

## **FG Midweek**

### **The Gospel of Mark**

#### **Class 9: Mark 7:31-8:26**

Good evening! Welcome back to our Midweek gathering. This time on Wednesday nights focuses on equipping you to do the work of ministry. God calls you to do more than just sit on the sideline—He has a plan and He has a purpose for you in His mission. Wednesday nights serve as an opportunity for you to learn, be built up, and to be equipped to the ministry that God has called you to.

**Reminder: study in spring, share in fall**

#### **REVIEW**

In the first three chapters of Mark, Jesus is introduced as the long-awaited Messiah and divine Lord. Following Jesus requires repentance and faith, but also requires counting the cost. We will face opposition because Jesus faced opposition. And still, we are called to live with faithfulness, boldness, and perseverance in the face of opposition. Amidst examples of false disciples, we see that the mark of a true disciple is one who is both with Jesus and sent out by Jesus. Parables are introduced by Jesus as a means to distinguish between those who rightly respond to the kingdom of God and those who don't. After the introduction of the parables, we have another showing of the power of Jesus, over the natural, supernatural, physical, and even over death. But He is nonetheless rejected in His own hometown. After the parables, Jesus sends His disciples out to share the gospel. They will experience opposition, as is highlighted by John the Baptist's murder at the hands of King Herod. Compared to Herod, Jesus is a better king—one who has power over nature and sickness, and one who rules with kindness and love. Mark emphasizes the nature of a true disciple in an altercation with the Pharisees and with the healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter. A true disciple will have an unshakable faith in Jesus.

The ninth section in Mark highlights Jesus' divinity and provision.

## The Gospel of Mark

- Mark 7:1-30
  - The section contrasts
  - 7:1-23: The Pharisees challenge Jesus concerning ritual purity traditions. Jesus tells them that what defiles a person is not whether they hold to extrabiblical tradition, but the sin that is in their heart.
  - 7:24-30: If one's heart is defiled through sin, then how is one made clean? What does a true disciple look like? True discipleship is rooted in faith in Jesus, not ritual purity tradition.
  - Application & Takeaways
    - We want to be careful to ensure that we are people of faith. It is easy for tradition to creep in and seek to overtake the truth of the Scriptures.

## The Gospel of Mark

### Mark 7:31-8:26

This section has three sections, but the outer two sections are parallel to one another, and the middle section stands on its own.

A. Jesus heals the deaf person with saliva (7:31-37)

B. Jesus feeds thousands for a second time and explains miracle (8:1-21)

A. Jesus heals the blind person with saliva (8:22-26)

This section is the end of Act 1 of 3 in Mark. This first act has centered on the failure of the disciples to understand and perceive the messianic identity of Jesus.

Act 1: Jesus in Galilee: Discerning Jesus' Identity, Person, and Divinity

Act 2: Jesus Going to Jerusalem: Accepting the Mission of Jesus

Act 3: Arrival in Jerusalem: Faithfulness to Jesus and the Passion of Christ

Text	Description	Summary
7:31-37	Jesus Heals a Deaf Man with Salvia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The deaf man in this passage is representative of the disciples and their lack of hearing.</li><li>• Ironically, Jesus spoke to the deaf man telling his ears to open. Mark includes this detail to emphasize the directive for all of his readers to open their ears to hear the message of the gospel.</li><li>• Jesus sighs here and again in the next section, showing His deep emotions and disappointment in the failure of people to hear and see Him.</li><li>• Once again Jesus tells the crowds not to speak of this miracle, but they couldn't help but proclaim it all the more</li></ul>

		<p>loudly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This healing implies and alludes to the disciples being deaf concerning the reality of Jesus. They are not hearing and understanding the person of Christ.</li> </ul>
8:1-21	Jesus Feeds Four Thousand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This feeding miracle differs from the feeding of the five thousand in a couple ways. First, Jesus is feeding a mostly Gentile crowd here as opposed to a Jewish one. Second, the crowd is in a more remote location, being a three day journey into the wilderness. Third, the disciples seem to play a more passive role in this episode. Fourth and finally, in this feeding, Jesus is more concerned with their hunger rather than being concerned that they are sheep without a shepherd.</li> <li>● Notice that Jesus has compassion once again on the crowd.</li> <li>● The disciples question whether or not anyone could feed these people in a desolate place. Surely they would have known the answer to this question by now! But they still don't understand.</li> <li>● Mark seems to emphasize Jesus' ability to provide for one's daily bread in these sections. We see this both in the feeding episode as well as the scene with the disciples.</li> <li>● It seems that the disciples implicitly want some sort of sign—they require something more to finally understand.</li> <li>● The Pharisees come right out and ask for a sign. Their intent was to argue with Jesus and to test him.</li> <li>● "He deeply sighed..." - we can sense the frustration and sadness in the heart of Jesus as His own people continue to reject Him and miss his messianic nature.</li> <li>● Jesus does not provide any of them a sign because He</li> </ul>

		<p>knows that a sign will not convince them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the boat, Jesus now addresses His disciples. This isn't the first time the disciples fail to understand things in a boat (4:35-41- lack of faith in Jesus' power over nature, 6:45-52- Jesus walks on water and they don't recognize Him). In this third scene, the disciples fret over only having one loaf of bread to eat after Jesus just fed 4000 people with seven loaves.</li> <li>● Yeast is often seen as a negative thing in the Bible—here the disciples are warned to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees—their unbelief and distrust in Jesus.</li> <li>● The disciples remember the details exactly but miss the significance entirely.</li> <li>● 8:17: "Do you not see/perceive or understand? The lack of discernment of the disciples is exemplified in the two surrounding healing miracles.</li> </ul>
8:22-26	Jesus Heals a Blind Man with Saliva	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TheT blind man in this passage is representative of the disciples and their lack of sight.</li> <li>● Mark uses several verbs and nouns here for seeing. He also mentions the man's blindness twice.</li> <li>● Jesus tells him not to even enter the village, meaning that the healed man was not to tell anyone about this miracle.</li> <li>● This healing implies and alludes to the disciples being blind concerning the reality of Jesus. They are not seeing and understanding the person of Christ.</li> <li>● This healing of the blind man serves as an end to Act 1 and also a beginning to Act 2. The end of Act 2 comes with a healing of a blind person again. One of the main differences in the two healings is that this one here is gradual and the one at the end of Act 2 is instantaneous.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ I believe this alludes to the disciples' gradual understanding of Christ and his divinity. It is plausible that Jesus heals the man gradually intentionally to show this gradual belief of the disciples.</li></ul>
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**Sharing This Passage With an Unbeliever**

This section ends Act 1, which centers on the recurring question: who do you say that Jesus is? Once again, this is a great opportunity to pose this question with the one with whom you are reading. What one believes about the identity of Jesus is all that matters in this life. True belief results in faith and repentance in the one true God.

Perhaps this is a good time to use the context and structure of this passage to have a direct conversation with a lost person. Who do you say that Jesus is?

**Conclusion**

Here at the end of Act 1 in Mark, we see the divinity of Christ clearly emphasized, and we are reminded ourselves that what we believe about Jesus is the most important thing about us. Jesus cares for His people, and is even concerned about the small matters of life such as our daily bread. He is a good and kind God. Seeing Jesus as the one who is able to take care of our biggest problems (death, disease, storms) to even our smallest problems (what we are eating for dinner) is central to having faith and being a true disciple of Jesus.