

Mark 6:30-44 (NIV)

30The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught.

31Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

32So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

33But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

34When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

35By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him.

“This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late.

36Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

37But he answered, “You give them something to eat.” They said to him, “That would take eight months of a man’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

38“How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.”

39Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass.

40So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.

41Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all.

42They all ate and were satisfied,

43and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish.

44The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

41-06-01-Soulshift#6: Sheep to Shepherd

Jesus, shepherd, leadership, evangelism, service

Mark 6:30-44

Jesus shepherds us in the direction of becoming shepherds, too.

INTRODUCTION: (Text for Scripture reading)

–**Title**– [**Steve DeNeff**’s quote: “*Jesus did not come to earth simply to forgive us. He came to earth to recruit us.... It was not His intent to create a church full of passengers.... It was His intent from the very beginning that His people should learn to drive.*”] **HOM.idea.**

–Mark records this *attitude* and *motivation* in Christ before the **text** we will be looking at:

Mark 1:17, “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”

(The idea of discipleship in Jesus’ mind was that of following Him, and that meant being a fisher for souls, as He was.)

Mark 3:14-15, He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. [**apostle** means “sent one” or “missionary.”] (Christ’s will for the 12 is the same for us, that is, to do what He did: (1) communicate the good news, deal with physical needs, and relieve those oppressed by evil.)

–We may see ourselves as incapable of those tasks, but God’s vision for us is what counts. As we’ll see in our **text**, **Jesus never calls us to serve without supernaturally supplying us with the power to do it.**

Mark 6:34, *When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.*

I. God Wants Us to Share His Word with Lost Sheep**A. What was Christ’s attitude toward the large crowd?**

1. Jesus wasn’t overwhelmed by the largeness of the crowd. (It’s a big world out there—a big *globe*, a big *country*, a big *city*, a big *retirement village*—and that can be intimidating. But size isn’t God’s focus, and it shouldn’t be ours.)
2. Jesus *saw* a crowd of *sheep without a shepherd*. His response was to have *compassion on them*. (*Compassion* is what motivates God as a caring Shepherd. Compassion should motivate us, when we see people who are living *like lost sheep*.)

B. The immediate result of His compassion for the crowd was that He

began teaching them many things.

1. It's interesting that Mark doesn't specify what things Jesus taught them. (Humans tend to make legalistic lists and rules on doing evangelism, but instead of pleasing God, they can limit Him.)
2. God wants lost sheep to know many things, but only He knows exactly what they need. (This is why we have to be open and very attentive to Him. [example: God may prompt us to send a note or an inspirational card, or to share a personal testimony or an answered prayer, or to boldly tell something about our faith and hope in God.] We can turn our compassion into teaching only by listening our Shepherd's voice.)

TRANS: John 10:27, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. As His sheep, we follow Jesus by *listening to His voice*. If **He's shepherding us in the direction of becoming shepherds**, then He'll speak to us about speaking to others. This means we can trust Him to guide us in how, when and what to share with other lost sheep.

Mark 6:35-37a, *By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." But he answered, "You give them something to eat."*

II. God Wants Us Involved with the Needs of Others

- A. Maybe the disciples were already showing compassion—concerned for the situation people were in—being away from town so long.
 1. We easily sympathize when going through the same thing. (They might have been wanting Jesus to stop teaching, so they could turn their attention towards a meal to satisfy their own hunger.)
 2. Human compassion often tries to fix things with human logic: "*Send the people away so they can...buy themselves something to eat.*" (We can offer Jesus some pretty good ideas for solving problems, and often they minimize our own involvement.)
- B. Jesus has a better idea: *he answered, "You give them something to eat."*

TRANS: Normal life presents situations and circumstances that appear impossible to alter. But supernatural Christian life and service call us to overcome the logic of facts with faith in God's logic. Jesus calls us to follow Him into a shepherding faith that trusts God for the outcome.

Jesus told them, "*You give them something to eat,*"...

Mark 6:37b-38, 41-42, *They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish." . . . Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied.*

III. God Wants Us to Share What We Have with Others

- A. Our own estimation of what we have to share is not important:
 1. It is important to discover our strengths and weaknesses. God asks us to do that: "*How many loaves do you have?*" he asked. "*Go and see.*" (Some fear even to try doing shepherding care for others, because they've never taken a personal spiritual inventory.)
 2. Once we know our limitations, we can fully realize something absolutely important: OUR SUCCESS in caring and helping others depends totally upon God taking the little we have and magnifying it into the necessary abundance that we do not have.
- B. LISTEN, sheep of the Lord, this is the key to successful moving from being *sheep* to being *shepherds*: *Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied....*
 1. Take what you have, but don't look at it, look up to heaven
 2. Give thanks for what you have and share it (Remember: your trust is never in what you have, but in what God can do with it.)
 3. Expect nothing but what God, the over-Shepherd, has planned (But if He has said, "*You give them something to eat,*" then it is surely His will that every lost sheep eat and be *satisfied*.)

CONCLUSION:

—God always provides more grace than we need for any task. After this large crowd *ate and were satisfied, ... the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish.* God gives us *abundant life* in Jesus Christ, so abundant that no matter how much we give to others, there is more than enough left for us to grow on, as we follow our Shepherd into a life of *shepherding others*.