



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V22 N42 November 1, 2020

## KING JESUS

### “Questioning Faith”

Mark 8:14-21

#### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

##### Faithfulness

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

*“Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.”*

Proverbs 3:3-4



How does remembering enhance faith?

Who doesn't love a good piece of bread? A French baguette, a Kaiser roll, a Jewish bagel, a Mexican tortilla, a Mediterranean naan, an Indian roti, an Ethiopian injera, a Chinese steamed bun or even a thick slice of crunchy, buttery Texas Toast – the world understands the essential nature of bread. Even the most gluten intolerant or carbohydrate averse among us struggles to evade the ubiquity and allure of the loaf. In much of the world, both ancient and modern, bread is a staple for survival. When refrigeration and food preparation resources were limited, bread served as a portable and easily accessible commodity of nutrition. “Bread is life,” many say. Others claim that “bread is a life all unto itself.” We do learn from Jesus that we “cannot live by bread alone” (Mt 4:4), but a piece of bread now and then sure can help keep things going.

Bread and consumption are frequent exhibits in the Gospel of Mark. In Mark 2, Jesus' disciples ate with sinners (v. 16) and chose to eat while others practiced fasting (v. 18). No doubt Jesus' disciples ate plenty of bread and were condemned for such in both cases. At the end of Mark 2, the disciples of Jesus are condemned for plucking and eating the ingredients of bread on the Sabbath. Jesus reminded his objectors that King David was allowed to eat the holy showbread of the tabernacle (v. 26) because of his anointed status.

When Jairus' daughter was raised from the dead, Jesus ordered that she be given something to eat (5:43), a piece of bread, perhaps? Jesus' largest miracles by scale were the two feeding miracles where Jesus took a small number of loaves of bread and a few fish and fed thousands of people

with these provisions (6-8). The feeding of thousands with miracle bread is the only miracle repeated in all four Gospels.

The Syrophenician woman who begged Jesus to heal her daughter discussed with Jesus the exclusions she faced as a Gentile using the metaphor of “bread crumbs” fallen from the table of chosen (7:28). Bread in this story is a picture of the gospel and the good news of God's salvation for both Jew and Gentile.

Jesus memorializes his final hours by sharing one last meal with his disciples. In this “Last Supper,” Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, giving it to his disciples. The description of this act of communion with Jesus and his disciples (14:22) reads very much like the description of Jesus feeding the 5000 (6:41). Bread and the breaking of bread is a key component of the Gospel of Mark. Bread as a life-giving force becomes even a more powerful metaphor as it is broken and used to represent the sacrifice that Jesus makes as a ransom for many.

God is faithful to provide for his children. We can remember when God has provided for us and when he has provided for others. We can remain full of faith and faithful to him and others because we know that he can meet our every need. Remembering the “bread” God has provided for us for daily sustenance will stir us to faithfulness. Remembering the Bread who was broken for us reminds us of the sacrifice Jesus has made for our eternity. We do not need to worry or fret about what we will eat. God will supply. God will also supply for those we serve, often through us. He is our ultimate source both physical and spiritual nourishment. His sufficient supply for us can satisfy our deepest longings.

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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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?"*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle each use of the word "bread," "loaf" or "loaves" vv. 14-21.
- Underline each of the dangerous parties named in v. 15.
- Draw a line connecting the word "it" in v. 16 to what it is referring to in v. 15.
- Count each question Jesus asks by placing a sequential number in front of each question.
- Draw a line connecting the phrase "not understand" in v. 17 with the corresponding phrase in v. 21.
- Write the reference Mark 7:52 above the word "hardened" in v. 17.
- Write the reference Mark 8:25 above the word "see" in v. 18.
- Write the reference Mark 7:35 above the word "hear" in v. 18.
- Double underline the word "remember" in v. 18.
- Draw a line connecting the words "basketfuls" in v. 19 and v. 20.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. What happened with Jesus and the disciples immediately before this boat trip (see vv. 10-13)?
2. Mark 8:13-21 is the final boat ride mentioned in the Gospel of Mark. What do the “boat lessons” of Mark share in common (4:35-41; 6:45-52; 8:13-21)?
3. To what is Jesus referring with the metaphor of “yeast” (v. 15)?
4. The disciples were in the boat with only one loaf (v. 14), yet they concluded Jesus was lecturing them because “they had no bread” (v. 16). Why were they so flustered about the quantity of food they had?
5. Where had the disciples heard the words of Mark 8:17-18 before (consider Mk 4:9-12; Jer. 5:21; Ezek. 12:2; Isa. 6:9)?
6. What is the relationship between understanding, the heart, and remembering (vv. 17-18)?
7. What is Jesus emphasizing in his questions about the two miraculous feedings (vv. 19-20)?
8. Jesus uses two different words for baskets (“basketfuls”- NIV) in Mark 8:19-20. Why?
9. What is it about “the loaves” that the disciples did not understand (See 6:52)?
10. How do the miracles of Jesus’ feeding thousands impact your faith in him?

### Commentary On The Text

In the final boat ride of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus leaves the western region of “Dalmanutha” (8:10) and heads to the “other side” (v. 13) on the east side of the lake. Although Dalmanutha is hard to place, most suggest that this region is just north of Tiberius, near Magda. Some suggest that Dalmanutha and Magda are one and the same. This location is probably the closest Jesus ever traveled near Herod’s palace in Tiberius. The Pharisees here demanded a sign as a test for Jesus to prove his claims and confirm his miracles were from heaven. Jesus is exasperated with such a faithless demand and gets back into a boat with his disciples to head to the Gentile side of the lake.

Most likely still upset by the challenge of the Pharisees, Jesus issues a warning to the disciples about the “yeast” of the Pharisees and Herod. Matthew links this metaphor of yeast with the false teaching of the Pharisees (16:12) and Luke links this image with the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (12:1). Mark leaves the image unspecified but most likely had in mind the lack of faith expressed by the Pharisees (vv. 11-12) and the selfish wickedness of Herod (6:14-29).

The disciples struggle to understand Jesus’ metaphor. They immediately make a literal interpretation and connect Jesus’ warning to their failure to bring enough bread with them on this boat ride. Perhaps they feel guilty for once again not being prepared with provisions for yet another trip to the more desolate western side of the lake. They may have sold previous leftovers to Pharisees and Herodians in Dalmanutha and think Jesus might be against such exchanges. They begin to discuss strongly (See note on 8:16) their lack of bread and the warning that Jesus gave them, perhaps even blaming each other. Jesus moves from warning to interrogational rebuke with eight penetrating questions.

“Jesus’ rebuke is expressed in a series of sober questions which focus on the persistent blindness displayed by the Twelve (cf. 4:13, 40; 6:52; 7:18). Repeated exposure to Jesus’ teaching and mighty works had not led to reflection on their significance but to a basic insensitivity and dullness. Mark does not attribute the severity of the rebuke to the failure of the disciples to grasp the allusion to a sign-oriented disposition in verse 15, but to their failure to perceive the meaning of Jesus’ presence with them. The indignant questions concerning hardness of heart and blindness of disposition echo the description of Israel in prophetic literature (Jer. 5:21; Ezek. 12:2; Isa. 6:9 f.) and are related to the distinction between the crowd and the Twelve in 4:11f. There those who are “outside” were contrasted with the disciples who listen to Jesus’ word. Here the Twelve appear to be no better than the crowds who profit from Jesus’ miracles without reflection and who seek his teaching without applying it to themselves” (William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, NICNT, 281-282).

Jesus’ questions deal with the heart, a frequent reference in the Gospel of Mark. The heart involves thinking (2:8), worship (7:6), morality (7:21), belief (11:23) and love (12:30). The disci-

ples have experienced more of Jesus than the Pharisees had, yet they have not fully opened their hearts to all of whom Jesus has revealed himself to be. The pair of feeding miracles, distinguished by different baskets (see note on 8:19) and the amount of fragments leftover, emphasized the extreme nature of Jesus’ power to provide and sustain. Just as God on numerous occasions provided for the children of Israel in the wilderness, so Jesus miraculously provided for his followers. While in the environs of a boat, his disciples have been frightened (4:41), astonished (6:51) and now agitated (8:16), not understanding whom they were with and why he came. This lack of understanding has less to do with content and more to do with communion or the lack thereof. Signs of this “lack of faith” from the disciples are repeated throughout the Gospel of Mark (4:40; 6:52; 7:18; 8:17-21,33; 9:19, 32) culminating in the confusion and desertion of the disciples from Jesus (14:50).

“In the same way that the yeast of 8:14-15 is a symbol with an inner meaning, the feedings teach a hidden meaning that Jesus expects his disciples to catch, a meaning hinted at by the numbers twelve and seven, respectively. It is not strange for Mark to have seen symbolic meaning in the feeding incidents and to have seen this meaning as essentially being the secret of Jesus’ person, for it is a Markan characteristic to emphasize the secretive and mysterious nature of Jesus’ message (cf. 4:10-13, 33-34; 6:52). The previously noted failure of the disciples to perceive the secret of the first feeding (6:52) makes them unable to recognize who Jesus really is in the sea miracle in 6:45-52. Mark intended to teach far more than that Jesus could work miracles and could supply much food from little. He meant his readers to come to a mature apprehension that Jesus was not just a prophet or wonder-worker but the Son of God, whose ministry not only brought the fulfillment of the prophetic hope of Israel but also was the basis for the preaching of salvation to the whole world. The Pharisees represent those who continually ask for more proof and are unable or unwilling to perceive what is shown them. The disciples, with whom the readers are to identify themselves, show a less hostile, but nevertheless seriously shallow, perception of Jesus” (Larry W. Hurtado, *Mark*, UBCS, 128).

After this final “boat lesson,” Jesus will perform a two-stage healing of a blind man from Bethsaida (8:22-26). This man will see, but not completely, on his first interaction with Jesus. Jesus does not fail to heal, but the man fails to fully perceive at first pass. So the disciples are unable to fully grasp who Jesus is even with repeated demonstrations of his divine power. Jesus’ repeated challenges to the disciples to believe and trust in him as both Messiah and the Son of God (1:1) are meant for us as reluctant believers as well. We too know of Jesus, but do we fully believe and trust in him with our heart and worship? Pharisees with their hypocrisy and Herodians with their selfishness are significant threats from without. Perhaps even more dangerous is our own lack of faith and lack of trust in all of who Jesus has shown himself to be for us. Do we “still” not understand?

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 14 *forgotten* “It does not appear that Jesus was greatly concerned as to whether they had brought bread or not: he had already shown that he could meet their needs. But the disciples certainly were worried about it, and probably they had a guilty conscience about their oversight. This can be seen both from the use of the words *had forgotten* (14), and from the way in which, as soon as Jesus mentioned *leaven* (15), their minds at once flew to this point. Psychologically, this is very true to life: they expected to be blamed for their culpable lack of foresight, and so they saw reproof where none was intended. They were not blamed by Jesus for their lack of foresight, but for their lack of faith” (R. Alan Cole, *Mark*, TNTC, 200).

v. 15 *yeast* “[Yeast] is used figuratively in Bib. Greek for a pervasive influence, either good or bad, though generally the latter, owing to the ceremonial depreciation of leaven among the Hebrews. The leaven of the Pharisees is their general spirit, including hypocrisy, ostentation, pride, formalism, pettiness, and the like; cf. Mt. 23. Here, where Jesus is fresh from his controversy with them about signs, the thing specially in his mind would be the spirit that leads them to ask for a sign, when his whole life and teaching was a sign. It would be, in a word, their unspirituality, their blindness to spiritual things, which led them to seek outward proof of inward realities. The leaven of Herod, on the other hand, was worldliness. The Herods were professed Jews, who sought to leaven Judaism with the customs of heathenism. They represented the escape from the rigors and scruples of Pharisaism into the license and irreligion of the world” (Ezra Palmer Gould, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*, ICC, 146).

v. 16 *discussed* “‘To discuss’ or ‘argue’ is used of the deliberations of Jesus’ enemies in 2:6 and 8 (where it is translated by ‘to think’) and in 11:31; cf. also 9:33, where it is used of the disciples when they are again clearly failing to understand Jesus. This suggests that Mark has used it here deliberately to indicate the kind of discussion which stems from unbelief” (Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, BNTC, 195).

v. 17 *understand* “True spiritual insight is bound up with acknowledging and accepting Jesus’ identity as the unique Messiah and Son of God who causes astounding exorcisms and miracles to happen since in his words and deeds the coming of God’s kingdom has become a present reality. Peter will soon confess Jesus to be the Messiah (8:29), but he has not yet understood (8:32) that this entails Jesus’ suffering, death

and resurrection (8:31). A lack of understanding and a hardened heart can infect others, just as a small batch of leaven affects an entire lump of dough. Judas Iscariot was one disciple who did not heed Jesus’ warning: he joined the opposition and betrayed Jesus” (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 187).

v. 17 *hardened* “This rebuke is the harshest comment on the dullness of the disciples thus far in Mark (cf. 4:13, 40; 6:52) and describes them in language borrowed from the OT where rebellious Israel is condemned for disobedience to God and an unwillingness to hear his prophetic word (e.g., Ps. 95:8; Isa. 63:17 “hardness” of heart). Mark 8:18 is actually a quotation of Jeremiah 5:21, a prophetic condemnation of Israel that makes for most insightful reading alongside the present passage, which predicts God’s judgment upon Israel for failing to acknowledge the Lord God and which refers to her wicked leaders (like the Pharisees in Mark?). By his quotation of this passage, Mark may have intended his readers to refer to Jer. 5:20–31 to understand what he was trying to say about the significance of Jesus’ ministry and the seriousness of rejecting it” (Hurtado, 126–127).

vv. 19–20 *baskets* “Two different words are used for basket in the two stories of the feeding of the multitudes. *Kophinos*, ‘lunch basket’ is used in all six references to the feeding of the five thousand (Mt 14:20; 16:9; Mk 6:43; 8:19; Lk 9:17; Jn 6:13), while *spyris*, ‘hamper’ is used in all four references to the feeding of the four thousand (Mt 15:37; 16:10; Mk 8:8, 20). This consistency argues powerfully in favor of two separate incidents” (Walter W. Wessel and Mark L. Strauss, “Mark,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 9:821). The specificity of this distinction between basket types would be a detail known only by eyewitnesses and important to a first-hand participant in these events (see Richard Baukham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 343–345).

v. 21 *still not* “Jesus repeats the question, ‘Do you not yet understand?’ Again the rhetorical question and the ‘not yet,’ while reflecting a note of despair, does offer hope that the disciples will understand. Furthermore, this pericope is placed between the healing of a ‘deaf-mute’ (7:31–37) and a blind man (8:22–26) which bespeaks Jesus’ healing power for the ‘deaf’ and ‘blind’ disciples. And the next section of Mark’s story (8:27–10:52) focusing on Jesus’ instruction and the disciples’ misunderstanding shows that even this ‘healing’ takes place with a struggle” (Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, Vol. 34A, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 426).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Fully understanding who Jesus is, trust him as the miraculous Son of God who can abundantly meet our needs and the needs of those to whom we minister.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



### 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

I think parenting is a lot like playing pinball. We do our best to launch our kids onto the playing field of life, all the while nudging them to stay within the boundary lines. Our hard-earned wisdom gives us the ability to see how certain friendship influences will positively or negatively affect their lives. We are beyond grateful for those good, true, loving friends that are our kids' biggest fans and encourage them to honor the Lord. Unfortunately, there's a push-pull tension with those friends that raise a flag in our minds. Hands down, we want our kids to be the light in the world spreading the Gospel with love and grace. We want our kids to be friends with those who don't know the Lord, but we definitely don't want them to be negatively influenced. As our kids are becoming more independent and forming relationships outside of our influence, keep an open dialogue with lots of fact-finding questions. Ask them what it means to be a good friend and which of their friends embodies those characteristics. Have a friendship "check-in" asking your kids about what is happening in their social world and listen to their view/opinion on their friendships. Open your home! Allow these friendships to continue as you model a godly lifestyle. You never know, your home might be the only place this friend hears about the saving grace Jesus offers. Lastly, model loving and God-honoring friendships for your child. We are praying your kids develop lasting friendships that glorify God!

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read Mark 8:14-21.

1. What had the disciples forgotten to bring?
2. What was Jesus warning?
3. Why didn't the disciples understand?

### What Do You Think?

Jesus warns the disciples to watch out for bad influences. Can you think of something or someone that might be a bad influence in your life? What should you do about this?

### What Do You Do?

Combine 1 cup warm water (about 115°F), 1 tsp sugar and 1 packet of Active Dry Yeast. Notice how the yeast grows over the next 20 minutes. Describe how this is like the Pharisees from this week's passage.

### CORE COMPETENCY: Faithfulness

I am loyal to God and others so they know they can count on me.

### MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 77:11

*I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.*

## KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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