

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS

The Rev. Dr. Luigi Gioia, *Theologian In Residence*

The Gospel of Mark: A Journey to Recognition

Mark vividly tells the story of disciples who follow Jesus without ever fully understanding him. Through movement, conflict, and irony, his Gospel portrays discipleship as a journey toward recognition, culminating at the cross and continuing in our lives.

1. A Reticent and Ironic Jesus (October 18)

Jesus remains strangely elusive throughout Mark's Gospel. His identity can be recognized only gradually, as his relationship with the disciples deepens and they learn to place their trust in him.

2. Blindness and Misunderstanding (October 25)

The inability of the disciples to understand Jesus is one of Mark's most powerful and unsettling themes, and yet his most reassuring.

3. Restless Discipleship (November 1)

Following Jesus in Mark means embracing uncertainty, leaving familiar ground behind, and discovering that faith is learned along the way.

4. A New Type of Community (November 8)

Jesus promotes a community shaped not by status or power but by the conviction that greatness is measured by the capacity to serve.

5. The Instant of Recognition (November 15)

The decisive moment of recognition occurs at the cross, and the Gospel's unfinished ending invites us to embark on the disciples' same journey.

GUEST SPEAKER

The Very Rev. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge,
Dean Emerita, Seminary of the Southwest

1. Trees Walking: Imperfect Sight, Unfinished Faith in the Gospel of Mark (December 13)

The "two-try" healing of the blind person in Mark 8:22-26 offers paradoxical insights on the gospel for our human life on the road.

2. How to Be Human: Mark's Good News (June 13)

While the gospel of Mark certainly does proclaim the identity of Jesus, the focus of the story may be as much about how to be human.

STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

1. Who Is This Man? (1:1–3:35)
 - 1.1. The beginning of the Good News (1:1–13)
 - 1.2. The proclamation of the Kingdom and the calling of the first disciples (1:14–20)
 - 1.3. A day in Capernaum: teaching, healing, and exorcisms (1:21–45)
 - 1.4. The first controversies: forgiveness, sinners, fasting, and Sabbath (2:1–3:6)
 - 1.5. The crowds, the Twelve, and the question of Jesus' identity (3:7–35)
2. Seeing Without Understanding (4:1–8:26)
 - 2.1. The parables of the Kingdom (4:1–34)
 - 2.2. The calming of the storm: “Who then is this?” (4:35–41)
 - 2.3. Power over evil, illness, and death (5:1–43)
 - 2.4. Rejection at Nazareth and the mission of the Twelve (6:1–30)
 - 2.5. The loaves, the sea, and the disciples' incomprehension (6:31–56)
 - 2.6. Purity, outsiders, and the boundaries of belonging (7:1–37)
 - 2.7. The second feeding and the warning against blindness (8:1–21)
 - 2.8. The gradual healing of a blind man (8:22–26)
3. Learning to Follow (8:27–10:52)
 - 3.1. Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (8:27–30)
 - 3.2. The first passion prediction and the call to take up the cross (8:31–9:1)
 - 3.3. The Transfiguration (9:2–13)
 - 3.4. Faith, unbelief, and the healing of a boy (9:14–29)
 - 3.5. The second passion prediction: greatness and service (9:30–50)
 - 3.6. Marriage, children, and possessions (10:1–31)
 - 3.7. The third passion prediction: power and servanthood (10:32–45)
 - 3.8. Bartimaeus: seeing and following on the road (10:46–52)
4. The Kingdom and a New Human Community (11:1–13:37)
 - 4.1. The entry into Jerusalem (11:1–11)
 - 4.2. The fig tree and the cleansing of the Temple (11:12–25)
 - 4.3. The challenge to Jesus' authority (11:27–12:12)
 - 4.4. Caesar, resurrection, and the greatest commandment (12:13–34)
 - 4.5. The Messiah, the scribes, and the widow's offering (12:35–44)
 - 4.6. The destruction of the Temple and the coming crisis (13:1–23)
 - 4.7. The coming of the Son of Man and the call to vigilance (13:24–37)
5. The Cross: Recognition at Last (14:1–16:8)
 - 5.1. The anointing at Bethany and Judas' betrayal (14:1–11)
 - 5.2. The Last Supper (14:12–26)

- 5.3. Gethsemane: prayer, abandonment, and arrest (14:27–52)
- 5.4. Jesus before the council and Peter's denial (14:53–72)
- 5.5. Jesus before Pilate (15:1–20)
- 5.6. The crucifixion and death of Jesus: the centurion's recognition (15:21–41)
- 5.7. The burial of Jesus (15:42–47)
- 5.8. The empty tomb: fear, silence, and the unfinished ending (16:1–8)

2. BLINDNESS AND MISUNDERSTANDING

6. Inability to understand

- 6.1.** 4.¹¹And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in **parables**, ¹²so that “they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not **understand**, lest they should turn and be forgiven.” ¹³And he said to them, “Do you not **understand** this parable? How then will you **understand** all the parables?”
- 6.2.** 6.⁵¹And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵²for they did not **understand** about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.
- 6.3.** 7. ¹⁴And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and **understand**
- 6.4.** 7. ¹⁷And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸And he said to them, “Then are you also without **understanding**?”
- 6.5.** 7. ¹⁴Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵And he cautioned them, saying, “Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”^b ¹⁶And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. ¹⁷And 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? ¹⁸Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? ¹⁹When 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.” ²¹And he said to them, “Do you not yet **understand**?”

7. Explanation of the parable of the seed

- 7.1.** 4.¹⁴The sower sows the word.
- i.** ¹⁵And these are the ones **along the path**, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.
 - ii.** ¹⁶And these are the ones sown **on rocky ground**: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.^a
 - iii.** ¹⁸And others are the ones sown **among thorns**. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
 - iv.** ²⁰But those that were sown on **the good soil** are the ones who hear the

word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

8. Seeing signs does not help

- 8.1. *After Jesus calms the storm*, 4. 41And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”
- 8.2. *After the healing of a man with a demon*, 5. 16And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. 17And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.
- 8.3. *Jesus walking on the water*, 6. 49but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, 50for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” 51And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, 52for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

9. The closer people are to Jesus the less they understand, hear, see

- 9.1. *People from his own city, Nazareth*, 6. 2And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? 3Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

10. The restoring of hearing and sight

- 10.1. 7. 31Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32And they brought to him a man who was **deaf** and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. 34And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “**Ephphatha**,” that is, “**Be opened**.” 35And **his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly**. 36And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”
- 10.2. 8. 22And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. 23And 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?” 24And he looked up and said, “I see people, but they look like trees, walking.” 25Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. 26And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

11. The good soil: faith

- 11.1. *Woman loosing blood*, 5. 27She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. 28For she said, “If I touch

even his garments, I will be made well.” ²⁹And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. [...] ³⁴And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”

- 11.2. *Jairus*, 5.³⁶ Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.”
- 11.3. *The Syrophoenician Woman*, 7. ²⁹And he said to her, “For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

12. The seed along the path and Satan: Peter

- 12.1. 8.³²Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But 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

Observations

13. Seeing is not the same as recognizing

- 13.1. The disciples witness extraordinary events: storms are calmed, demons expelled, the sick healed, thousands fed. Yet none of this guarantees understanding.
- 13.2. Mark challenges an assumption about faith: that if only we had sufficient evidence, we would believe.
- 13.3. The problem is not that the disciples have seen too little. It is that they have not yet learned how to see.
- 13.4. Recognition requires something more than information, evidence, or even religious experience. It requires a transformation of the person who sees.

14. Familiarity with Jesus does not guarantee understanding

- 14.1. Ironically, those who spend the most time with Jesus are often the least capable of understanding him.
- 14.2. The people of Nazareth think they know him because they know his family. The disciples think they know him because they accompany him. Peter will soon confess that Jesus is the Messiah, only to reject what being the Messiah actually means.
- 14.3. There is a warning here for religious people, especially those of us who have spent our lives studying, teaching, or serving the Church.
- 14.4. Familiarity with Jesus can become an obstacle to recognizing him.
- 14.5. We may become so attached to what we think we know about God that we lose the capacity to be led deeper into the knowledge of God.

15. Only faith makes understanding possible

- 15.1. Cf. the woman suffering from hemorrhages, Jairus, and the Syrophoenician woman.
- 15.2. None possesses a complete understanding of Jesus. Yet each approaches him with trust, despite fear, uncertainty, or apparent rejection.

- 15.3.** The disciples, by contrast, repeatedly ask what is happening, even when they have witnessed extraordinary things.
 - 15.4.** We do not understand first and believe afterwards. We have to trust before we can begin to understand.
- 16.** Blindness is not the greatest problem. Refusing to recognize one's blindness is.
 - 16.1.** In the healing at Bethsaida, the blind man initially sees only indistinctly: people appear like walking trees.
 - 16.2.** Recognition is not an instantaneous conversion from ignorance to certainty. It may be a gradual process, requiring patience, repeated encounters, and the willingness to acknowledge that our vision remains imperfect.
- 17.** Jesus' patience
 - 17.1.** The disciples misunderstand Jesus repeatedly. They are frightened, distracted, preoccupied with bread, unable to interpret what they have witnessed. Peter will even become an obstacle to Jesus' mission.
 - 17.2.** And yet Jesus continues to teach them, question them, travel with them, and invite them to follow him.
 - 17.3.** This is what faith looks like for most of us: not the possession of clear answers, but the willingness to keep following someone whom we have not yet fully understood.
- 18.** Mark places the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida (8:22–26) immediately before Peter's confession (8:27–30) and his subsequent rebuke (8:31–33). This narrative sequence makes Peter himself resemble the partially healed man: he sees enough to recognize Jesus as Messiah, but not enough to understand what kind of Messiah Jesus is.

GOSPEL OF MARK

Chapter 4

The Parable of the Sower

¹Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ²And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." ⁹And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The Purpose of the Parables

¹⁰And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹²so that

"they may indeed see but not perceive,
and may indeed hear but not understand,
lest they should turn and be forgiven."

¹³And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.^a ¹⁸And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²⁰But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

A Lamp Under a Basket

21And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? 22For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. 23If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." 24And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. 25For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

The Parable of the Seed Growing

26And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. 27He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. 28The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

30And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? 31It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, 32yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

33With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. 34He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

Jesus Calms a Storm

35On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." 36And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. 37And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. 38But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 39And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Chapter 5

Jesus Heals a Man with a Demon

¹They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.^a ²And when Jesus^b had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." ⁸For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" ⁹And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹²and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." ¹³So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

¹⁴The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed^c man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ¹⁶And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. ¹⁷And they began to beg Jesus^d to depart from their region. ¹⁸As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

Jesus Heals a Woman and Jairus's Daughter

²¹And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. ²²Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." ²⁴And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. ²⁵And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, ²⁶and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well."

29And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" 31And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" 32And he looked around to see who had done it. 33But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. 34And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

35While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" 36But overhearing^e what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." 37And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus^f saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 39And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." 40And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. 41Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." 42And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. 43And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Chapter 6

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

1He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. 2And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? 3Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. 4And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." 5And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

7And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8He

charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—⁹but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.^a ¹⁰And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. ¹¹And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

The Death of John the Baptist

¹⁴King Herod heard of it, for Jesus’^b name had become known. Some^c said, “John the Baptist^d has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.” ¹⁵But others said, “He is Elijah.” And others said, “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.” ¹⁶But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.” ¹⁷For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because he had married her. ¹⁸For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” ¹⁹And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, ²⁰for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

²¹But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. ²²For when Herodias’s daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you.” ²³And he vowed to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom.” ²⁴And she went out and said to her mother, “For what should I ask?” And she said, “The head of John the Baptist.” ²⁵And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” ²⁶And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. ²⁷And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John’s^e head. He went and beheaded him in the prison ²⁸and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

³⁰The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³²And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. ³³Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴When

he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. ³⁵And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. ³⁶Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." ³⁷But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii⁹ worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" ³⁸And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." ³⁹Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. ⁴¹And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. ⁴²And they all ate and were satisfied. ⁴³And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. ⁴⁴And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Jesus Walks on the Water

⁴⁵Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night⁹ he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, ⁵⁰for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." ⁵¹And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵²for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

⁵³When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him ⁵⁵and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

Chapter 7

Traditions and Commandments

¹Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, ²they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is,
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unwashed. ³(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly,^a holding to the tradition of the elders, ⁴and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash.^b And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.^c) ⁵And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" ⁶And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me;
⁷in vain do they worship me,
teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

⁸You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

⁹And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! ¹⁰For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' ¹¹But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban"' (that is, given to God)^d— ¹²then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, ¹³thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

What Defiles a Person

¹⁴And he called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him."^e ¹⁷And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?"^f (Thus he declared all foods clean.) ²⁰And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. ²¹For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

The Syrophenician Woman's Faith

²⁴And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon.^g And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. ²⁵But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. ²⁶Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the

demon out of her daughter. 27And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." 28But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." 29And he said to her, "For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." 30And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

Jesus Heals a Deaf Man

31Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. 34And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." 35And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36And Jesus^a charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Chapter 8

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

1In 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. 3And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." 4And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?" 5And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." 6And 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. 7And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. 8And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. 9And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. 10And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.^a

The Pharisees Demand a Sign

11The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. 12And 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.” 13And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side.

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod

14Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. 15And he cautioned them, saying, “Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”^b 16And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. 17And 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? 18Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19When 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.” 21And he said to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

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

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

27And 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?” 28And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” 29And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” 30And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

31And 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. 32And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33But 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.”

34And 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. 35For whoever would save his life^d will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the

gospel's will save it. ³⁶For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷For what can a man give in return for his soul? ³⁸For 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."