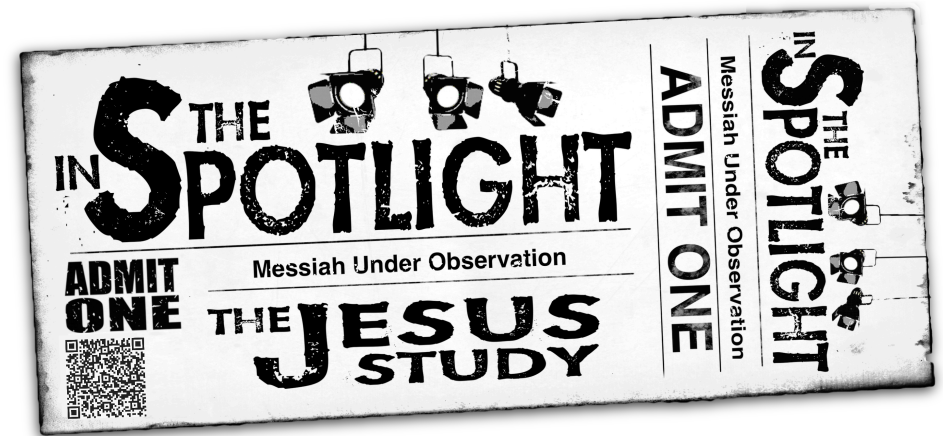


THE REVIEWS:

1. With whom do you identify in this lesson?
2. Mark's Gospel portrays a rift between what the readers "know" about Messiah (*the book introduces Messiah Jesus in his opening sentence*) and the disciples' erroneous expectations of Messiah. What might be Mark's reason for creating that tension?
3. What is the cost of following Jesus, and what is the cost of receiving Jesus' gift of peace, joy, and abundant life?

FURTHER STUDY:

- A. Scriptures (parallel Gospel accounts):
Matthew 15:1-31
- B. Suggested Reference Materials:
"Beautiful Outlaw" by John Eldredge



LESSON #13

"Jesus Gets Real"

Mark 8

Focus Scripture: Mark 8:35

"For those who want to save their life will lose it,
and those who lose their life for my sake, will
save it."

Food for Thought

"It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand." -Mark Twain

Vocabulary Definitions:

Rebuke (ἐπιτιμάω): chide, admonish. In modern vernacular: "shut up!"

Life (vv.35-37) (ψυχὴν): (a) the vital breath, breath of life, (b) the human soul, (c) the soul as the seat of affections and will

Brief Historical and/or Cultural Context:

Several passages in this chapter are spent in the Decapolis. A region where 10 Roman cities (nine of which were located on the Eastern/Northeastern side of the Jordan river and Sea of Gallilee) made a pact to do commerce and protect each other. The inhabitants were of all nationalities and religions. In scripture, leaven, or yeast is symbolic of several things, not necessarily all bad or all good. Leaven has the characteristic of being something small which permeates and expands an entire loaf of bread. Metaphorically, it could represent corruption, or, the Kingdom of God. Perhaps Jesus' use of leaven in today's lesson may refer to the fact that leaven produces gas.

Malachi 4:5-6 states that Elijah would return prior to the Lord's return. The Jews were quite expectant of a Messiah, many thought he was Elijah. John the Baptist had already been murdered, and even Herod believed Jesus was John reincarnated, however, Jesus refers to John the Baptist as Elijah.

Scene 1

THE STAGE: Read Mark 8:1-10

1. Where is Jesus (see 7:31)?
2. Who is there, how many, what's the problem?

THE SCRIPT:

1. How is Jesus responding?
2. How do the disciples respond?
3. How does this correlate to Jesus' desire to teach us to live an abundant life?

Scene 2

THE STAGE: Read Mark 8:11-26

1. Now where is Jesus in these passages? (see map)

THE SCRIPT:

(Note bookend verses 10 & 13, with only two verses in between.)

1. Why would Mark place Jesus' altercation with the Pharisees in between these two bookend verses?

Recall our lesson of John the Baptist and Herod. Herod was keeping John in prison, but was intrigued by John's teaching. Herod's fascination never developed into belief.

2. How might Jesus' leaven metaphor relate to the Pharisees and Herod?
3. What do you make of Jesus' rebuke?
4. What are the similarities between the healing of the blind man, and the healing of the deaf mute in chapter 7?
5. What do you think Mark is trying to say by putting this story here? (compare Jesus' rebuke to the disciples and how this healing came about)

Scene 3

THE STAGE: Read Mark 8:27-33

1. Where is Jesus now, and with whom?
2. Picture the scene, as if you were "blocking" the characters in a play.

THE SCRIPT:

1. Can you recall from Jesus' sermon on the Mount, what he says about where one should set their mind if following Jesus?
2. Why does Jesus call Peter "Satan"?
3. What does Jesus do immediately after reprimanding Peter? (to whom is he speaking?)

Read Mark 8:34-38

4. What are the three main points Jesus reveals about following him? (vs 34, 35-37, 38)
5. How is this offensive?