

Scripture and Background Information for March 8-14

The Unanswered Questions of Jesus

The accounts of Jesus' life are filled with stories, parables, sayings, sermons, and miracles. They're also filled with questions – not just the questions people asked Jesus. They're filled with questions Jesus asked the people who were deciding whether or not to follow Him. During this series, we'll look at the questions Jesus asks, consider their relevance, and challenge ourselves to find answers to the things about us and within us that Jesus wants to know.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

Since this week is quite long, write out some details that you'll need to retell the story in the **GOD'S WORDS** section. Then in the **MY WORDS** section, retell the story in your own words.

Background for Mark 8:14-21

On both sides of this exchange between Jesus and the disciples, Jesus has been performing miracles. One of the miracles that Jesus had just performed was the feeding of the four thousand in which he multiplies bread so that many can be fed.

So, Jesus becomes frustrated when they misinterpret His spiritual command as a physical admonishment about how much bread they brought with them. Still filled with doubt, the disciples argue about physical bread when Jesus is pointing to a spiritual condition. Yeast or leaven throughout the New Testament is used to express the idea of evil influence of sin. In this case, it is meant to express the hypocrisy and corruption of the Pharisees and Herod.

Jesus's seemingly harsh rebuke rests on the fact that the disciples' mistake was not simply a mistake of absent mindedness but of spiritual insensitivity and blindness. Sometimes the clearest message that we learn from the disciples is that proximity to Jesus does not always mean closeness with Jesus. Instead, Jesus encourages those who follow him, including us, to open our eyes both physically and spiritually to see how He has been working.

Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:

March 15	Mark 10:17-22
March 22	Luke 10:23-28