

Mark 6:52

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

Analysis

For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened. Their amazement revealed failure to learn from the feeding: 'they considered not the miracle of the loaves' (οὐ γὰρ συνῆκαν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄρτοις, ou gar synēkan epi tois artois). 'For their heart was hardened' (ἀλλ᾽ ἦν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδία πεπωρωμένη, all' ēn autōn hē kardia pepōrōmenē)—πωρώω (poroō) means calloused, dulled, unable to perceive. This sobering assessment shows even devoted disciples struggled with spiritual understanding. The same term describes unbelieving Israel (Mark 3:5; John 12:40), warning that privilege doesn't guarantee perception.

Historical Context

Heart hardening was serious biblical concept, associated with Pharaoh's resistance to God (Exodus 7-14) and Israel's wilderness rebellion. Mark's including this critical assessment of disciples was unusual—most ancient biographies idealized heroes. The candor suggests eyewitness testimony (likely Peter's self-criticism transmitted through Mark). Early church found encouragement: if disciples who walked with Jesus struggled with hardened hearts, contemporary believers shouldn't despair over spiritual dullness but seek divine illumination.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does this verse teach about Christ's nature and work?
2. How should this truth shape our daily discipleship?

Interlinear Text

οὐ	γὰρ	συνῆκαν	ἐπὶ	τοῖς	ἄρτοις	ἢν	γὰρ	ἢ
not	For	they considered	the miracle of	G3588	the loaves	was	For	G3588
G3756	G1063	G4920	G1909		G740	G2258	G1063	
καρδία αὐτῶν πεπωρωμένη								
heart	their	hardened						
G2588	G846	G4456						

Additional Cross-References

Luke 24:25 (Parallel theme): Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

Isaiah 63:17 (Parallel theme): O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

Mark 16:14 (Parallel theme): Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.