

Do You Not Yet Understand?
Mark 8:1-21

I. Expectation: Understanding

A. Expectation

1. We come away from Mark's narrative with at least one certainty: **Jesus expects those who follow Him to understand who He is and why He has come.**
 - a. Scripture
 - (1) **Jeremiah 24:7 (ESV)** *I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.*
 - (2) **Proverbs 9:10 (ESV)** *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*
 - (3) **Isaiah 1:3 (ESV)** *The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand."*
 - b. Jesus
 - (1) Christ came to bring us the knowledge of God
 - (2) Sinclair Ferguson
 - (a) "The knowledge of God is the heart of salvation and of all true spiritual experience.
 - (b) Knowing Him is what we were created for."
2. Timeline
 - a. Through the next three chapters we will find that the understanding Jesus expects His disciples to have of Him and His purpose comes as a process rather than a single event.
 - b. Next week Mark will give us a living picture to support the idea of process, and that's the reason I am calling this series, "Jesus Through the Eyes of the Blind."
 - c. Today I ask you to focus your attention not so much on the process as the goal.
 - (1) What does Jesus expect His disciples to understand?
 - (2) What does Jesus expect us to understand about Himself
 - (a) He is the Messiah for the Jews
 - (b) He is the Christ for the Greeks.

B. The Focus Question

1. Event:
 - a. Details
 - (1) Still in the Decapolis
 - (2) Another large crowd unprepared for the lateness of the hour
 - (3) Jesus states His compassion for what is likely a largely Gentile crowd

- (4) Feeds the crowd of four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fish
- (5) Take up seven baskets of leftovers
- b. Significance
 - (1) Not so much in the differences in details
 - (a) How many people
 - (b) How many loaves
 - (c) How many fish
 - (d) How many baskets
 - (2) As in the difference in crowd: Gentiles
 - (a) Delivering the daughter of a woman who knew her place? Ok.
 - (b) Healing a deaf and dumb man who may never have known better? Ok.
 - (c) Feeding a crowd with the same power and promise that God extends to His covenant people?
 - i) This is no longer a slight diversion
 - ii) This is a major development!

2. After the event

- a. Jesus sends the crowd away
- b. Jesus and His disciples sail to the area of Dalmanutha
- c. The Pharisees gather and demand a sign
 - (1) (as if what they have seen already is not enough)
 - (2) (as if the Christ is somehow beholden to them to perform on demand)
 - (3) (as if the Messiah must seek human approval or religious support in order to be the Savior sent by God)
 - (a) Many people today claim they would believe if they could see some evidence that satisfies the criteria of their own selfish sinful heart
 - i) Bring about world peace
 - ii) Stop all human suffering
 - iii) Grant some coveted desire
 - (b) In another place Jesus declares there would be no other sign than the “sign of Jonah”
 - i) **Matthew 12:38-40 (ESV)** ³⁸ *Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.”* ³⁹ *But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.* ⁴⁰ *For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the*

heart of the earth.

- a) At the time Jesus says this, the cross and the resurrection are still in His future
 - b) But Jesus knows exactly what is coming and what it will mean!
 - ii) The death and resurrection of Jesus from the grave is the single most powerful sign of His deity and love and worthiness than any other
 - a) **Romans 5:8 (ESV) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**
 - b) **Hebrews 10:26-27 (ESV) ²⁶ For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.**
 - iii) The evidence Jesus provides for His person and His mission is more than enough for faith in His promise!
- d. Jesus refuses and left to the other side in a boat
3. In the boat
- a. They realize they left most of the bread behind (?) - they have one loaf
 - b. Jesus, reflecting on the Pharisees, cautions His disciples
 - (1) The Pharisees challenge Jesus because they refuse to accept the evidence right in front of them
 - (2) The Pharisees not only misunderstand Jesus, they refuse to put faith in what they do understand
 - c. Somebody starts a discussion about who left the bread behind
4. Jesus asks the pivotal question: **“Do you not yet perceive or understand?”**
- a. In fact, Jesus asks them this question twice. “Do you not yet understand?”
 - b. Key Question:
 - (1) Do you not yet understand?
 - (2) It is this question that drives the narrative from this point forward.
 - (a) We will be watching who understands Jesus, and how they come to understand Him, and who does not understand Jesus.
 - (b) What we’re going to discover is that, for some of

- us, understanding is more a journey than a destination, more a process than an event,
- (c) but whether it is a process or an event, **understanding is a result of carefully responding with faith to Jesus' revelation of Himself.**

II. True understanding calls for genuine faith.

A. Faith

1. People, Understanding, and Faith
 - a. People who do not understand Jesus usually put no faith in Jesus.
 - b. People who genuinely have faith in Jesus usually genuinely understand something of Jesus.
2. Faith involves confidence in the revelation of God's person and God's plan
 - a. Faith believes and trusts that God is all He reveals Himself to be
 - b. Faith believes and trusts that God's plan of salvation through faith in Jesus is the sole means to personal reconciliation with God.

B. What faith involves supernatural certainty that:

1. God sent His Son into the world to become a man representative of all mankind, just like Adam was a representative for all who came from Him
2. God sent Christ into the world to fulfill on our behalf the unbroken covenant relationship Adam broke
3. God sent Christ into the world to take in Himself the sins of the whole world and die on the cross as the substitute sacrifice receiving the just sentence of death we all deserve.
4. God sent Christ into the world to clear away guilt and shame so that we may be reconciled to our Creator without fear and with eternal joy.
5. God sent Christ into the world that through faith in Christ, those who believe might be filled with the Spirit of God and lead a new life that radiance the holiness and glory of God, which was the purpose for the creation of man in the first place.

C. What faith in Christ produces: Salvation

1. Salvation is always about conversion, condition, and conduct
 - a. Conversion: Leave the old behind.
 - (1) **Philippians 3:13-14 (ESV)** ¹³ *Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*
 - b. Enter into a new condition (new creation)
 - (1) **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*
 - (2) **1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (ESV)** ⁹ *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters,*

nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

- c. Conduct: Follow through with a new life
 - (1) **Romans 6:4 (ESV)** *We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*
 - (2) “walk” is the key word here
 - (a) Lots of people think once they get in the kingdom the journey is over
 - (b) They go on about their lives adding a little Jesus here and little Jesus there
 - (c) But true faith results in a changed life!
 - (d) If you are living the same life on the same principles seeking the same outcomes as you did before you got saved, my friend, you need to check your credentials!
- 2. Salvation is not just a prayer someone says in the crisis of guilt.
- 3. Salvation is the life of faith and obedience someone lives in the power of the Spirit through faith.
 - a. **We are saved from sin and guilt**
 - b. **We are saved to holiness and obedience**

III. Faith and Communion

A. This is the message of the Lord’s Supper.

- 1. In proclaiming Christ’s death until He comes, Communion makes two interwoven declarations.
 - a. First, we declare in symbol the necessary death of the innocent Son of God on our behalf because of sin.
 - b. Second, we declare in action our commitment to live faithfully to Him by faith in Him because of grace.
- 2. Proclamation
 - a. We proclaim the significance of the death of Jesus to others.
 - b. We proclaim the significance of the death of Jesus to ourselves.
- 3. Invitation
 - a. **Come to the Table and proclaim the Lord Jesus in symbol**
 - (1) Put your faith in Jesus and come to the Table knowing that if we confess our sins, if we put our faith and trust in the plan of God, He will forgive our sins.
 - (2) He will take away our guilt.
 - (3) He will remove our shame.
 - (4) He will accept us, adopt us, work His glory in us.

- b. **Come to the Table and proclaim the Lord Jesus in fact**
 - (1) Renew your daily commitment to live in the power of the Spirit for the glory of God
 - (2) Renew your daily commitment to no longer live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit in holiness, obedience, and love.
 - (3) Renew your daily commitment to lose your life for Christ.

B. Come to the Table

- 1. Because you understand something of Christ and the grace He offers
- 2. Because you understand something of the heart of God and are committed to greater understanding
- 3. Because what you understand today, though there is always more to understand, is enough for faith in this moment, to trust and honor Christ.