

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod

Discussion Questions for Mark 8:11-21

Open It

1. When was a time you misunderstood what someone said or did? What resulted?
2. What is one negative example from which you have learned?
3. In what ways do many adults grow hardened as they get older?

Explore It

1. Who came to see Jesus? Why? (8:11)
2. How did the Pharisees plan to “test” Jesus? (8:11)
3. Why did Jesus “sigh deeply”? (8:12)
4. What announcement did Jesus make to the generation of His day? (8:12)
5. What did Jesus think of His visitors? (8:12–13)
6. When did Jesus start talking about the Pharisees? (8:15)
7. What did Jesus warn His disciples against? (8:15)
8. How did the disciples misunderstand Jesus’ warning? (8:16)
9. What was Christ’s explanation for why the disciples could not understand what He meant? (8:17–18)
10. Why couldn’t the disciples understand what Jesus said? (8:17–18)
11. What would have enabled the disciples to understand Jesus better? (8:17–18)
12. Why was Jesus amazed at His disciples? (8:17–21)
13. Why did Jesus remind the disciples about the miracles of feeding the crowds? (8:19)
14. How did Jesus try to get through to His disciples? (8:18–20)
15. Of what miracles did Jesus remind the disciples? Why? (8:19–20)

Get It

1. What did Jesus want His disciples to learn from the Pharisees and Herod?
2. When have you ever misunderstood what the Bible said about a certain topic or idea?
3. What passages or ideas from the Bible have you struggled to understand?
4. How can we guard against misinterpreting or ignoring the Scriptures?
5. When has your heart been “hardened” to God’s message?
6. When has your heart been “hardened” to the voice of the Holy Spirit?
7. How can you be more sensitive to God’s will for you?
8. If Jesus had been speaking directly to us, what negative example might He have warned us to learn from?
9. If Jesus had been speaking to you personally, what negative example might He have warned you to watch out for?
10. How can you separate yourself from the corruption of the world and yet still be an effective witness for Christ?

Apply It

1. What miracles of Christ, negative examples, or object lessons can you use as reminders of Christ's proper place in your life?
2. What is one step you can take to soften your heart toward God this week?
3. What is one specific command of Christ's that you want to apply to your life this week?
4. What can you do to steer clear of the evil and corruption in your workplace, community, or home life?