The Gospel of Mark

The Students' Stubborn Blindness

Mark 8:13-26

1. the Lesson (Mk. 8:13-16)
Jesus left the conflict with the Pharisees so abruptly that the disciples only realized they forgot to bring provisions once they arrived at their destination (cf. Mt. 16:5). Jesus uses this opportunity to warn the disciples about dangers that they had just witnessed (Mk. 8:15 cf. Mk. 8:11-12). The disciples are oblivious to the real warning from Jesus and instead focus on solving the problem of their provi-

sions (Mk. 8:16).

2. _____ the Lesson (Mk. 8:17-21)

Jesus warns the disciples that their persistence in missing His point was putting them in the same boat as the people who only heard His parables (Mk. 4:10-12). The disciples' problem was that their memory of the miracles was more focussed on what Jesus did rather than what it meant for Jesus to have done them (Mk. 8:19-20). The disciples finally understood that Jesus was not concerned with who bakes their bread but rather who influences their understanding of Himself (cf. Mt. 16:12).

3. _____ the Lesson (Mk. 8:22-26)

This account of healing a blind man is only recorded in Mark's gospel, and it is the only miracle in Mark where the healing is not instantaneous (Mk. 8:22-26). The disciples have been slow in fully grasping Jesus' teaching up until this point (Mk. 6:52), and that will continue until after His resurrection (Acts 1:6). This first account of a blind man receiving sight (cf. Mk. 10:46ff) serves as both a living illustration for Jesus' disciples and as a literary transition for the reader of the gospel. Jesus will shortly clearly reveal who He is to His disciples (Mk. 8:27-29; 9:2) while patiently walking with them as they struggle to comprehend all that they witness (Mk. 8:31; Jn. 20:8-9).