

Journey Through the New Testament

Mark 7 – 11

Series: Do as I Do!
“Stay Above the Fray”
2-24-19

Introduction

The readings from this week were full of healing miracles, misunderstanding, fear and faith. Jesus responded to the criticism of the chief priests and teachers of the law, taught the disciples about the kingdom of God and acted with compassion to the needs of the crowds who followed him everywhere he went.

In the midst of it all, the disciples floundered; at other times, they responded with faithful understanding. During their travel from place to place, Jesus began to speak about his coming death and resurrection, something Peter did not want to accept.

The very human responses of the disciples help us reflect upon the struggle of walking by faith and the process of growing deeper in our trust of Christ.

Opening Prayer

Lord, your word reveals who you are and what it means to belong to the kingdom of God. But like the disciples, we don't fully understand what you have shown us. We confess, "You are the Christ," but we are fearful and focused on the wrong things. Open our eyes and hearts that we may see and believe, take up our cross, and follow you. Amen.

Bible Study Selected verses from Mark 8 – 9 (CEB)

What?

Mark 8:14-21 Jesus warned the disciples about the "yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod." (v.15) Consider what yeast does to dough.

1. What did Jesus mean by his warning?
2. What is the **response** of the disciples when Jesus warned them about the Pharisees and Herod? (v. 17,21)

Note the irony... In the opening verses of chapter 8 Jesus fed thousands of people with a few loaves and fish!

Mark 8:27-30 As Jesus and the disciples traveled to Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked the disciples what people were saying about who he was.

1. What did the people think about Jesus? (v. 28)
2. Bringing it closer to home, Jesus asked, “What about you? Who do you say I am?” What was Peter’s **response**? (v. 29)

Mark 8:31-33 After Peter’s amazing declaration of Jesus’ identity, Jesus delivered the sobering news of his coming death and resurrection.

1. What was Peter’s **response** when Jesus predicted his death? (v. 32)
2. What did Jesus say in return? (v. 33)
3. What did Jesus mean by saying that?

Mark 9:17-18, 21-24 Imagine the scene: Teachers of the law, the crowd, and the disciples are arguing. The disciples had not been able to heal a demon possessed boy.

1. What was the father’s **response** in the situation? (v. 22-24)
2. What clues about faith do you see in the father’s statement, “I have faith; help my lack of faith!”

So, What?

1. In what way can you relate to the ups and downs of the disciples as they grew in their faith?
2. So what do these passages from Mark’s gospel reveal to us about walking with Christ?

Now What?

1. Now what **response** do you need to make to Jesus?
Are you clear and ready to take another step? Are you confused about what Jesus means? Are you praying for more faith?

Closing As the disciples walked with Jesus, they were challenged by the arguments of the teachers of the law, the demands of the crowds, their lack of faith, and the hard truths of Jesus. They eventually learned to stay above the fray of it all and develop a deep, abiding faith. Jesus never gave up on them. May God grant us grace in the ups and downs of our journey.