

## Mark Chapter 8 Continued

Verses 22-26: This healing of a "blind man," where sight gradually improved until he; "saw" clearly; pictures the disciples' slow but progressive spiritual comprehension. Which climaxes (in verse 29), with their confession of Jesus as Messiah.

The second of Jesus' two miracles recorded only (in Mark 7:31-37). It is also the first of two healings of blind men recorded (in Mark 10:46-52).

**Mark 8:22 "And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him."**

"Bethsaida" (see note on 6:45), for the other Bethsaida. This is Bethsaida-Julias, several miles north of the Sea of Galilee and east of the Jordan River.

Bethsaida means place of fish. This miracle was told about only in the book of Mark. It seems that many believed that Jesus must touch the person who had come for prayer for them to get a miracle. The blind man here, was brought by others to get help.

If we were to look at the spiritual side of blindness, surely a friend who wants us to come out of our spiritual darkness and see the Light (Jesus), would have to lead us to the Lord.

**Mark 8:23 "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought."**

"Spit on his eyes": This action and Jesus' touching his eyes with His hands (verse 25), were apparently meant to reassure the blind man (who would naturally depend on his other senses, such as touch), that Jesus would heal his eyes (7:33; John 9:6).

Jesus took the blind man by the hand. We see here again, as we did with the deaf man, that Jesus was interested in him as an individual. He separated himself away from the crowds to give total attention to the needs of this one man.

Again, here we see Jesus made direct contact with the part of the man which needed healing. Probably this was so that this would build the man's faith up. Here we see Jesus asked the man if he could see.

**Mark 8:24 "And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking."**

This touch of the Lord's hand had brought healing. Now this man saw some light. Again, if we were looking at this from the spiritual, we would understand that our being born again and living brand new lives with Jesus requires another touch of the Lord's hand that we might see clearly.

This also brings to me an answer to the question, "Should I pray more than once for the same thing?" The answer is "Yes".

James 5:16 "Confess [your] faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Continue to pray and you will see wonderful results, as we do here in the next verses. The first time the man was looking as if through a glass darkly. His look was distorted, but let's see what a second touch brought.

**Mark 8:25 "After that he put [his] hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly."**

I really believe this second touch of Jesus was so that we would understand to keep praying and not give up if we don't get an immediate answer. He made him look up (give God the glory).

We are told in the Scriptures that there are different operations. Jesus was saying, "There are different ways of doing things with the same results". The Lord does it His way. We see when this man was obedient to the Lord, he was totally restored.

**Mark 8:26 "And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell [it] to any in the town."**

"Neither go into the town": Jesus led the blind man out of town before healing him (verse 23), probably to avoid publicity and the mob scene that would otherwise result. Unlike others in the past (1:45; 7:36), he apparently obeyed.

Jesus told the man this so that great multitudes of people would not follow Him just for His healing power. There was really no way to keep this type of miracle a secret though.

Verses 8:27 – 9:50: Jesus' influence expands through intimate self-disclosure. In (verses 27-33), we see the first prediction of Jesus' death (see 9:31; 10:33-34).

**Mark 8:27 "And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?"**

"Caesarea Philippi": A city about 25 miles north of Bethsaida near Mt. Hermon, not to be confused with the Caesarea located on the Mediterranean coast about 60 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

I really believe this question is of great importance today. Who do you say Jesus is? The answer you give can send you to heaven or hell (Romans 10:9-10). Jesus already knew what was being said, but again, He was making an important point.

**Mark 8:28 "And they answered, John the Baptist: but some [say], Elijah; and others, One of the prophets."**

“Elijah” (see notes on 6:15; Mal. 4:5; Matt. 11:14; Luke 1:17).

This is the very type of answer that many people are giving today. They call Jesus everything but God manifest in the flesh.

People are still trying to figure out with their mind who Jesus really is. Just the fact that He took on the form of flesh and dwelt among us makes people want to think of Him as mere man.

**Mark 8:29 "And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ."**

“But whom say ye that I am?” After they reported the prevailing erroneous views about Jesus (verse 28), He asked the disciples to give their own evaluation of who He was. The answer every person gives to this question will determine his or her eternal destiny.

“Thou are the Christ”: Peter unhesitatingly replied on behalf of the 12 (Matt. 14:28; 15:15; 17:4; 19:27; 26:33; John 6:68; 13:36).

“Christ” means here the “Messiah,” the Anointed One of God, the Redeemer prophesied in the Old Testament.

In (Matthew 16:16), we see the best answer of all given by Peter, "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Peter said a lot in this statement. He said You were born of a virgin because You are the Son of God. He was not a Christ, but THE Christ: The Anointed One of God. The entire subject of the Bible, Old and New Testament, is Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

All salvation is based on what you believe about Jesus. If you believe like Peter, you are saved; if you believe like the rest of the world, you are lost. Jesus is the Lamb of God, The Savior of the world.

**Mark 8:30 "And he charged them that they should tell no man of him."**

“Tell no man of him”: Jesus’ messianic mission cannot be understood apart from the cross, which the disciples did not yet understand (verses 31-33; 9:30-32).

For them to have proclaimed Jesus as Messiah at this point would have only furthered the misunderstanding that the Jewish people, desperate to be rid of the yoke of Rome, would seek to make Jesus king by force (John 6:15; 12:12-19).

There was nothing to be gained by this being told at this time. The Jews were looking for a king to rule them and get rid of the Romans. If they believed it, they would try to make Him rule like David.

The people who believed that He was God manifest in the flesh would doubt like Peter did when He was crucified. It was much easier to believe in His Godhead after He rose from the dead.

Verses 8:31 – 10:52: In this section, as they traveled to Jerusalem, Jesus prepared the disciples for His death.

**Mark 8:31 "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and [of] the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."**

“Son of man” (see note on 2:10).

“Must suffer many things”: Jesus’ sufferings and death were inevitable because they were divinely ordained (Acts 2:22-23; 4:27-28), though, humanly speaking, caused by His rejection from the Jewish leaders (see notes on 12:10; Isaiah 53:3; Matt. 21:42).

“Elders” (see note on 7:3).

“Chief priests”: Members of the Sanhedrin and representatives of the four orders of ordinary priests (Luke 1:8).

“Scribes”: Experts in the Old Testament law (see note on Matt. 2:4).

“After three days”: In keeping with the sign of Jonah (Matt. 12:40).

“Rise again”: Jesus always mentioned His resurrection in connection with His death (9:31; 10:34; Matt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Luke 9:22; 18:33), making it all the more incomprehensible that the disciples were so slow to understand.

Notice, when Jesus spoke of His death, He called Himself Son of man. He was fully God and at the same time was housed in the body of a man. His deity was from the Father and His humanity from Mary.

Many believe, and I am one of them, that the third day He arose; not after three days. His body was subject to death as yours and mine, but His Spirit is eternal. It did not die. He dismissed His Spirit from His body. His body was buried in the cave. On the third day, His Spirit re-entered His body and appeared to the women.

**Mark 8:32 "And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him."**

“Spake that saying openly”: I.e., not in parables or allusions (John 16:29).

“Peter ... began to rebuke him”: The disciples still could not comprehend a dying Messiah (see note on verse 30). Peter as usual (see note on verse 29), expressed the thoughts of the rest of the 12 (verse 33). His brash outburst expressed not only presumption and misunderstanding, but also deep love for Jesus.

In Jewish thought of that day there was no room for a doctrine of a suffering Messiah, to Peter, as to any other Jew, that would be a contradiction in terms.

Peter was thinking of Jesus taking over physically while He was here. Peter was thinking that Jesus would set up an earthly kingdom. Peter, who saw Him as the Lord, now was letting Satan use him to tempt the Lord with worldly fame.

**Mark 8:33 "But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men."**

“Get thee behind me, Satan”: In a startling turnaround, Peter, who had just been praised for being God’s spokesman (Matt. 16:17-19), was then condemned as Satan’s mouthpiece. Yet Jesus’ sacrificial death was God’s plan (Acts 2:22-23; 4:27-28), and whoever opposed it was, wittingly or not, advocating Satan’s work.

The rebuke Jesus spoke (even though directed to Peter) was actually to Satan himself. Peter, in thinking of an earthly kingdom, let Satan use him.

Verses 8:34 – 9:1: Jesus teaches how to follow Him and why.

**Mark 8:34 "And when he had called the people [unto him] with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."**

“Deny himself”: No one who is unwilling to deny himself can legitimately claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

“Take up his cross”: This reveals the extent of self-denial, to the point of death if necessary. The extent of desperation on the part of the penitent sinner who is aware he can’t save himself reaches the place where nothing is held back (Matt. 19:21-22).

“And follow me” (see notes on 1:17; Matt. 10:38).

“The people”, shows that this teaching is not limited to the present disciples, but extends to all who would serve Jesus.

We see here, that to be Christians (followers of Christ), we must put off the desires of our flesh and take on the will of God in our lives. Contrary to many teachings today, we see here that there

is a cross to bear. If we are to follow Jesus, we too must crucify our flesh and live new lives of the spirit.

**Mark 8:35 "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."**

“Shall lose his life ... shall save it”: This paradoxical saying reveals an important spiritual truth: those who pursue a life of ease, comfort and acceptance by the world will not find eternal life. On the other hand, those who give up their lives (see note on verse 34), for the sake of Christ and the gospel will find it (John 12:25).

The flesh must die that the spirit may live. We must be willing for the flesh to die so that we may live with Christ.

Verses 36-37: “Soul”: The real person, who will live forever in heaven or hell. To have all that the world has to offer yet not have Christ is to be eternally bankrupt; all the world’s goods will not compensate for losing one’s soul eternally (see note on Matt. 16:26).

**Mark 8:36-37 "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" "Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

All the riches in the world are nothing if you have to give up eternal life with Jesus to have it. Life on this earth is very short, and all the wealth of the world for this short life cannot even begin to compare with all of eternity in heaven with Jesus. Men or women should be willing to give up anything they need to, that will purchase life eternal for them.

**Mark 8:38 "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."**

“Ashamed of me and of my words”: Those who reject the demands of discipleship prove themselves to be ashamed of Jesus Christ and the truth He taught, thus not redeemed from sin at all.

“Son of man” (see note on 2:10).

“When he cometh”: Mark’s first reference to Jesus’ second coming, an event later described in detail in the Olivet Discourse (13:1-37).

Jesus makes a close connection between Himself and His words.

This just means if you deny Jesus now, He will deny you on judgment day. We must believe that Jesus is our Savior and tell the world. To be a Christian is to be a believer in and a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Share Him with everyone.

## Mark Chapter 8 Continued Questions

1. When Jesus was at Bethsaida, who did they bring to Him to heal?
2. What did they want Jesus to do to heal him?
3. What does Bethsaida mean?
4. Which of the gospels was this told in?
5. Where did Jesus take the blind man?
6. What physical thing did Jesus do to the blind man?
7. What did Jesus ask him?
8. What did the man see at first?
9. Should you pray more than once about something?
10. What do we learn about prayer in James 5:16?
11. Why did Jesus have the man to look up?
12. When was the blind man totally restored?
13. What did Jesus tell the man to do after He healed him?
14. At Caesarea Philippi, what did Jesus ask the disciples?
15. What three answers did they give?
16. In Romans 10:9-10, what do we learn about salvation?
17. Why do people want to believe Jesus was a mere man?
18. In verse 29, Jesus asked them what?
19. What did Peter answer?
20. What did Peter's statement tell us of Jesus' birth?
21. What is the subject of the entire Bible?
22. Salvation is based upon what?

23. What did Jesus begin to teach here to the disciples?
24. When Jesus spoke of His death, He called Himself what?
25. Jesus' deity was from the \_\_\_\_\_, and his humanity \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_.
26. What was Peter's reaction to Jesus telling of his death?
27. When Jesus rebuked Peter, He was really rebuking \_\_\_\_\_.
28. If we follow Jesus, we must take up our \_\_\_\_\_ and follow Him.
29. The \_\_\_\_\_ must die for the \_\_\_\_\_ to live.
30. If we are ashamed of Jesus here, what will He do in heaven?
31. To be a Christian is what?