

Citizens of Heaven

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

SEPT 15, 2024

True Vision

We must learn to see the world through the person and work of Jesus.

In the *Citizens of Heaven* series, we will look at seven episodes from the life of Jesus in the book of Mark. In each, Jesus is confronted by the politics of his day—both religious and civil. In Mark 8:10–21, leaders from the party of the Pharisees, often defined as the separatists, ask him for a sign from heaven that would prove he was the Messianic figure who would end the occupation and usher in the end time. Yet this was not why he came. They were blinded by their expectations and, therefore, unable to see who he really was. If we really want to be of use to the world, we must let God be God and put any false visions of him down.

Read Mark 8:10–21.

- How has your vision of Jesus, his mission in the world and his role in your life, changed over time? How have your expectations changed?
- What might be the reason for Jesus's frustration expressed in response to the Pharisee's question (Mark 8:11–12)? (see John 5:39–40)
- What was the underlying expectation that many in Israel had about Jesus and his ministry (see Acts 1:6)? How has this misunderstanding, projection on to Jesus, carried on in our own day?
- What might Jesus be referring to in his warning to his disciples (Mark 8:15)? (see 1 Corinthians 5:6–8). See also his series of questions to them in Mark 8:17–21.
- What is it that the disciples seem to still not understand here (Mark 8:21)? (see John 6:5–6; Philippians 1.6)
- What steps can you take today to guard your heart from doubt and unbelief?

Praying together

Holy Spirit, deepen my understanding of the work of the Gospel in my life today.