



WEEK FIVE: Mark 8: 11-21

WARM-UP

- What is your favorite doughnut and why?
- Do you tend to be someone who overthinks or someone who moves too rashly?
- Share a highlight and/or a lowlight from the past week.

WORD

¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. ¹² He sighed deeply and said, "Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to it." ¹³ Then he left them, got back into the boat and crossed to the other side. ¹⁴ The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. ¹⁵ "Be careful," Jesus warned them. "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod." ¹⁶ They discussed this with one another and said, "It is because we have no bread." ¹⁷ Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? ¹⁸ Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don't you remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" "Twelve," they replied. ²⁰ "And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" They answered, "Seven." ²¹ He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

Mark 8: 11-21 (NIV)

WE EXIST TO HELP PEOPLE KNOW GOD, GROW TOGETHER,
DISCOVER PURPOSE, AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



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INTRODUCTION

Jesus displays His deity yet again to His disciples by feeding the four thousand. It wasn't so long ago that he fed the five thousand, but it wasn't enough to convince His disciples of his identity. It's not too far-fetched to see why the Pharisees also could not believe Jesus' claims. The difference between the disciples and Pharisees is in the description of how they approached Jesus. While the disciples may have questioned, the Pharisees came with the intent to argue, or dispute Jesus' claims. This is why the Pharisees come asking for a sign, but not just any sign, like feeding the four or five thousand; it has to be a sign directly from heaven (verse 11). In other words, the Pharisees want Jesus to command God to give an irrefutable sign, not realizing that their request is a reflection of how distant they've removed themselves from God. To them, God is no longer personal, God only cares about rules and laws, and those who follow them mindlessly are considered closest to God, just as a dictator would demand.

Jesus grieves their stubbornness and lack of faith, and returns to the boat with His disciples where he warns them of the "yeast" of the Pharisees. Completely ignoring Jesus' statement, the disciples begin to discuss their own current lack of food, which in turn grieves Jesus just as the Pharisees did. It seems the disciples do not truly catch Jesus's warning about the yeast of the Pharisees; both the Pharisees and the disciples were still too influenced by the thinking of the world. Just as a little yeast can affect an entire loaf of bread, growing quickly and easily, hidden away from plain sight, so will the influences of our modern world overpower our understanding and relationship with Jesus. disciples still do not understand, and perhaps do not truly believe everything they are hearing or seeing from Jesus, just as they had not understood before.

Mark

THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS



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DISCUSSION

1. Why would the Pharisees still demand a 'sign from heaven' from Jesus after the miracles he had just done? How might they have responded if Jesus did what they asked? (v.11)
2. Why do you think Jesus refused to give a "sign from heaven" to the Pharisees, especially after he had just performed several miracles? (v.12)
3. Jesus is grieved by the responses of both the Pharisees and His disciples. Which do you think grieved Him more? Why?
4. What is the "yeast of the pharisees" that Jesus was warning His disciples about? (v.15)
5. What is it that the disciples still don't understand? (v.21)

APPLICATION

1. When Jesus warned against the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod, He was warning against their hard hearts and the influence they had on others. What influences in your life tend to harden your heart and lead you to doubt God?

Mark

THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS



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APPLICATION CONTINUED

2. Like the disciples, we too, often forget or discount the significance of the presence of Jesus which has brought provision and healing in the past. Instead, we worry as if the past hadn't happened. How can we learn from the past and trust Him for the present and future?
3. What areas or issues in your life need faith in Jesus right now? What steps can you take this week to strengthen your faith?

PRAYER

- Think of a time where you were provided for, cared for, or healed, and take a moment to thank God for it, again.
- Pray for those you know who are seeking provision, care, or healing, praying for them by name.
- Pray for the areas of your life where you need more faith. Ask God to help you strengthen and grow your faith.

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TRANSFORMING THE CITY, ONE LIFE AT A TIME