

Bread in the Desert
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Mark 8:1-21
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Synopsis:

God is at work providing for us in Jesus. The question is whether we *see* God at work. Some of us are clueless, some picky, and some just dense. Regardless of our condition, God wants to open our eyes so that we may see the wonder of his presence.

I.

Seeing Jesus

Mark 8:21 Do you not yet understand?

Jesus asks his disciples at the end of today's story

"Do you not yet understand?" Mark 8:21

What are we supposed to understand?

Jesus' Miracles: Walking on Water, Feeding 5,000/4,000

-Mark 6 Feeds 5,000 and walks on water

*What are we to make of these seeming miracles?

Options:

David Copperfield = Is this magic? Where's the trick?

Science and Reason = This conflicts with both

Gullible people = Jesus a trickster?

*Jesus asks: "Do we not yet understand?"

*Huh?

Clear about Miracles

OT

Signs and wonders, associated with exodus experience = God's deliverance of his people (Exodus 1-15) leads to trust in a delivering God (Exodus 19-Num 10)

E.g. Exod 16:8 "You will know that it was the LORD"

NT

Signs and wonders, John calls them all *signs* (John 2-12)

Sum: Bible uses the words *signs and wonders*, not *miracle*

Miracle makes you say Wow! How did he do that?

- Signs *point* to a delivering God and ask for *trust*
-POINT and TRUST
*Three responses to God's signs today
*Find yourself in all three

II.

Clueless Crowds

Mark 8:8 They ate and were filled

What do the crowds see and understand? READ Mark 8:1-8

- *Use your imagination: What are they thinking?
-Hungry, been in desert three days
-Sat down on the ground
-Ate and went their way

- *Crowds are clueless: Hungry, Rest, Filled, Go
*Miss seeing because they are preoccupied with needs

How many of us are clueless to the presence of God in the world?

- Hungry, Rest, Filled, Go
-Consumer attitude: Fill us and we'll stop asking questions
-Life reduced to animal instincts: Skyler
ACTION: Pay attention to the world! Ask, Seek, Knock!

III.

Picky Pharisees

Mark 8:11 The Pharisees came . . . asking him for a sign

What do the Pharisees see and understand? READ Mark 8:11-12

- *Use your imagination: What are they thinking?
-Heard the stories about Jesus
-Came to test him
-Ask for a sign of their design

- *Pharisees are picky: Hear, Come, Test
*Can't see because they won't see

How many of us hear about Jesus, come to him, and test him?

- “I'll believe if you do this.”
-“If you satisfy my demands, then I will believe.”
-Life reduced to skepticism: Picky
-Question your skepticism!
ACTION: Stop demanding God to meet your needs

IV.

Dense Disciples

Mark 8:18 Do you have eyes and fail to see?

What do the disciples see and understand?

REFER to Mark 8:1-8

READ Mark 8:13-21

- already experienced feeding 5,000 (Mark 6)
- Short-term memory loss
- Get into boat: Again, short term memory loss
- Dull hearts, blind eyes, stopped ears
- *Jesus and the Seven dwarfs!

These are the best of the three groups = Dense Disciples

- Only one woman yet to get Jesus in Mark (last week)
- Who sees and understands Jesus?

*Disciples are slow learners

*Encourage us who are slow learners

- Remember the point of signs

POINT

TRUST

- This side of seeing God face to face we live in faith/trust
- Hebrews 11 "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the substance of things not seen."

E.g. Story from Screwtape letters: Enemy overrides at first

Story of blind man:READ Mark 8:22-26

- takes two applications to see
- Jesus help our sight and faith
- discipleship is slow, full of doubts and fears

ACTION: Pray that God will soften hearts, open eyes, unstop ears