

# Discussion Guide

Week of March 3, 2013

Mark 8:1-21

## Passage Overview:

In Mark 8:1-10, Mark records a *second* feeding miracle of Jesus. The main difference between this feeding miracle and the last (see 6:30-44) is that it shows Jesus serving a multi-ethnic Gentile crowd instead of an only-Jewish crowd. We know this because in 7:31 we are told that Jesus traveled to the region of the Decapolis, ten Gentile (non-Jewish) cities around the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. This was a very multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan area, and so the crowd would have been largely Gentile. By including this account, Mark is teaching us that Jesus is the King-Savior of the whole world, not just for Israel. With this as the backdrop, Jesus responds to the Pharisees (vv11-13) and teaches his disciples (vv14-21).

## Understanding God's Word—Read Mark 8:1-21.

In vv1-10, what differences are there between this feeding miracle and the one in 6:30-44. What might be Mark's purpose in including this one?

## Living and Applying God's Word

- In v11, why do the Pharisees ask for a sign? Why won't Jesus give them one? What does this teach us about the nature of faith in Jesus?
- What is Jesus trying to get across to his disciples in vv14-21? (*Note: Jesus uses "leaven" as a symbol of the sinful self-reliance of the Pharisees and Herod.*) What does their failure to understand teach us about ourselves?
- The disciples are bewildered in both feeding miracles. Specifically, in the miracle recorded in Mark 8 they do not see that Jesus is able to feed the crowd (vv4, 19-21). When we read this we find it hard to believe that the disciples could have failed to learn from the feeding of the 5,000 that Jesus had the power to feed 4,000.
  - Mark is showing us how great human spiritual blindness is. In what ways do you fail to remember Jesus' power, goodness, faithfulness, etc.?
  - What does the fact that we continually doubt him, again and again, show us about our own hearts?

## Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- Why should we desire that CrossPointe be a multi-ethnic (and multi-generational) church, reflecting the demographics of our community at large? In what ways does this commend the gospel?
- In vv14-21, Jesus essentially warns the disciples of unbelief just as he does the Pharisees in vv11-13. While the Pharisees are actively opposed to Jesus, the disciples' hearts still do "not yet perceive or understand" (v17). Like the disciples, we also have continual areas of unbelief or think we know a lot more about Christ and ourselves than we really know. Why should this lead to humility, to a lack of spiritual arrogance and know-it-all-ism, the willingness to re-visit biblical texts and truth, to be very teachable and accept correction graciously? In which of these areas do you struggle?

## Prayer:

Pray to God this great truth together: "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Pray also for Seth & Rachel Park as they serve in Turkey.

## Announcements

- Men's Lunch (March 5 @ noon) ([springer@insidecrosspointe.com](mailto:springer@insidecrosspointe.com))
- Midweek Fellowship (March 6 @ 5:45 p.m.) ([sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com](mailto:sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com))
- Ladies' Lunch (March 19 @ noon) ([sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com](mailto:sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com))
- Baptism (Easter Sunday, March 31) ([wayne@insidecrosspointe.com](mailto:wayne@insidecrosspointe.com))