

COMMENT SHEET
TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY
Session: June 17, 2003
Gospel of Mark 7:31 to 8:30

As you read, recall that we approach our study of Mark by sections and not by chapters. The sections are reported in The Gospel Chart of St. Mark. This is a separate resource soon to be printed in a pdf. file related to this Gospel.

I. Read Mark 7:31 to 8:30 in one reading.

II. Note that this section of our study chart is on the topic of "Demonstrating his authority." This is the first part in a new section "The New Mission: Awakening the World." With this in mind read the indicated verses and answer the question what is the authority Jesus uses in each story?

To summarize: The authority of Jesus is derived from fulfilling his "creative gift." This is to say, Jesus lived as an authentically human being. This authenticity, or this "creative gift" we perceive as The Christ" within the man Jesus.

7:31 - 37 Healing of the Deaf Mute

Do research on the city of Tyre and also about the Decapolis. What is the significance of Jesus' ministry here? How does this connect with the previous reading of 7: 24 - 30? What is the "gut trip analysis" of opening ears and speech. What is the significance of Jesus warning those who witnessed this event not to say anything?

Scholars believe the Gospel writer Mark was confused about the geography of the Gentile regions. The Decapolis was built on 10 mountain tops and was a coherent region. On the other hand, Tyre was on the Mediterranean coast.

The significance of this material is that Jesus is ministering to Gentile people. The OT prophet Isaiah believe the purpose of the Jewish people was to share the Good News with all of the then known world. Jesus is a follower of principles of Isaiah, and definitely is taking the Good News to those outside Palestine or Israel.

This is supported in Chapter 7:24-30 in the story of healing the Sryophencian Woman -- a Gentile Woman.

The "gut trip analysis" of opening ears is our experience of being deaf to The Christ present in this world.

8: 1 - 10 Feeding of the 4,000. Return to Mark 6: 39 - 44 and compare the two readings. Make notes here:

Mark 6: 39 - 44 -- Sat is hundreds and fiftys; five loaves and two fish; twelve baskets of broken pieces; 5,000 men

Mark 8:5 - 10 -- crowd sat on ground; seven loaves and a few small fish; seven basketfulls; 4,000 men.

The significance of the placement of this story after the feeding of the 5,000 indicates to scholars that this may have happened twice. In Jewish story telling, stories got larger and wilder, instead--as in this case--smaller and tamer.

Using a "gut trip analysis," what is the hidden message from God, the Perfect At-One-Ment?

Life, as we know it, is a desert experience. However, our environment is not important. Rather, our relationship to the Good News is important. People in the desert get fed.

We have a choice to be victims or victors!

8: 11 - 21 Asking for a sign — and the Disciples are out of bread (again).

Jesus' warning concerns "the yeast of the Pharisees, and that of Herod." The Pharisees were influential in the life of the people they served. They represented "head trip analysis" in that the structures of spirituality were more important than the "experience" of spirituality. Herod represented the political structure of the day in the same way; following the letter of the law and not the spirit of the law was important.

Vss. 11 - 13 What is the story here concerning the Pharisees? Why does Jesus refuse to give them a sign? (Keep it "gut trip," please.!!)

Jesus rejects the need for an additional sign. The Pharisees couldn't see the sign represented in the presence of Jesus. How could they interpret another sign?

Vss. 20, 21 Research the significance of Jesus counting the number of people, and the number of baskets for the remainder of the food.

Some scholars have too much time on their hands. They speak of these numbers as "spiritual geometry."

8: 22 - 26 Healing of sight

What is the significance of this healing? What is the significance of Jesus' request for the blind man not to say anything, nor even go into his village?

This healing story, like all of them, represent the blind nature of human beings -- we are blind to the "Really Real," while awake to The Way Life Is (TWLI). Jesus calls us to Awaken to the existence of "The Really Real." (Authenticity, genuine, fulfilling our "creative gift.")

8:27 - 30 The inspired answer.

What is the source of Jesus' authority? (Keep it "gut-trippy.")

Jesus is fully awake! He is authentic. He is genuine. We have this capacity, yet we are blind to most of it.

What is the significance of Jesus' request for them to say nothing in vs. 30

Each of the gospels are written from a knowledge of the end of the story. Yet, the story itself is told as if it is from the beginning. Mark is written in this way. *Every thing will be clear, when you have experienced the resurrection!.*"