

***And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” Mark 8:29***

*Find a quiet place to begin. Take a few deep breaths. Ball your hands up into a fist and think about all of the frustrations, irritations, and worries of the day. Now take a long slow breath. As you release your fists, ask God to take away your anxiety and frustration of the day, and open your heart and mind to the study of his word.*

**Read Mark 8:1-10**

1. Why were the crowds with Jesus, and how long had they been there?
2. What does Jesus want to do for them?
3. What do his disciples say about this?
4. What does Jesus do, and how many people does he feed?
5. What is similar or different about this story than the feeding of the 5,000 people in Mark 6:31-44?

**Read Mark 8:11-13**

1. Who comes to Jesus in this passage?
2. What do they want from him?
3. When they ask for a sign from him, what kind of sign do you think they expected from him?
4. How does Jesus respond to them? Are you surprised by this?

**Read Mark 8:14-21**

1. Where were Jesus and his disciples?
2. What does Jesus warn them about?
3. What do the disciples think Jesus is talking about?
4. What are the questions Jesus asks them? (8 total.)
5. Why does Jesus ask them all these questions?
6. What does the “Leaven” represent in this passage? (remember Jesus often uses parables as a window into spiritual truths. He is talking to them about leaven as a way of teaching them something spiritually.)
7. What is the leaven of the Pharisees? (reference the conversations they have had with Jesus so far to help you form your answer.)
8. What is the leaven of Herod? (remember that he beheaded John the Baptist who was a prophet because a little girl asked him to and he didn’t want to disappoint her or his dinner guests. See Mark 6:14-29)

**Read Mark 8:22-26**

1. Where is Jesus in this story?
2. Who does he heal, and how does he do it?
3. Why does it take Jesus two times to fully heal this man?
4. How is this healing different from all the other healings we have witnessed?

**Read Mark 8:27-30**

1. What happens during this conversation?
2. What do the disciples conclude?
3. What does Jesus charge them? Why does he want this kept secret?

**Read Mark 8:31-38**

1. What does Jesus begin to teach the disciples? ( 4 different things.)
2. Is Jesus vague about these things or is he clear?
3. What does Peter think about this?
4. How does Jesus respond to Peter? Does this surprise you?
5. After speaking these things to the disciples, he calls the crowds to himself. What does he tell them?
6. What does Jesus tell them about following him? How do you think the people would have understand this? What would have been their response?
7. Thinking through this passage, what is your response?