Session 7: Mark 6:30-8:30	
SESSION GOALS	
Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the	
discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.	
Main Idea: Because of his unique power as creator, Jesus renews and restores what sin and darkness broke.	
Head Change: To understand Jesus's character and mission.	
Heart Change: To feel excited at Jesus's ability to equip us to follow him.	
Life Change: To live in light of our knowledge of who Jesus is and what he's about.	
<u>OPEN</u>	
There's something attractive about power. We like the freedom it gives us, the ability to do whatever we wish. Or so	
we think. What sort of position do you hold that gives you power over	
someone else? And where is the limit	
to that power?	
Jesus, in this passage, is going to demonstrate real power, the kind that defies natural law and remakes religious law. Pay attention to those who benefit from his power.	

READ	
Read Mark 6:30–8:30.	
<u>WATCH</u>	
Before viewing the session, here are a	
few important things to look for in	
Francis's teaching. As you watch, pay	
attention to how he answers the following questions:	
What sort of power does Jesus have	
over the brokenness in our world?	
Who or what is responsible for our sin?	
How do believers come to understand	
the truth of the gospel? Through	
whose power does Jesus become clear in our minds?	
Show Session 7: Mark 6:30-8:30 (15	
minutes)	
DISCUSS	
DISCUSS	
Francis visited the site where scholars believe Jesus multiplied the fish and	
loaves to feed over 5,000 people. Jesus	
was in high demand during those days.	
After his apostles had returned from their	
missionary outing, they tried to get away	
for a break. But the crowds followed, and	
Jesus showed compassion for them.	
Look at Mark 6:34–37. How would you	
characterize Jesus's response to	

having his recharge time interrupted?	
He spends a full day teaching, then directs his followers to feed the crowd who had not eaten all day. Read 6:38–44. How did the apostles' attitude differ from their master's?	
Francis notes the significance of the miracle of the bread and fish. What difference does it make that Jesus can create something out of nothing?	
[Note: For further study on the significance of bread being made from nothing, see Go Deeper section 1 at the end of this session.]	
Now read Mark 6:45–56. What parts of the created world does Jesus display mastery over?	
Read Mark 7:1–23.	
The Pharisees prove yet again that Jesus's miracles and teaching have not made an impact on their own thinking. Note the timing of their complaint about the disciples' unwashed hands.	
Why does Jesus rebuke the Pharisees in 7:6–13? In what ways are they hypocrites?	
[Note: For further study on the significance of a person's ceremonial cleanness, see Go Deeper section 2 at	

the end of this session.]	
Consider your own righteousness. Have you added self-made "rules" that reveal someone's deeper holiness, in your sight? In what ways have you added to the gospel, like the Pharisees did?	
Jesus clarifies what defiles a person in Mark 7:14–23. Francis noted that we often make the same mistake, blaming all sorts of external issues for our sin, as opposed to realizing the real issue is within our hearts. We have to change from the inside out. What "external" things are you blaming your sin on? What has to happen for you to allow Jesus to change your heart?	
As we dive into chapter 8, note that Mark purposely organized his gospel to emphasize Jesus's power. This week's section shows repetition of key events: 6:30–7:37 mirrors nearly identically 8:1–30. We see two miraculous feedings, two sea trips, two confrontations with the Pharisees, two object lessons with food, two sets of healings, and two declarations of faith in Jesus.	
Read Mark 8:1-10.	
In what ways is this miracle of feeding the four thousand similar to feeding the five thousand in Mark 6:30–44? How are these two miracles different?	

Read Mark 8:11–21.	
After reiterating the results of both of his multiplication miracles in Mark 8:20–21, Jesus asks, "Do you not yet understand?" You can almost feel the sadness and confusion coming off the page. After all he's done, how can the disciples still not understand who Jesus is? But before we jump to condemn the disciples, how do we, too, respond to Jesus in a similar way? Do you live in a way that exhibits a clear understanding of who Jesus is and what he's done for you?	
Read Mark 8:22-30.	
In Mark 8:22–26, a man comes to Jesus to have his blindness healed—fairly routine, right? But it takes Jesus two tries to get him seeing again.	
Before we start to wonder if Jesus somehow flubbed the miracle, notice that we've seen throughout the whole passage: two of everything. Mark's doubling-down effect comes to a point here. It takes two intentional actions on Jesus's part for the man to see clearly.	
After restoring sight to the blind man at Bethsaida, and the "double effort" we've seen in this week's passage, Jesus asks his disciples an important question in Mark 8:27–30. What does he hope his	

disciples see clearly?	
Do they?	
In what ways do you feel you see	
Jesus more clearly now? How does this passage increase your	
understanding of him and his mission?	

LAST WORD	
Next week's study is going to put Peter's confession to the test. In fact, Mark 8:22–30 forms the first of two bookends making the point that Jesus wants his followers to see clearly—not just who he is, but what his mission ultimately is.	
Throughout our passage this week, Jesus has been teaching the disciples important lessons about not only what he's doing in the world, but also how he wants them to live. Mark gives us a repeated set of stories to double-down on the point—discipleship is all about living the way Jesus lived.	
But living in faithful obedience to Jesus starts with surrendering our hearts to him. Francis reminded us that it's not so much about what we do, but more about the condition of our hearts.	
As we conclude today's lesson, take a moment as a group to be silent before God. Have you allowed Jesus to change your heart? What areas of your life are you still holding on to? If you feel comfortable doing so, have a few people share with the group.	
GO DEEPER	
The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We've highlighted a	

place where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.	
But you can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting.	
1. Background: Bread Made from Nothing	
By including both scenes of Jesus feeding the multitudes, Mark assumes that his readers are familiar with their Old Testament. Let's look back at an important Old Testament passage that should help understand the nuances of Mark 7–8.	
Turn to Exodus 16:9–21. This section picks up after God rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt. The people started complaining pretty quickly, though, because they were out in the middle of the wilderness.	
As you read the passage in Exodus, what sounds familiar to what you've read in Mark? (Think specifically about the location where Jesus takes the disciples prior to feeding the five thousand.)	
What do you think the people eating the bread Jesus had just multiplied would have thought?	

If Jesus is re-creating the something-	
out-of-nothing provision that Israel saw in the wilderness, what does that	
say about Jesus?	
leave's provision through mirror days	
Jesus's provision through miraculous bread should immediately clue us in to	
two things: First, Jesus is God-in-the- flesh and he will provide for his followers.	
But second, he's not about simply	
satisfying our cravings. As the passage in	
Exodus goes on, God's frustration with Israel grows because, rather than trust	
him to provide, they ignore his	
instructions and try to take advantage of his provisions.	
In the same way, Mark presents the	
Pharisees in chapter 7 as also taking	
advantage of God's generosity, using their own legal traditions to ignore caring	
for elderly parents.	
So, as you sit down to eat your next	
meal, stop and pray for a moment. In	
your prayer celebrate the provision that Jesus offers you—not just in the food	
you're about to eat, but also in the	
resources you need to be about his mission.	
1111331011.	
In what ways have you been tempted	
to take God's generosity for granted? Discuss or write down actionable ideas	
about how to practice gratitude.	

2. Background: Ceremonial Cleanness	
The Pharisees attacked Jesus and his	
followers for eating without first washing	
their hands. Mothers everywhere may	
applaud them, but Jesus rebuked them.	
Why? The Pharisees were focused on the	
wrong thing. They were not so much	
concerned about cleanliness—as in, not	
carrying dirt or germs—but rather	
cleanness, a term describing ritual	
suitability.	
The concept of cleanness goes back to	
the Law of Moses, in which God	
instituted conditions on how he could be	
approached. To be in God's presence, a	
person needs to be in a state of holiness.	
A person who is clean is in a state of	
holiness; therefore, becoming clean is	
essential for entering into the presence of	
God. Likewise, anything that makes a	
person unclean separates that person	
from God.	
Generally, anything associated with	
health or life would be designated as	
clean. For example, a perfect one-year-	
old lamb was an acceptable sacrifice, but	
a lamb that was lame—or nearer to	
death, less than perfect—was	
unacceptable. If something or someone	
was unhealthy or associated with death,	
they were unclean. Skin diseases,	

illnesses, touching a corpse, or

participating in sinful activities all could

make a person temporarily unclean.	
An unclean person could go through a process to become clean—make a suitable sacrifice (Leviticus 1:3–17), allow the right amount of time to pass (Lev. 15:19), participate in a symbolic ceremony, such as a ritual washing (Exodus 30:17–21). This was likely what the apostles did not do before eating, prompting the Pharisees' complaint.	
In the Gospels, we see Jesus change the rules: he touched the unclean personally to cleanse and purify them, illustrating that he holds the power to transform the lives of individuals. Jesus's touch healed or restored dead people (Mark 5:21–24, 35–43), those with skin diseases (Mark 1:40–45), even those suffering an unnatural blood flow (Mark 5:25–34) to a state of cleanness.	
In Mark 7:15, Jesus proclaimed that nothing going into a person can make that individual unclean—only things coming out of a person. In this passage Jesus abolished the defiling physical and animal aspects that made a person unclean.	
He confronted the religious leaders by exposing their hypocrisy: they were very concerned about how the people followed every tiny regulation, which could be trumpeted about to show their "righteousness." They were too busy	

looking good to prioritize actually doing	
good: they were neglecting the	
commandments of God to love their	
neighbors, honor their parents, uphold	
justice, protect the vulnerable.	
Canaidan yayın anirityal life. Hayy are	
Consider your spiritual life. How are	
you busy following the rules, spoken or	
unspoken, in your faith tradition?	
How have you unwittingly added	
conditions to your righteousness,	
behaving as if adherence to traditions	
or rules will determine how pleased	
God is with you?	
It's easy to mask our inner motivations	
with outward activities. Think of your	
church or family life. What sort of	
actions look righteous? Now, how can	
a person engage in those while	
inwardly being unrighteous? When	
have you done this? How can you	
avoid such double-mindedness in the	
future?	