



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V22 N41 October 25, 2020

KING JESUS

“Evidence that Demands a Verdict”

Mark 8:1-13

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Personal God

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

“I lift up my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.”

Psalm 121:1-2



Why no *sign*?

Jesus is God *incarnate*, that is, God who “became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (Jn 1:14). Put differently, Jesus is God *with skin on*, God in the flesh. Thirty times in John’s Gospel Jesus called God “my Father,” and even went so far as to say, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (Jn 14:9). Jesus’ self-understanding is reflected in Paul’s Christology. To the Philippians he writes about Jesus: “Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!” (2:6-8). And to the Colossians he writes: “The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created . . . All things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together” (1:15-17). The same Christology is echoed by the author of Hebrews, who writes: “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word” (1:3a).

We read in Mark’s Gospel that Jesus “had compassion” on people—first on a “large crowd” because they were *spiritually* needy, being “like sheep without a shepherd” (6:34) and later on “another large crowd” because they were *physically* needy, having been with Jesus for three days and having nothing more to eat, and Jesus knows if he sends them home hungry, some, who have come a long distance, will collapse on the way (8:2-3). And we shouldn’t be surprised because our God is “a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity” (Jnh 4:2). In other words, because we know that God is involved in and cares about the lives of *spiritually* and *physically* needy people.

On the compassion of the God-Man, one

author writes: “The emotion which we should naturally expect to find most frequently attributed to that Jesus whose whole life was a mission of mercy, and whose ministry was so marked by deeds of beneficence that it was summed up in the memory of his followers as a going through the land ‘doing good’ (Acts xi. 38), is no doubt ‘compassion.’ In point of fact, this is the emotion which is most frequently attributed to him . . . This emotional movement was aroused in our Lord as well by the sight of individual distress (Mk. i. 41; Mt. xx. 34; Lk. vii. 13) as by the spectacle of man’s universal misery (Mk. vi. 34, viii. 2; Mt. ix. 36, xiv. 14, xv. 32). The appeal of two blind men that their eyes might be opened (Mt. xx. 34), the appeal of a leper for cleansing (Mk. 1. 41),—though there may have been circumstances in his case which called out Jesus’ reprobatation (verse 43),—set our Lord’s heart throbbing with pity, as did also the mere sight of a bereaved widow, wailing by the bier of her only son as they bore him forth to burial, though no appeal was made for relief (Lk. vii. 13). The ready spontaneity of Jesus’ pity is even more plainly shown when he intervenes by a great miracle to relieve temporary pangs of hunger: ‘I have compassion on’—or better, ‘I feel pity for’—‘the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their home, they will faint in the way; and some of them are come from afar’ (Mk. vii. 2; Mt. xv. 32),—the only occasion on which Jesus is recorded as testifying to his own feeling of pity. It was not merely the physical ills of life, however,—want and disease and death,—which called out our Lord’s compassion. These ills were rather looked upon by him as themselves rooted in spiritual destitution. And it was this spiritual destitution which most deeply moved his pity . . . Thus we read in Mark vi. 34: ‘And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them—better, ‘he felt pity for them,’—because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and he taught them many things’” (B.B. Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ*, 96, 98-99).

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

1 During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 2 "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. 3 If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance."

4 His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?"

5 "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked.

"Seven," they replied.

6 He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so. 7 They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. 8 The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. 9 About four thousand were present. After he had sent them away, 10 he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

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.

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

- Underline "in those days" in v. 1.
- Circle "another large crowd" in v. 1.
- Circle "compassion" in v. 2.
- Bracket "with me three days" in v. 2.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 3.
- Underline "seven loaves" in v. 6.
- Underline "a few small fish" in v. 7.
- Circle "seven basketfuls" in v. 8.
- Circle "four thousand" in v. 9.
- Circle "Dalmanutha" in v. 10.
- Bracket "sign from heaven" in v. 11.

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

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

1. Describe the *setting* of the feeding of the four thousand indicated by “during those days,” and “another large crowd” (v. 1).
2. How do you account for the “large crowd” in a Gentile region?
3. What triggers Jesus’ compassion for the crowd?
4. The disciples’ question is an evidence of their *arrested development* as disciples. How so?
5. What would have been a more *spiritually mature* question for them to ask?
6. Highlight some *differences* between this feeding and the earlier feeding of five thousand.
7. How does Mark *magnify* the *magnitude* of Jesus’ miracle?
8. Describe the Pharisees’ *tone* suggested by the connotation of “question” and “test.”
9. What did they want from Jesus before they would believe? Explain whether it was reasonable or not.
10. **Discussion:** Arrested spiritual development – talk about how to avoid it.

Commentary On The Text

The feeding of four thousand in the Gentile region of Decapolis on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, recorded in Mark 8:1-13, is the third in a series of miracles outside Jewish territory (7:24-30; 31-37)—a repeat of the feeding of five thousand (6:30-44) but on a smaller scale and for a predominately Gentile crowd. Similarities between the two accounts of the two feedings have led some to conclude that both “go back to one single event or that the second narrative is a creation of Mark’s to make a theological point concerning Gentiles” (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 179). But Jesus says otherwise: “And don’t you remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up? . . . And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” (vv. 19, 20).

Two separate but related incidents occur in verses 1-13. The *first* involves the feeding of the four thousand; the *second* involves the Pharisees’ request for a sign. The *first* occurs in the region of the Decapolis (v. 31); the *second* occurs in the region of Dalmanutha (v. 10). The link between them is seen in the following episode, in which Jesus warns the disciples to “watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod” (v. 15) and they mistakenly assume it’s “because we have no bread” (v. 16). Jesus responds by making it clear that bread is *not* the issue (vv. 17-21).

The first incident consists of four parts: a brief description of the setting (v. 1); a description of the challenge facing Jesus and his disciples (vv. 2-4), along with its implications; Jesus’ response to the challenge, to wit, the feeding miracle (vv. 5-7); and a conclusion, pointing to the magnitude of that miracle (vv. 8-9b). The second incident has but three brief parts: a description of the setting (vv. 9b-10); the Pharisees’ request (v. 11); and Jesus’ response (v. 12) followed by Mark’s transitional statement leading to the next episode (v. 13).

Regarding the feeding of the four thousand, “another large crowd” has gathered (v. 1), reminiscent of the one that had gathered before the feeding of the five thousand (6:34). This crowd is different, however, in that the people have nothing to eat, because they have run out of food after spending three days with Jesus. And Jesus has compassion on this crowd not because of their *spiritual* needs, namely, that they are “like sheep without a shepherd” (6:34), but because of their *physical* needs, namely, that they are hungry (v. 3). Rather than asking “Are you going to feed this crowd like you did the crowd before?” the obtuse dis-

ciples ask a very different question. On it, one commentator writes: “The present account brings into bold relief the arrested development of the disciples. They were in on the first miracle feeding of five thousand in a deserted place, but this does not stop them from asking Jesus, ‘But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?’ (8:4). The answer to their question is obvious: from Jesus. The disciples are slow on the uptake and grope for answers in the dark, expecting nothing miraculous from Jesus. Again, Jesus patiently has the disciples go through their inventory of provisions. They do not yet realize that even with their scanty supplies, they have in Jesus enough to feed the entire world” (David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary: Mark*, 307).

The feeding of the four thousand follows the pattern of the five thousand. Jesus discovers how much food the disciples have and then tells the crowd to sit down on the ground. He gives thanks for the bread, breaks it, and as in the previous feeding, “keeps on giving” it to his disciples to distribute to the crowd. In the feeding of the four thousand, he gives thanks for the fish separately and likewise tells the disciples to distribute them. Another commentator contrasts this feeding to the first: “The description is less vivid, and the numbers are different: there are seven loaves rather than five, and ‘a few small fish’ rather than two fish. The fish, which are mentioned as though they formed a second course of the meal, are connected with a separate blessing. Seven loaves and a few small fish are inadequate for feeding a large crowd of people, and thus underline the scope of the miracle” (Schnabel, 180). To further underscore the magnitude of the miracle, Mark specifies that “seven basketfuls” of uneaten leftovers are collected after 4,000 people eat their fill and are satisfied.

Regarding the Pharisees’ request, after Jesus and his disciples land in Dalmanutha, these hardhearted religious leaders ask for a “sign from heaven” (v. 11). Since Jesus’ “miracles” are not technically “signs,” they want more compelling proof of Jesus’ divine messianic authority, the kind that can only come “from heaven” (v. 11), that is, directly from God. After expressing his frustration with their lame attempt to trip him up, Jesus *emphatically* denies their request. You see, they have been given sufficient evidence, but they refuse to go where the evidence takes them. Put differently, the evidence demands a verdict that they refuse to reach—Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Consequently, “Jesus will offer this generation no noisy sign from heaven, only the wind whistling through an empty tomb after his resurrection” (Garland, 309).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *in those days* “The time reference *during those days* links the miracle of the feeding of the four thousand with the previous episode in which a deaf-mute man was healed in the region of the Decapolis, perhaps near Hippos (cf. 7:31)” (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 179).

v. 1 *another large crowd* “The last reference to a ‘great crowd’ is 6:34, when Jesus feeds the five thousand (6:30-34). The similarity in content between the present account and the former feeding miracle, the specific verbal tie to the ‘great crowd,’ and the word ‘again’ indicate that Mark wants his readers to recall the previous feeding miracle as they read/hear the present account” (Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT, 367). “Since this incident took place in the region of the Decapolis (see 7:31), the crowd may have been made up of both Jews and Gentiles” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Mk 8:1).

v. 2 *compassion* The scene is reminiscent of the one in 6:34. “There Jesus’ compassion arose from the crowd’s ‘spiritual need’ as ‘sheep without a shepherd’; here he senses their ‘physical need’ for sustenance (Haenchen, 278)” (Robert A. Guelich, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34A, *Mark 1-8:26*, 404).

v. 2 *with me three days* Cf., “they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat” (GNT). “‘Three days’ had passed and the crowds were now hungry, having exhausted the provisions they had brought with them” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Mark,” 2020 ed., 166, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/mark.pdf). “The diminishing food supplies did not diminish the crowd but, after three days, were becoming a problem. We are left to assume that the large number of people came from all over the Decapolis, the region in which the man from Gerasa from whom Jesus had exorcised the legion of demons had been spreading the news about Jesus and his miraculous powers (5:20), prompting people to bring the deaf-mute man to Jesus in the earlier episode (7:32), a healing which was widely reported in the area (7:36-37)” (Schnabel, 179).

v. 6 *seven loaves* Cf., “five loaves” in 6:38.

v. 7 *a few small fish* Cf., “two fish” in 6:38.

v. 8 *seven basketfuls* Cf., “twelve basketfuls” in 6:43. “The baskets (*spyridas*) on this occasion differed from those used in feeding the 5,000 (*kophinoi*, Mark 6:43; cf. 8:19-20). They were rope or mat baskets sometime large enough to carry

a man (cf. Acts 9:25). Thus 7 basketfuls (perhaps a basket for each loaf used) of Mark 8:8 likely held more than the 12 basketfuls of 6:43” (John D. Grassmick, “Mark,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 137). The smaller *kophinoi* were more rigid, probably made of wicker, whereas the larger *spyridas* were more flexible, probably made of hemp (see Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT, 345).

v. 9 *four thousand* Cf., “five thousand” men in 6:44. “In the second feeding, the number fed drops from five thousand to four thousand, while the loaves and fishes increase from five loaves and two fish (6:41) to seven loaves and a few small fish (8:5, 7). The number of basket of fragments leftover diminishes from twelve (6:43) to seven (8:8)” (David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary: Mark*, 306).

v. 10 *Dalmanutha* Cf., “vicinity of Magadan” (Mt 15:39). “Instead of Dalmanutha, the Matthean parallel has Magadan/Magedan/Magdala, an important fishing center located one mile north of Tiberias . . . It may be that Mark is referring here to a town that has left no traces in contemporary sources (Marcus 2000:498)” (Stein, 374, 375). Or perhaps, Magadan was the name of the town and Dalmanutha the name of its harbor or anchorage, since Dalmanutha in Aramaic meant “harbor” (see J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, 246-47; cf. Garland, 307).

v. 11 *sign from heaven* “The word sign (*sēmeion*) is not just another miracle (for which Mark uses the term *dynamis*, ‘power’, ‘deed of power’) but an event that confirms the intervention of divine power, authenticating Jesus as a *bona fide* prophet” (Schnabel, 182). “The ‘sign’ (*sēmeion*) requested does not involve the working of a miracle. In Mark and the other Synoptic Gospels, miracles are referred to not as ‘signs’ but as ‘mighty works’ (*dynameis*) involving healings, exorcisms, or nature miracles (see 6:2, 5, 14; 9:39; cf. 5:30), whereas ‘sign’ refers to an event of wonder (13:22) . . . The sought-for sign would involve an act by which God would reveal his approval of Jesus in an irrefutable way” (Stein, 375). “Since they wanted ‘outward compelling proof of divine authority (Cranfield, 257) rather than a display of power, [*sēmeion*] instead of [*dynamis*] became the appropriate term. The latter left too many questions (cf. 1:27;3:22)” (Guelich, 413). “From heaven” certainly means “from God.” Some think it suggests more, that is, “signs in the heaven of cosmic proportions commonly associated with the end of time,” or “a convincing ‘apocalyptic’ sign authenticating the eschatological character of this ministry” (Guelich, 413-14).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Based on the incontrovertible evidence provided by Jesus, disciples must not resist the verdict that he is the Messiah, the Son of God – and live accordingly.

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

What’s the deal with the disciples? Why didn’t they automatically remember Jesus feeding the 5,000? I mean, that’s kind of a huge thing: five loaves, two fish, 5,000 men plus women and children, 12 basketfuls of leftovers. Ring any bells, Twelve? So, why, when presented with a nearly identical problem, did they suddenly draw a blank? Honestly, I shake my head with wonder, and then try to remember what I had for breakfast or what day it is. So, maybe I relate to the disciples a little more than I let on. Our kids will start trading childhood memories during mealtimes and bring up all kinds of crazy things that happened and truthfully, I’m shocked that I forgot those sweet stories. Or, we’ll look through our family journals and our memory is jogged about a sweet time the Lord was so good and faithful and gracious to us. How could I ever forget His blessings? Truly, I can’t fault the disciples. We have God’s Truth in our hands at the touch of a fingertip and we forget that He can calm the storm, He is powerful enough to part the Red Sea, He can heal the sick, and He is “able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine” (Eph 3:20). What has God done for you recently that you don’t want to forget? Today is a great day to begin counting your blessings. Grab a journal and have each family member record how God has blessed them daily. When you look back in a few weeks or a year, you’ll be amazed at God’s work in your life.

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Mark 8:1-13.

1. How long had the crowd been with Jesus?
2. How many people did Jesus and the disciples feed and with what?
3. How much food was left over after feeding all the people?

What Do You Think?

Why didn’t the disciples simply remember Jesus’ past miracle of feeding 5000?

What Do You Do?

One way to remember the ways God has blessed you is to write them down. Using supplies around the house, create a journal. At the end of each day, write down several ways God blessed you that day. At the end of the week, go back and read the journal.

CORE COMPETENCY: Personal God
I believe God cares about everything in my life.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 5:7
Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

KidPIXCOUPON

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

- _____ 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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The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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