

# MARK 6:30-44

Today we are going to cover one of my favorite stories in the bible.

- In terms of visible scale, this is the most extensive miracle in the bible.

Most people call it “the feeding of the 5 thousand”

- In reality, this is “the feeding of the 25 thousand”
  - We know this from the parallel account in **Matt 14:21** where it says that “There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children”.
    - Most likely there were just as many woman as men and probably more children.

This makes me think of **John 1:3** “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.”

**We’ve got some amazing cooks in this room....**

- I’ve seen you all prepare food for hundreds of people!
  - At our harvest dinner our men get together and make one of the greatest thanksgiving meals you can find around.
  - I’ve seen our ladies cook mass amounts of food for our school events like it’s just any other meal...

But it’s another thing entirely to instantaneously create food for twenty to twenty-five thousand people...

- Not even the greatest restaurant in the world could do that. (chick-fil-a of course)
- This was something only the Maker of the universe could do.

When I first went through this passage as a teenager I instantly picked up on a phrase that it uses over and over “a desert place.”

- In vs. 31 it says that Jesus brought his disciples into a “desert place.”
- Vs. 32- they departed into a desert place”
- Vs. 35- they are hungry and in a “desert place”
- BU THEN... vs. 39... he has everyone sit down, it says, “on green grass”!

**I would think to myself, SEE.... THIS IS HOW GOD WORKS....**

- You could be in the most terribly place in your life... dry as a desert!!
- But God can bring the green grass anywhere!

I would quote **psalms 1** that “**he will make you like a tree planted by rivers of water.**” .... and then I would say... even if you’re in the desert...

Then I was in a seminary class and the instructor happened to highlight this passage... he said, you know how it says desert 3 times and then says they sat on green grass... yeah, that doesn’t mean God made green grass... the word desert encompasses the word Wilderness also.

So, I was making a mountain out of a mole hill... even worse... I was not performing exegesis but isegeesis.

- Exegesis is when pull meaning from the text
- Isegeesis is when you put meaning into the text

Today I hope to bring some comparisons in this text to light. Maybe even show you something here you haven’t seen before... *but let me start off with the basics:*

**This isn’t just another story about Jesus’s power on display... this is a glimpse into the heart of Christ.**

- We see His Merciful compassion and tender care!
- He doesn’t just have the power to meet human needs, He also has a deep desire to do so!

Here we see Jesus as “**Jehonah-jirah**” from **Gen 22:14**.

- This is an Old Testament name for God, meaning “**the Lord who provides.**”

In **Mark 6:30-44**, Jesus is seen as the great provider that he is...

This is a beautiful event... *but it has a terribly ending...*

We read how this encounter ended in **John 6:66** “**From that time... many of his disciples (or followers) went back, and walked no more with him.**”

Most of the people in the crowd that day would ultimately reject Jesus...

- Any yet He provides for all of them...

Johnny Mac says in this passage Jesus “provides rest for the weary, truth for the wandering, and food for the wanting.”

Aren't you glad we serve a compassionate caring savior!?

Here's my title for today:

## THE BEST BREAD YOU'LL EVER EAT!

**Vs. 30** “And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.”

- **Note:** The twelve had just returned from their short term missions trip and were giving a report to Christ.

Apparently it didn't last long because vs. 31 says they couldn't get a free second due to people coming and going... it says they **could get time to even eat!**

- **This can be a typical day in a busy ministry...**
  - Over the years I have developed an appetite that allows me to eat at whatever time of the day is open.
  - You say, “**WHY**” ... **because sometimes eating is the easiest thing on the schedule to give up or move around.**
  - Now Ethan?... not so much...he turns into what I call “**afternoon Ethan**” if don't get food into him every now and then.

So, vs 31... the disciples are exhausted and hungry

What does Jesus do?

- **Vs. 31** “And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while... (32) And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.”

Sometimes you've just got to get away...

- Life can sometimes be so strenuous that its best to get away and rest.

- **Business is not Godliness...** Jesus teaches us here the importance of taking a break.
  - Many a Pastor's wife and children have suffered because of this neglected lesson.
  - **Let me be clear-** we never take a break from our relationship with Christ or his people...
  - We take breaks to go towards our relationship with Christ and his people.
  - **Those are the tools God uses to bring us TRUE rest!**

Well **(vs.32)** they take off on their boat and most likely have a 4 mile journey ahead of them...

**Vs. 33** says the crowd took off running and met them of the other side...

- We know where this happened because of chapter 9...
- So we know that it was likely a 8 mile run for the people on the shore behind them... somehow they make it before the boat does. (could have been stormy seas, it could have been a nap in-between rows.)

Whatever the case, vs... 34.. Jesus gets out of the boat and says, "you've got to be kidding me... we just came over here to get a break from you all."

- Jesus didn't say that, that's what we say to our kids when they follow us into the other room...

**Vs.34**, look what our loving Saviour actually does,

"And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd..."

Jesus meets the crowd with compassion.

- In the Greek, "moved with compassion" is one word. (splänkh-ne'-zo-mi)
  - **Meaning:** The deepest part of a persons being.

Jesus saw the thousands as shepherdless sheep, defenseless, lost, unable even to feed themselves. And it says, "he began to teach them many things."

- **Or in other words:** he taught them at great length.

Jesus was MOVED in the deepest way you could be moved for these people!

Believe it or not, Jesus is moved today for you!

- Some of you have a hard time believing that...

**Illustration:** An old man whose son had been convicted of gross crimes in the army and sentenced to be shot came to plead with Lincoln. As the boy was an only son, the case appealed to Lincoln; but he had just received a telegram from Butler which read: “Mr. President, I beg you not to interfere with the court-martials of this army. You will destroy all discipline in the army.”

Lincoln handed the old man the telegram, and he watched the shadow of disappointment and sorrow come over the man’s face as he read the message. He suddenly seized his hand and exclaimed, “By jingo! Butler or no Butler, here goes!”

He wrote out an order and handed it to the father. The man read the order, which was as follows: “Job Smith is not to be shot until further orders from me. Abraham Lincoln.”

“Why,” said the father, “I thought this was going to be a pardon. You may order him to be shot next week.”

“My old friend,” said Lincoln, “evidently you do not understand my character. If your son is never shot until an order comes from me, he will live to be as old as Methuselah”

**Point:** Regardless of whether you are a believer or not, if you cannot imagine that Jesus has tender compassion for you, you simply do not know what he is like.

- Jesus “felt it,” and may we reverently understand that though he is glorified he still does.
  - **Hebrews 4:15** “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities...” he knows.. he cares...

So Jesus selflessly ministered to them...

- How did he do it?
  - One by one? 50 by 50? Groups of 1,000....
  - WE don't know... but what we do know is that it was getting late.

The disciples come to him with an idea

**Vs. 35** “And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: <sup>36</sup>Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.”

It was spring, probably mid-April, and the sun set at about 6:00 in Palestine at that time of year.

- So perhaps it was around 4:00 when the disciples come to Jesus with this idea.

They were hungry... the multitude was hungry... and almost everyone forgot to pack a lunch...

- They were all getting a little wrestles... “afternoon Ethan” as I call it, was setting in.

**How do I know that?**

- Because Jesus said to the disciples, **vs. 37** “Give them something to eat!”
- And what do they say back?

“Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?”

**Note:** They were being sarcastic... today that's a bit more common... back then it was straight up disrespectful...

- In the disciples mind, It would be like me walking into lambo field and saying to my wife, “honey, can you wip something up for these nice folks.”
- Humanly speaking, the problem appeared insurmountable...

**Here's the point:** They were so focused on the problem, and the need to find a human solution, that they failed to consider the divine power of their Lord.

## Application: Have you ever been there...

- The problem in front of you is so massive and so impossible that you never actually stop to consider the divine power of God.
  - **Maybe its financial** and you can't remember that God owns the cattle on a thousand hills.
  - **Maybe its physical** and you don't stop to remember the broken woman with the issue of blood or the leper, or the dead little girl that Jesus healed.
  - **Maybe its relational** and you forgot that God is the one who transform people's minds.
  - **Maybe its political** and you forgot that God holds the heart of every king and every president and they can't do anything outside of his control.

So the disciples are hangry & distracted at this point... So he presses them:

He says, (Vs. 38) "How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes."

Vs. 39- 40 Jesus has them get organized and sit down.

Vs. 41 "And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all."

Some try to explain this miracle away. There have been a number of failed attempts:

- 1) "Jesus had a secret stash of food hidden away." He stood at the entrance of a cave where bread was hidden.
- 2) "Rich and Pious ladies brought more food."
- 3) "A miracle of sharing."
  - 25k people shared 2 fish sandwiches and a piece of bread.
  - What did they do, lick it?

**Jesus could have fed these people any way he chose to.**

- He could have made it rained bread...he did that before.
  - Cloudy with chance of Panera bread bowls

**Btw**, Don't picture two loaves of bread from pic-n-save and a cod fish sandwich from Mcds- think of a granola bar a two sardines.

**John's** account in **John 6:8** fills in the details of where this food came from: “**One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,<sup>9</sup> There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?’**”

Jesus used a young boys lunch to feed the masses...

He not only fed them, **Vs. 42** he filled them...

“**And they did all eat, and were filled.**”

**Vs. 43**, knowing that his disciples had worked hard... were tired... hadn't had much food in the last few weeks... **Jesus perfectly makes enough food for 12 remaining baskets.**

- **The original gift basket, filled directly from Jesus.**

But after all this... the disciples still didn't get it...

**Transition:** Jesus had to do another miracle b/c the disciples **STILL** didn't understand! They didn't get it...

**What did they not understand?**

- They understood that he broke bread so that hungry ppl could be satisfied.
- They didn't understand that he was the bread of life that would be broken so that hungry souls could be satisfied.

Their standing there with a basket of bread--that was just miraculously made... and they still didn't fully understand that Jesus was the bread of life that would hold them....

So, **Verses 45-52** happens... Jesus walks on water...

- And how do I know that's why this happened?
- **Vs. 52... “they didn't understand (kjb=“consider”) the miracle of the loaves...”**

Let's read this passage

**Mark 6:45** “**And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.**”

<sup>46</sup> And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. <sup>47</sup> And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. <sup>48</sup> And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. <sup>49</sup> But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: <sup>50</sup> For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. <sup>51</sup> And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. <sup>52</sup> For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.”

**You might not have known this:** The story of Jesus walking on water is directly connected to the story of the feeding of the 25 thousand...

**Btw, Job 9:8 prophesied this:** it says “**God will come trampling on the sea.**”

- Now the disciples didn't think of this verse though.
  - B/c they thought **(vs.49)** he was a ghost.

**Vs. 48** says something very unique: Its says Jesus “**would have passed by them.**”

- This statement **echoes Job 9 and Exodus 33**
  - Job 9- Job hears from God
  - Exodus 33- Moses asks to see God

But notice the difference.

- Moses could only see the **backside, and Job couldn't see Him.**
- **Mark 6-** Jesus passed by the disciples so that they may see Him.

Hear me out:

- **Jesus isn't trying to pull a stunt; He's revealing His glory.**
- Jesus is teaching them that the **most important thing about your ministry going forward is Me.**

They didn't get it with the bread, so he does it with the boat...

# Things to Take Home

## 1. Lead a Word and Deed ministry simultaneously.

Jesus had “compassion.” Literally “guts ripped out”

- Church are usually strong on mercy and weak on gospel outreach or vice versa.
- **We must pursue balance:**
  - Jesus fed people with the word and with food. Let’s do the same.
    - Kids who are starving to death need a plate of food.
    - Girls trapped in a brothel need rescued.

**Here’s the key:** As you give people bread for body, don’t forget the bread they need for their souls...

- Whitefield – Orphanages,
- Wesley- prisons
- McCheyne – it was the broken part of the city
- For you- it could be the food pantry or foundations for living or the Agapa center...

## 2. Learn to give generously

- One of the greatest privileges I had growing up was watching my father teach me how to give. (taking the guest preacher out to eat, paying for the young preachers boys gas as he drove in from college... and on and on and on...)
- This is one of the reasons I have a hospitality budget in the church line item- We have been called to be a giving people

**Now:** The primary purpose of the feeding of the 5,000 is not about giving, but there’s something to learn here.

- We tend to focus on we don’t have, instead of what we do have.
- Realize again that God can multiply your gift!

The little boy didn't say, "These are my fish sandwiches! Why don't you find someone in the crowd who owns a bread store and have him underwrite this thing."

No, he says, "Okay, you can have it."

Five loaves and two fish were nothing, but he gave it.

## Here are 3 reasons to give:

### 1) Giving weans you off the love of money.

- You need to give a whole lot more than God needs to receive!
  - God doesn't need your money...

### 2) It keeps you from finding security in money.

- Jesus gives them leftovers. One for each disciple! He's teaching them to trust in him... he will take care of them...
  - Food won't take care of you
  - Money won't take care of you.
  - Your job won't take care of you...
- Being generous is a sign that you trust God more than you trust your money!

### 3) It gets you in "the game" so to speak.

- You get involved in the ministry.
- Can you say, "I gave my two fish!"

Btw, there is a lot more to give here than money...

- I think of some sweet retired ladies who have been working throughout this building the last few weeks in their spare time to help clean and paint, and clean, and clean more... and wait for a mess and then clean more...
- Don't be selfish with the money, time, or life the God has given you!

BE A GIVER!!

### 3. Don't make the same mistake the disciples did

- Some of you are going to leave here today with a basket full of a sermon bread...
  - You might really enjoy that...
  - You might feel like you are filled up and there is plenty left over...
- HEAR ME: don't pick up your basket of bread and leave today without noticing the one who made it gave it...

#### (turn to John 6)

Listen to what Jesus says in the book of John after performing the miracle of making bread for the 25 thousand:

- **John 6:31** "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. <sup>32</sup> Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."
- **Vs. 35** "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."
- **Vs. 35** "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."
- **Vs. 48** "I am that bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. <sup>50</sup> This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

The listening Jews had a problem understanding that: (Like maybe some of you are having a hard time understanding this) So the Jews asked:

**Vs.52** "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

**Here's the key:** Jesus wasn't saying you needed to physically eat him... He was saying that you spiritually need to partake of him....

**Vs. 63** Jesus said- "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

**What were the words that Jesus said?**

**Very simple:** **Vs. 47** "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

**So here is the text's challenge for us today:**

**Here is what the feeding of the 25 thousand is telling us:**

Partake today, some for the first time, and some for the hundredth—of the best bread you'll ever eat.