something caught them. Something caught them with supernatural power.

And their eyes were related, To a certain text or phrase. They have never forgotten that. You never do forget these things.

Now that's what the Lord means. Have ye understood these things? Did blinding shame, he says, Did it come with power to your hearts?

[ 11 : 30 ] Have ye been affected by it? And I said, yes, Lord. Now then, how do we know, Or certain?

That the world comes to us like that. How do we know what certain? And then, if we do understand. In that sense. On a plain and simple answer to that, He may get practical application of it.

In our lives. There's no other answer but that. The doctor comes in to see you. And he tells you what the nature of your illness is.

And then he tells you what to do. Now, in his talk in plain English. And we're able to understand plain English.

The only way in which anybody can tell that we have understood what the doctor said was.

[ 12 : 46 ] If we do what he told us to do. A blind of course that was all for our good. And the advice was good.

But if we don't. Then, we didn't understand. We understood the language, the words. But they didn't come with power to our minds.

To make us do them. And that's no use. So, it's really by a practical application of the truth. To our lives.

That we give evidence. That we understand the truth. The truth. In fact, we understand it in the sense of which we all meant here. Now, we understand it.

Must be out. Never. Never by your own brain. However sharp and keen it may be.

[ 13 : 48 ] This kind of understanding is given only by the Spirit of God. And if you have had experiences of the kind that I mentioned.

Healing the power of the word. Then the Holy Spirit is within you. It's God in the presence of the Holy Spirit who gave you to understand.

You couldn't of your own have done it. And if all the world were sitting beside you. You couldn't of me to understand as much. In your lifetime. As you understood.

There. In the twinkling of an eye. It's his word. And of course. He puts his imprimatur on it. His own stamp.

He reveals. Shows. It's his own word. By the way which he grasps it. And by the power with which it comes.

[ 14 : 52 ] I don't think this should be a rare experience in the history of the believer. It's all too rare in the history of any one of us.

But it should not be our real experience. But I have referred to that just in a minute ago. Now regarding this kind of understanding.

It does have beginning like every other understanding. We have to begin with the alphabet. Of the Christian faith.

Can't begin anyone else. No doubt there are people and Paul. And Augustine and Calvin.

Who God used. Who got a marvelous understanding. As it were all of a sudden. But that's not the usual way. We have to begin.

[ 15 : 56 ] At the very beginning. So then friends. I think. I am sure. But it is not a question. It is not a question.

It is not a question. First it is not a question. For us. And that's about all we understand. And our understanding of that.

Is even. Mere question. But we understand enough of that. To trust our souls to this saviour. Forever and ever.

But to talk about it. We couldn't do that. Perhaps you remember. You felt that when you began. When you understood these things.

You were terrified. Lest anybody should speak to you. Not that you didn't want them to speak. But you didn't want to speak to them. For here you would say something wrong. You understood so little.

[ 16 : 56 ] And you felt it. Well. That's the way with everyone. That understanding of these things. Has a beginning.

And so. Don't be worried if. You are only beginning. To understand. Because understanding is progressive. Like that of a pupil in school.

To go on and on. Now. I know the way we talk about ourselves. Any often. Perhaps with a sort of a false modest deed. That we are not this and that.

But if you put it to yourself. Fairly and squarely. You will have to admit. That you understand far more today. Than you did. Say five years ago.

Far more probably. Than you did. Than you did. Five years ago. Far more probably. Than you did even.

[ 17 : 54 ] Even I hear. I am going. Now. That you know. That you would understand far more today. probably that you didn't even a year ago. You understand far more than you did then.

His mind has been enlightened on a lot of things since then. He is going to go on like this and if you leave for another 5, 10 or 20, you will understand far more than you do.

Of course, I suppose you are just the same as myself. When I first discovered that the Lord Jesus Christ was my Savior, I didn't think I had any more to understand. I didn't want to understand more. I was quite happy with what I had.

And I thought I had everything. But of course, you realize that this is not so. That's not God's way or plan.

And then you know that you are only a child in the school of Christ. But you go on progressing in knowledge. And I know very well like today. I understand and speakably more than I did then. I am not saying I am happier.

[ 19 : 28 ] But I am saying that I understand more. And then understanding is to be communicated. Remember now. It is your duty.

What you understand. What you understand. What you understand. You ought to communicate to a little bit. Just you listen to this.

If Paul had never written down the things that he understood. Where would we be today? That Paul understood more than anybody did in his own generation.

And he wrote it down. And he wrote it down. And the world has been briefing. The church has been briefing the benefit of it ever since. For two thousand years or so.

Well then. If we understand these things. Let us communicate them. And make other friends understand them.

[ 20 : 32 ] After all if we understand them. After all if we understand them. We get this by the Holy Spirit may be through human means. So therefore it is of duty to do it.

Christ did it with his disciples. He spoke to them in parables simply. And he said, did you understand these things?

Christ did it with his disciples. And he said, did you understand these things? You read the Acts of the Apostles. And you see that this distress is laid on the Apostles. Teaching. Those people who were converted to the faith.

Stress is laid in the address of that. Teaching. The winter brought everyone. Preaching and teaching. The things concerned. The kingdom of God. Well. There are some people who don't understand. Anything at all.

Of the unconverted. They don't understand anything. Only they themselves think. They do. But they don't.

[ 21 : 54 ] They don't understand anything. Or they enjoy. They enjoy new ministers for the communion. They enjoy to listen to them. But they don't understand. But they are quite happy without understanding.

But the Lord's people are not. They like to enjoy. But they are not happy. If they don't understand. And they enjoy new ministers for the disciples. And they are not happy. They don't understand. They do. And they say they don't understand. And they don't understand. And there may be various reasons for that. Of course they try to try to try. And the same as the same. And this year there are some of brighter intelligence than others. Just the same as you have in a class of school. There are pupils much greater than the other.

of brighter intelligence than others. Just the same as you have in a classic school, there are pupils much brighter than others. They grasp a thing far quicker than others.

Well, in the school of Christ, there are people who understand far more than others. They are more intelligent naturally, and so they grasp these truths easier. That is one reason why some people understand more, and a reason why some people understand less. The church just haven't got the natural grasp of these, to understand spiritual things. And sometimes lack of understanding comes through slurring, spiritual slurring. How much do we do to understand the truth? You know what you say to your own children? Did you do their lessons? And if you didn't hear me, it will do them. And doing the lessons involves time. They can't play and do their lessons at the same time. So, they have to set aside time to do them. And when they do them, they're understanding the lessons. They're arithmetic, they're English. They're understanding the things. Well, now, that's the way in the school of Christ. If we want to understand, then we shall have to be diligent. And if we haven't time, we just must make it. Don't say, I can't find time. You'll have to find time. And if we neglect the Bible and the helps

You'll have to find time. And if we neglect the Bible and the helps that are given on the Bible, if we neglect, no wonder we don't understand.

[ 25 : 10 ] If we leave a door to the minister to teach us without any effort at all, it'll be like a child in school leaving a door to the teacher without doing any home worship. Well, he won't get very far.

So friends, did you understand? I hope it's not sloth that keeps you from doing it. Some don't understand because of lack of interest. They're really not interested in things. Oh, a lot of people are not interested.

I suppose, and I'm not saying this post-debly, visiting ministers have said it today, but there's certainly merit to a congregation that show more attention than you do.

I can say the same. But if you are standing in this pulpit sometimes, or sitting in it during the same, and you looked at the wandering eyes, you're wondering, but don't understand.

If you looked at the eyes of people, and you know perfectly well they are not that particular of interest in what you see. Well, how can we understand if there's not interest in it?

[ 26 : 42 ] So we have to have an interest in these things, if we want to understand them. But now, just as I close, I suppose you all say, just what I say myself, well, I know so little.

Yes, of course, of course, of course, of course. Yes, of course, that's a sign that we get to know something. Professor Ross, who is now dead, he was Professor of Greek in the college in my day.

And I got to know him very well. And I got to know him very well. As a student. I was with him in Burkhead at his last communion. And we were sitting together at the Fiesi talking, uh, happily nearly.

And I said to him. And I said to him, and I said to him, no, I said, Professor Ross, you're going away. And I, a young minister in the church, I would like very much if you would give me some advice on preaching.

He had been in the ministry. He had been in the ministry. I think since I think 15 or something like that. Where he said, I feel now that I'm only beginning to know how to preach.

[ 28 : 22 ] That was his last communion. After probably 50 years or more of preaching.

I love preaching. So friends, we can say the same with other things. You can say, I feel that I'm only beginning to grasp, beginning to understand.

But that's no wonder. Through the city of it. What is the length and the breadth and the depth and the heart? Nobody can know.

And at our best, we see through a glass darkly. But with this word, I will let you go. One day you, a child of God, one day very soon, is going to understand and speak every more than ever he did.

It has been the opinion of men in the past. There is no reason why we shouldn't agree. That the moment that saw this glory right, the moment that the believing soul leaves the body, it immediately goes into glory.

[ 29 : 54 ] But it was the opinion of great people in the past, that in the twinkling of an eye, a glorified soul knows and speakably more than even Paul knew in all his lifetime of the mystery of the extreme.

And you think of what is waiting for you. You are only sipping the truth when you understand it most. There you will be drinking out of an ocean of fullness.

So, friend, upon you moan that you don't understand much. Encourage yourself when the day is coming when you are going to understand much.

Drinking out of the fullness of God without interruption. Now let us unite in prayer. Oh Lord God, we have to blame ourselves for our lack of understanding of thy truth.

We have been slothful. We have been careless. We have ensured the emptiness that we should have. Do thou forgive us these things. Help us to know Christ more and more.

[ 31 : 25 ] And have thou faith and hope. Provide thou hope, thou faith, in a knowledge that one day there would be nothing in those lives at all, but an understanding of Christ Jesus.

In this world there is much more. There are distractions in family life and in employment. In various other ways. But there there would be nothing to distract or to interrupt.

And so we shall go on. Grasping as we never did. And as we could not do. In this world. The glory of Christ Jesus. May our hopes be revived for this. Amen.

Amen.