

Sermon Study Questions

Sunday, July 5, 2026

1. Read Mark 8:1-21.
2. What is the context of Jesus' warning about the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod? Where had Jesus been and what has He been teaching His disciples?
3. When it comes to the signs that Jesus performed, what must we pay special attention to?
4. When the Pharisees met Jesus what does the language Mark uses tell us about their motives? How did the sermon explain what is really going on?
5. How did the sermon discuss Jesus' reaction to the Pharisees? Why did He refuse to show them a sign? What does Jesus' reaction tell us about the danger He warns His disciples about?
6. What does Jesus' use of the word leaven tell us about the danger He is warning us of? What is the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod?
7. What do the Scriptures teach us about the Pharisees and what to watch out for in our own hearts? How did they view God and His grace? How does the disciples' little faith speak to us about the dangers of dully hearing the word of God?
8. What is the cure to the leaven of the Pharisees?
9. What are some of the ways discussed in the sermon that keep us from falling into the error of a merely outwardly conforming faith?
10. Pray.

Reading of the Law -

James 1:22-24 - 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his

natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

Prayer of Confession

Heavenly Father, hallowed be Your name. May Your kingdom come, may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Father, You have given us great light in Your word. Never have so many had such free and abundant access to Your word as we have today. Yet, so often Lord, when we hear and read Your word it finds little room in our hearts. We often think that it is sufficient that we've heard and understood Your word, that we've attended worship, that in these things we have performed our duty and now may return to the cares and concerns of our lives. We often prepare little in prayer that we may receive Your word in faith when we come before You. And we often treat the worship of You as one thing among many that we fit into our lives and not as of the highest importance. Lord, You are the great God and Maker of all things who alone possesses life and immortality and we trifle with You and Your word. We do not seek Your grace in order that Your word would penetrate our hearts deeply and change us. We are content with an outward conformity to Your word. Father, these things ought not be so.

Please forgive us for so often being dull in our hearing and receiving of Your word. Please have mercy upon us in Christ and awaken us to our great need to not only hear Your word, but to trust in it deeply within our hearts, that we would treasure it as vital to our lives, that we might know You and worship You in sincerity and truth. Father, we are a weak and sinful people, prone to wander in thought, word, and deed. Be pleased to rescue us for Your name's sake from the hypocrisy of being only hearers of Your word. By Your divine power please hide Your word deep within our hearts that it would sanctify us and make us more like Christ; that we would love You and treat others with the same mercy and grace that You have treated us with. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon – Psalm 103:10-13

10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,

nor repay us according to our iniquities.

11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

12 as far as the east is from the west,

so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

13 As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 112

Q. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. I must not give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, not gossip or slander, nor condemn or join in condemning anyone rashly and unheard. Rather, I must avoid all lying and deceit as the devil's own works, under penalty of God's heavy wrath. In court and everywhere else, I must love the truth, speak and confess it honestly, and do what I can to defend and promote my neighbor's honor and reputation.

Ps 15; [Prov 19:5, 9; 21:28](#); [Mt 7:1](#); [Lk 6:37](#); [Rom 1:28-32](#).

[Lev 19:11, 12](#); [Prov 12:22](#); [13:5](#); [Jn 8:44](#); [Rev 21:8](#).

[1 Cor 13:6](#); [Eph 4:25](#).

[1 Pet 3:8, 9](#); [4:8](#).

OT Reading – Deuteronomy 13:1-5

1 If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So, you shall purge the evil from your midst.

Sermon Text

Mark 8:1-21

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

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

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