

LESSON SEVEN | MARK 8

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

WELCOME

Spiritual hunger
2–3 mins.

DRILL TIME

Feeding the 5,000
3–5 mins.

W.O.W!

Soul
3–5 mins.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Timeline
2–3 mins.

BIBLE INVESTIGATION

Mark 8
20–30 mins.

LESSON-AT-HOME

Mark 8:35
3–5 mins.

OVERVIEW

Mark 8 opens with Jesus teaching another large crowd in a lonely area for three days. Out of His great compassion, Jesus instructs his disciples to feed the crowd. Forgetting that Jesus had fed the five thousand with just five loaves and two fish, the disciples again doubt the ability to feed this crowd. In the midst of their unbelief, Jesus feeds these four thousand with seven loaves and a few fish.

Later, Jesus instructs the disciples to avoid the “yeast” or influence of the Pharisees. The disciples misunderstood, thinking he was angry at them for not bringing enough bread. Jesus rebukes their unbelief and lack of memory. He could easily provide from just one loaf of bread!

Jesus goes on to heal a blind man. Then, Peter seems to have his eyes opened, confessing Jesus to be the Christ. Unfortunately, he did not understand that Jesus must die for our sins, as he is rebuked for following Satan. Finally, Jesus warns His disciples against trying to save their own souls. The only way to life in Christ is to deny self, take up our cross and follow Him. Loving the world and our own souls only leads to eternal death!

PREPARATION

Read and meditate on Mark 8 this week. **Use flannelgraph figures or other pictures to illustrate the lesson.**

TEACHING ENCOURAGEMENT

Children are often told the stories of the Gospels in isolation from one another. Teaching through the Gospel of Mark from beginning to end allows you to teach each story in context, connected to action that occurs before and after. Mark, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells the life of Christ in a fast-paced, climax-building way. The crowds grow larger and larger. The oppression gets heavier and heavier. The miracles repeat again and again. Jesus as the Son of God is being revealed to people moment by moment. Don't think of each healing or teaching or confrontation as an isolated incident. Show your students how the action is all building to the climax of the cross. Their minds should be growing in expectation at what this Jesus is all about!



WELCOME

Greet the students. Welcome visitors.

Say: *If you're hungry, what do you need to do? [Eat.] God has given us hunger pains that tell us that it is time to eat. And, He has provided our bodies with food to take care of that hunger. Isn't God good to us?*

*But did you know that there is "spiritual hunger" too? Our "inner persons" need to be fed, just like our physical bodies. But the food that feeds our "inner persons" is much different. What do you think feeds our spiritual hunger? **Allow answers.** Let's feed our spiritual hunger with God's Word today!*



DRILL TIME

Before we move to our Bible Investigation, let's have our DRILL TIME. Are you ready?

Today's questions: *How many people were hungry because they stayed late, listening to Jesus? Who did Jesus say should feed them? How much food did the disciples find? What did Jesus do with this food? After all the people ate, how much food was left?*

Call on volunteers or select students to make attempts.

Answers:

1. Five thousand men, plus women and children.
2. Jesus commanded His disciples to feed them.
3. Five loaves of bread and two fish.
4. Jesus looked up to heaven, gave thanks, broke the loaves and divided the fish, and fed all the people.
5. Twelve basketfuls of broken pieces.

Say: *Jesus miraculously fed all of those people. Yet, He also fed their spiritual hunger. How? [Jesus taught the people the Word of God.] He preached the gospel which fed their spiritual hunger. Feeding their bodies was a sign to say that Jesus is the one who also feeds our spiritual hunger!*



W.O.W!

Who wants to learn a new word? Our W.O.W! (Word of the Week) this week is **SOUL**. Write the word on the board. Who can tell me what a SOUL is? **Allow answers.**

Believe it or not, every person has a body and a SOUL. The SOUL is the part of you that you cannot see. It is the “inner person” or your “inner life.”

While your body will die some day, your SOUL can never die. Your SOUL will either go to be with God or will spend eternity separated from God.

The SOUL is also that inner part of you that thinks and knows and feels and loves and desires. When God created Adam, He called him a living SOUL.

So each human being is a combination of body and SOUL. Just as you can't live without your body, you couldn't live without a SOUL.

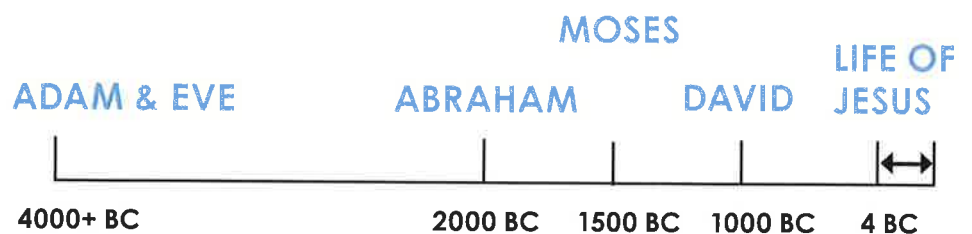
We will see the word SOUL in our reading today. Listen for it!



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

If necessary, draw this timeline on the board, and show the students when these events took place.

This Week's Timeline





Introduction: *Last time, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, teaching them that it is our own sin that causes us to be unclean, not what we eat or how we wash our hands. As Jesus continued to battle the religious leaders who lacked faith, He also healed people who put their faith in Him. Jesus calls people to turn from their TRADITIONS to the Word of God. What will Jesus do next?*

Let's read in Mark 8. Read Mark 8:1-3.

¹ In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, ² "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. ³ And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away."

Discussion: *Does this sound familiar to you? Jesus had already miraculously fed the five thousand. Now, another large crowd needed food to eat after spending three whole days with Jesus!*

Application: *Jesus is moved to feed these people because of His COMPASSION. He genuinely loved and cared about these people. If you claim to be a follower of Jesus, you too must have COMPASSION for people who are suffering. Christians should be moved to help others!*

Let's see what the disciples say. Read verse 4.

⁴ And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?"

Discussion: *Had the disciples forgotten the amazing miracle Jesus performed to feed the five thousand? They act as though they still do not know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*

Let's continue. Read verses 5-9a.

⁵ And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." ⁶ And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. ⁷ And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. ⁸ And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up



the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. ⁹ And there were about four thousand people.

Discussion: *How many loaves did the disciples find this time? [Seven.] And how many fish? [A few.] What did Jesus do with these loaves and fish? [He gave thanks and had the disciples distribute them.] How many people were fed? [About four thousand men, plus women and children.] How much was left over? [Seven basketfuls of broken pieces.] What a miracle! Jesus again feeds hungry people. Do you think the disciples now understand who Jesus really was?*

Let's read more. Read verses 9b-12.

⁹ And he sent them away. ¹⁰ And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. ¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. ¹² And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation."

Discussion: *There go those Pharisees again, trying to test and trap Jesus. Did they believe Jesus was the Son of God? [No.] Jesus has already done all sorts of miracles, yet they still ask for another one. Will another sign from heaven make them believe in Jesus? [No.] Jesus rebukes them for being faithless.*

Let's read more. Read verses 13-16.

¹³ And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side. ¹⁴ Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵ And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." ¹⁶ And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread.

Discussion: *Who can tell me what YEAST is? Allow answers. Yeast is the ingredient in bread that makes the bread dough rise. Yeast makes bread grow! So, why did Jesus tell His disciples to beware the YEAST of the Pharisees and that of Herod? Is He talking about their bread? No! Jesus was saying that just as yeast works its way through ALL the dough, the unbelief of the Pharisees could work its way into their lives if they weren't careful. He was warning them to stay away from the teaching and faithlessness of these leaders. We too must beware of false teaching and unbelief!*



*Listen to how Jesus responds. **Read verses 17-21.***

¹⁷ And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? ¹⁸ Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?” They said to him, “Twelve.” ²⁰ “And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?” And they said to him, “Seven.” ²¹ And he said to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

Discussion: *The disciples thought Jesus was upset with them since they only brought one loaf of bread along. It seems as though they had forgotten the two MAJOR miracles Jesus did with bread. How many people did Jesus feed with five loaves? [Five thousand.] And how many people did Jesus feed with seven loaves? [Four thousand more.] Do you think Jesus could feed the disciples with just one loaf of bread? [Sure!] The disciples still did not really understand the power of God.*

Application: *Jesus also told the disciples that their hearts were hardened. They would not put their faith in Jesus to spiritually feed them. Do you trust that Jesus can feed your spiritual hunger? He is the Bread of Life. You will only have eternal life if you put your faith in Jesus as your Savior and Lord.*

*Let's continue on. **Read verses 22-26.***

²² And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. ²³ And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?” ²⁴ And he looked up and said, “I see people, but they look like trees, walking.” ²⁵ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. ²⁶ And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

Discussion: *Jesus again is called upon to heal a blind man. What happened after Jesus spit on this man's eyes and put His hands on him? [The man received his sight back partially.] This man's vision was restored, but it was still blurry. So, what happened the second*



time Jesus put His hands on the man's eyes? [His eyes were fully opened.] What great mercy for this man!

Application: *Jesus must open our eyes too, so that we will see that He is the Son of God. Once Jesus gives us spiritual eyes, we will begin to see the world as God wants us to see it!*

*Let's read more. **Read verses 27-30.***

²⁷ And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸ And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰ And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

Discussion: *It sounds like Peter finally understands who Jesus is! Others think Jesus is just a prophet like Elijah or John the Baptist. Peter said that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*

*But listen to what happens next. **Read verses 31-33.***

³¹ And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Discussion: *Peter knew that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. But, Peter didn't believe that the Messiah must suffer and then die. Did you hear how Jesus rebuked Peter? He told him that he was being led by Satan instead of God. Satan did not want Jesus to go to the cross and die for the sins of His people. So Peter was believing the wrong things about the Messiah. Jesus must suffer and die in order to save His people from their sins!*

*Listen to what else Jesus says. **Read verses 34-35.***

³⁴ And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.



Application: *Jesus just said that He must die in order to save His people from their sin. Now He says that we must also die WITH Christ in order to be saved. We must lose our lives in order to gain our lives. That's hard to understand, isn't it? The point is that we must stop living for self and instead live for Jesus. He alone is the giver of life.*

*Let's finish up for today. **Read verses 36-38.***

³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Discussion: *Did you hear our Word of the Week? Jesus warned His disciples that they could gain the whole world yet lose their SOULS. Our SOULS will either be with Jesus forever or be separated from Jesus forever. Do you want to keep your SOUL or give your SOUL to God? He wants your SOUL to be with Him forever!*

Conclusion: *Over and over again, we see the contrast between SOULS that are committed to Jesus and SOULS that reject Jesus. The Pharisees were ashamed and embarrassed of Jesus, so He is also ashamed of them. The disciples were still trying to understand Jesus, yet they needed their blind eyes opened.*

What about your SOUL? Is your SOUL in God's hands or your own?



Distribute the “Lesson-At-Home” bookmarks. Read the Scripture Memory verse (Mark 8:35) together.

Mark 8:35 (ESV)

³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.

Say: *These are the words of Jesus we just read. What happens if you try to save yourself from your own sins? [You will lose your life.] But, if you lose your life with Christ, then Jesus will save your SOUL. You cannot save yourself from your sin. Memorize this verse so you remember that it is Jesus alone who saves!*

Review the verse a couple of times.

Direct the students’ attentions to the bottom half of the bookmark. It includes reminder points of today’s lesson that can be discussed with their parents and reviewed during the week.

Close in prayer and dismiss the students.

Lesson-At-Home

Bookmark

Scripture Memory

Mark 8:35

For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.

Lesson Review

Mark 8

*Jesus feeds the four thousand.
Avoid the yeast of the Pharisees.
Jesus heals a blind man.
We can't save our own SOULS.*

Year TWO

Investigating God's Word...
Summer Quarter ~ Lesson Seven

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