



Intro:

Today, we are going to look at a story from Jesus' life and ministry. In this story, Jesus interacts with two groups of people: His disciples and the Pharisees, who were essentially a rule-heavy religious group that kind of missed the whole "grace" thing. But in this passage, both groups shared a similar problem. Simply put, they weren't very observant. Now, before we jump into their story, I want to see how observant you are.

[TEACHER NOTE: If your youth ministry doesn't allow phones during the service, then have a few volunteers pass out pens and paper so each student can write down their observations. Also, the two pictures for this activity are in the folder labeled "Intro Chameleon Slides" in your downloaded file.]

So, go ahead and pull your phone out and open the notes app. Yes, I just told you to pull your phone *out*, in church, instead of asking you to put it *away*. So, take full advantage of this moment. Once your phone is out and your notes app is open, raise your phone in the air so I know when most of you are ready. Okay, here's what we are going to do. I'm going to put a picture up on the screen and you are going to have twenty seconds to write down every detail you observe. Where was the picture taken? What colors are in the picture? What's in the background of the picture? So on and so forth. This is an individual exercise so keep your observations to yourself. Sound good? Okay, here we go. You can start when I say begin. One, two, three, begin!

Time is officially up! No more typing. No more writing. Now, I'm sure you all wrote down a plethora of fantastic observations, but I just have one simple question.

Question: How many of you observed the chameleon?

For those of you who are extremely confused, let's take another look at the picture. Right there, smack-dab in the middle of the picture, is a big green chameleon butt. I would guess there's a handful of you thinking, how the heck did I miss that? It was right in front of me! And that's a fair question because it was quite literally right in front of you. Isn't it strange when that

happens? Isn't it strange how you can miss something that's right in front of your eyes? Well, that lack of observation is exactly what we are going to talk about today. Check out Mark 8:11-18 with me. I'm going to read the whole passage first and then go back and break it down. Keep in mind this whole exchange happens right after a miracle. That will prove both important and ironic as we move forward.

The Word:

Mark 8:11-18 (CSB)

¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, demanding of him a sign from heaven to test him. ¹² Sighing deeply in his spirit, he said, "Why does this generation demand a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³ Then he left them, got back into the boat, and went to the other side. ¹⁴ The disciples had forgotten to take bread and had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵ Then he gave them strict orders: "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." ¹⁶ They were discussing among themselves that they did not have any bread. ¹⁷ Aware of this, he said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact you have no bread? Don't you understand or comprehend? Do you have hardened hearts? ¹⁸ Do you have eyes and not see; do you have ears and not hear? And do you not remember?"

In these sequential stories, we see the two groups of people I mentioned earlier—the Pharisees and Jesus' disciples. We also see the problem both groups shared. Simply put, their problem is this:

Problem: They can't see what Jesus is doing right in front of their eyes.

Jesus had proven time and time again that He is who He said He was. He was (and is) in fact the promised Messiah, the Son of God, and the Redeemer of all things. And yet, like the chameleon in our exercise, they didn't see it, at least not fully. However, although the Pharisees and Jesus' disciples had the same observation problem, they had different reasons behind the problem. Let's look at the Pharisees' reason first. Jump back to Mark 8:11 with me.

The Pharisees:

Mark 8:11 (CSB)

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