



The sighs of Jesus in Mark	
1:41 "Jesus was indignant" OR "Jesus, filled with compassion"	σπλαγχνίζομαι <i>splanchnízomai</i> ; to have the bowels yearn, be moved with compassion (Mark 6:34, 8:2, 9:22 – only in gospels)
3:5 "Looked around in anger"	ὀργή <i>orgḗ</i> ; desire, violent passion; by implication punishment – indignation, vengeance (Rom 1:18, 2:5, Rev 19:15)
3:5 "And deeply distressed"	συλλυπέω <i>syllypéō</i> ; to afflict jointly, sorrow (on account of) someone; to affect with grief together; (only here)
7:34 "With a deep sigh"	στενάζω <i>stenázō</i> ; to be in straits, to sigh, murmur, pray inaudibly with grief (Rom 8:23, 2 Cor 5:2-4, Heb 13:17, James 5:9)
8:12 "He sighed deeply"	ἀναστενάζω <i>anastenázō</i> ; to draw sighs up from the bottom of the breast, to sigh deeply. (only here)
14:33 "Began to be deeply distressed"	ἐκθαμβέω <i>ekthambéō</i> ; to astonish utterly – affright, greatly (sore) amaze. (Mark 9:15, 16:5-6)
14:33 "And troubled"	ἀδημονέω <i>adēmonéō</i> ; to be overwhelmed to the point of loathing; to be in distress of mind, full of heaviness (Phil 2:26)
14:34 "Overwhelmed with sorrow"	περίλυπος <i>perilypos</i> ; grieved all around, intensely sad – exceeding sorrowful (Mark 6:26, Luke 18:23-24)

Request for a Sign | 8:11-13

- *Behind the demand for a sign was the prior conviction that Jesus' authority was demonic in origin and his works an expression of black magic.*
- *Hence the exasperation in Jesus' question "Why does this generation seek a sign?" which reflects the perverse unbelief of those who oppose God's grace (8:38, 9:19). Just like Moses experienced in the wilderness (Duet 32:5-20), Jesus experienced in his day.*
- *Jesus' absolute rejection of a sign is abbreviated in Mark but properly expanded in meaning to OT formula "May God do so to me and more if ever a sign is given to this generation!"*
- *Do not miss the violence of Christ against unbelief!*
 - *Christ is always ready to receive sinners on grounds of humility and belief. But his unrelenting opposition and judgment of unbelief is equal on the emotional scale.*
 - *This statement from Christ is more than resistance. It expresses Jesus' authority to judge.*

Failure to Understand | 8:14-21

- *The reference to the one loaf in the boat ties these verses together with the prior account where Jesus returned to the lake leaving the Pharisees standing on the shore. In the abrupt departure, the disciples had forgotten to take bread.*
- *Jesus chose this opportunity to caution the disciples against "the leaven of the Pharisees" while the impact of the recent encounter was still fresh.*
- *The disciples only heard a reference to bread and began arguing. Their arguing indicated how completely absorbed they were in their temporal preoccupations.*
- *This earned Jesus' sharp condemnation regarding a lack of understanding in men whose privileged position should have led them to perceive the truth of Jesus' person.*
- *The Pharisees had asked for a sign with which to judge Jesus, when in fact their judgment had already been decided by God.*

Failure to Understand | 8:14-21

- *Jesus' rebuke is a series of sober questions on the persistent blindness of the 12 (4:13, 40, 6:52, 7:18, 8:14-21). Repeated exposure to Jesus' teaching and works had not led to reflection on their significance. The rebuke is not because they missed the leaven analogy, but because they failed to perceive the meaning of Jesus presence with them.*
- *The indignant questions concerning hardness of heart and blindness of spirit echo Israel in Isaiah 6:9-10 and refer to the distinction between the crowd and the disciples in 4:11-12.*
- *By Q&A Jesus leads disciples back to the two feedings. The disciples remember the precise facts perfectly. Nevertheless they fail to understand what had taken place.*
- *The feeding of the two multitudes as Jesus' other miracles and, indeed, his teachings are all parables in the sense that they point to something beyond themselves to the secret that Jesus was the Messiah.*

Failure to Understand | 8:14-21

- *The yeast of the Pharisees was their desire to compartmentalize Jesus, to place him into traditional categories that they can manage.*
- *The two feedings were signs that pointed to Jesus as the Christ. But no traditional categories can grasp or account for the feedings. So the feedings did not meet the Pharisees "test" for prophetic authority.*
- *The scribes had reduced the Law to a formula (7:11-12). And now they sought to reduce Christ to a sign. This brought the indignation of Jesus with the Pharisees and his frustration with his disciples to a new pitch.*
- *Do I reduce Christ to a formula? To a sign? Do I need Jesus to "show up in my life" in order to answer the call to radical faith in him as the Messiah? Do I need an experience like The Shack to validate my faith? Will some temporal sign elevate my faith? There is a reason Abraham noted "though one rise from the dead, they will not believe!"*

Opening of Blind Eyes | 8:22-26

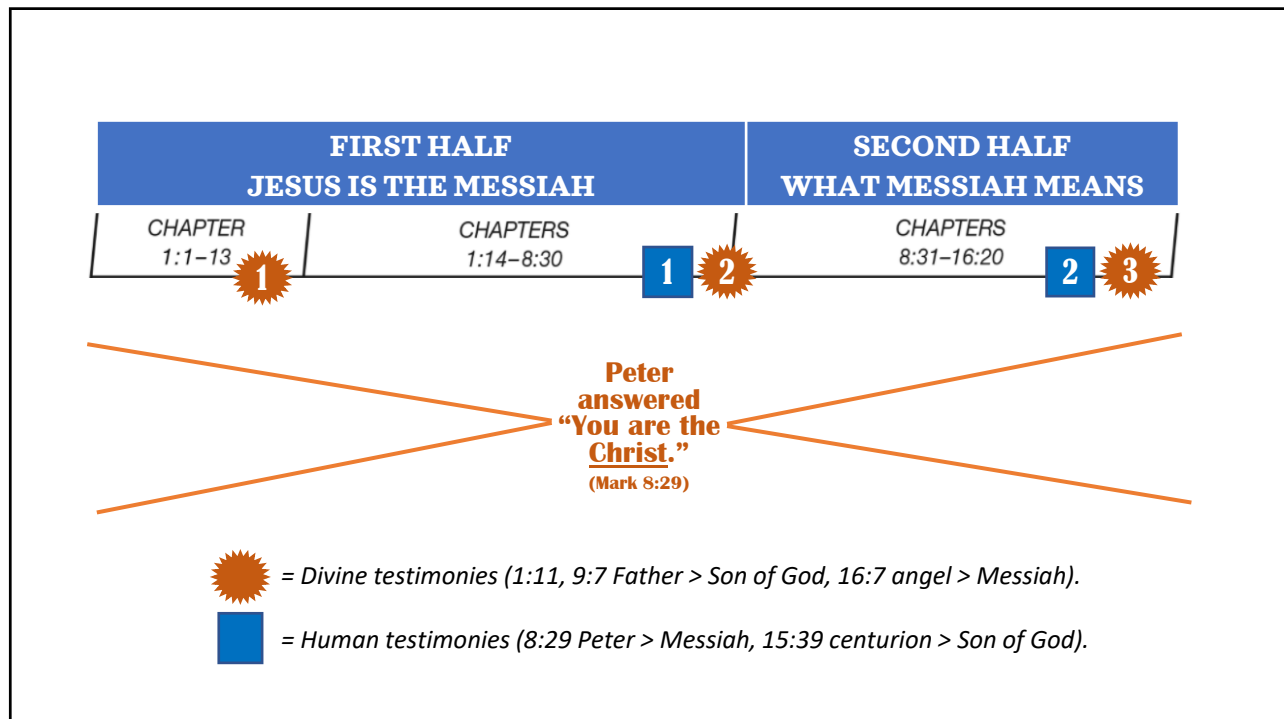
- *The crossing of 8:13 brought Jesus and the 12 to Bethsaida, which had the size of a city but the organization of a village. There a number of friends brought a blind man to Jesus.*
- *Jesus takes the blind man away by himself out of the village.*
 - *This was not Jesus' usual custom as he normally did his miracles publicly.*
 - *Establishing a personal relationship with the man beyond the customary leading was important for the man to exercise faith in Jesus.*
 - *Jesus sought to avoid the false verification that Jesus was only a miracle worker. (1:35-39, 45, 3:7-9, 6:45, 8:26).*
- *The personal touch points of using spittle and the laying on of hands were culturally expected.*

Opening of Blind Eyes | 8:22-26

- *Three unexpected elements unique only to this miracle –*
 - *Jesus questions if his action had been effective?*
 - *The explicit reference to partial healing.*
 - *The laying on of hands a second time to complete the healing.*
- *This parallels the disciples' recovery of sight. They remained blind but somewhere throughout their time with Jesus, their understanding began to deepen as to who their Master really was and what that meant for him. Like this healing –*
 - *Jesus questions his disciples as to whether they heard and saw and understood correctly? This is especially true in the following question where Peter proves his understanding is correct (though he had yet to learn what being the Messiah meant).*
 - *The disciples seemed to grow in small steps in partial understanding.*
 - *The work of Christ through his Spirit would not leave the disciples with a half-way understanding and faith. The work would be completed.*

Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *At the center of his gospel, Mark places the recognition that Jesus is the Messiah.*
- *This is expected since Mark opens with 1:1. Yet from 1:1 - 8:29 there is no recognition of this fact in spite of remarkable evidence which demands a decision about Christ's identity.*
 - *Jesus displays extraordinary power that astonishes his countrymen though they do not recognize his true identity (1:27, 2:7, 6:2).*
 - *He associates with sinners and disregards conventions of piety so scandalous that the guardians of tradition can only think in terms of the demonic (2:15-20, 3:22-30, 7:1-5).*
 - *That demons recognize him communicates nothing to the bystanders except opposition to Jesus (1:24f, 3:30f, 5:7f).*
 - *The disciples discuss Jesus' identity but find no categories to understand him (4:41, 6:51) so they fail to recognize him (8:17-21).*
- *By weaving these narratives through the first half of his gospel, Mark creates a tension which can only be resolved by the recognition of Jesus; dignity.*



Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *Now we understand why Jesus healed the blind man in several steps. He was making an analogy of the healing of physical sight to the healing of the disciples' physical sight. Mark patterns the two narratives exactly the same.*

Mark 8:22-26 is parallel to Mark 8:27-30

8:22	Situation	8:27
8:23-24	Partial Sight	8:27-28
8:25	Sight	8:29
8:26	Injunction to Silence	8:30

Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *This central message also introduces a massive pivot in Mark's gospel.*
- *Earlier indications that Jesus would be taken away (2:20) or that his adversaries were determined to destroy him (3:6) remained veiled allusions to an apparently distant event.*
- *In direct response to Peter's declaration however, Jesus spoke of the necessity of his death with a directness which scandalized even the disciples (8:31-33).*
- *Foreign to the disciples, this clear announcement of the theology behind the cross and resurrection dominate the rest of Mark's gospel.*
- *Thus, the recognition of Jesus as the Messiah is the point towards which the first half of Mark builds and from which the rest of Mark flows.*

Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *Iturea was dominated by Caesarea Philippi, the residence of Herod Philip. Originally given to Herod the Great by Augustus, Philip rebuilt the neighboring city, Paneas, and renamed it after Caesar and himself calling it Caesarea Philippi.*
- *Here Jesus questions the disciples as to his identity. Often the questions of Jesus lead to new teaching (9:33, 12:24, 25). The first question “Who do men say . . . ?” prepares the way for the second, more personal, question “Who do you say>”*
- *“Men” in Mark often refers to those from whom revelation remains veiled (1:17, 7:7f, 9:31, 10:27, 11:30) as opposed to the disciples who have been shown special grace. This sharp distinction widens the gap between the inadequate answers of “men” and the confession of faith by Peter.*

Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *The answers of men reveal the dignity of Christ remains veiled from the people. Their answers here are the same and in the same order as 6:14-16. And the responses indicate the same inadequacies –*
 - *The conviction that Jesus is Elijah or John indicates he is nothing in himself but only the reincarnation of a past event.*
 - *The affirmation that Jesus is an ordinary prophet fails to distinguish between Jesus and the messengers of God that God sent throughout Israel’s history.*
 - *All three opinions fail to recognize Jesus as the “One anointed by God.”*
- *The answers of men reveal the dignity of Christ remains veiled from the people. Their answers here are the same and in the same order as 6:14-16.*
- *That Jesus leads them to this recognition is significant. He solicited this response of his messiahship because it was imperative that he define what being the Messiah means.*

Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *Messiah = “the One anointed by God” and implies divine election and appointment to a particular task and a special endowment of power for its performance.*
 - *In the OT, prophets and priests and kings were anointed.*
 - *The expectation of a future anointed leader was grounded in the promise of a faithful ruler in David’s line (2 Sam 7:14-16, Isa 55:3-5, Jer 23:5).*
 - *Later “Messiah” became increasingly fluid. However, the special relationship to God and the people of God remained dominant.*
 - *In the first century, the crucial question concerned the function of the Messiah. And in this Jesus’ teaching stood in radical opposition to contemporary expectations.*
 - *Peter recognized Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, who fulfilled divine promise and the hopes of Israel. Of the deeper and more costly understanding of Messiah, he had no idea.*
 - *Jesus hesitated to use the term himself though he knew himself to be “the anointed of the Lord” (12:35-37, 14:61-62). But his destiny was to be the fulfillment of the prophetic anointed One, not the royal figure of popular expectations.*

Recognition of the Messiah | 8:27-30

- *Acts 2:22-41 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”*
- *Have you received special grace to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the anointed One of God?*
- *If I have received that special grace, what right do I have not to declare him as the Christ? What right do I have not to repent? What right do I have not to obey? What right do I have not to worship Jesus?*