

Mark 6:30-44  
**The Shepherd Feeds His People**

<sup>30</sup> The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup> And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. <sup>33</sup> Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup> And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. <sup>36</sup> Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." <sup>37</sup> But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii<sup>[a]</sup> worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." <sup>39</sup> Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. <sup>41</sup> And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied. <sup>43</sup> And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup> And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Mark's Gospel has been taking us on a whirlwind tour of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Just in the last couple of months, when we took up our study in Mark 5, we have seen him heal the Gadarene demoniac and return the man to his right mind. We saw him heal the woman who had a discharge of blood for 12 years, and we saw him heal Jairus' 12 year old daughter who had died. He has been delivering people from Satanic powers and healing the sick and raising the dead.

What kind of man is this? Who is this Jesus of Nazareth? Today we will learn more about him.

Let us pray:

*Holy Father, you have done all things well through your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As we consider this great event today, the feeding of the 5,000 men, teach us more about the Lord Jesus, about his greatness and about his glory; we ask it in his name. Amen.*

Who is Jesus Christ? Do you remember when you first heard of him? There are many in our world today who have not heard of him, or they may have heard of him but have only been given misinformation.

But this is the great question that needs to be put before all humanity. Who is this Jesus Christ? How a person understands who Jesus is, and how they respond to his person, will determine their eternal destiny.

Jesus Christ is, in fact, the great subject and theme of the Bible. The first part of the Bible, which we call the OT, be prophesies of his coming. And the second part of the Bible, the NT, records his coming, his life, his teaching, and his work, his actions.

If the Bible is true, and Jesus is the theme of the Bible, then the most important thing we can do with our lives is to know this Jesus. If he really is the Son of God, we need to embrace him, we need to run to him – we need to leave everything else in the world right where it is and run to Jesus Christ and confess him as Savior and Lord. To glorify him and serve him must become the dominating passion of our lives. He is the great Promise of the Ages, he is the one whom Moses said would come, the one Moses said we must listen to.

He is, in fact, the great prophet who was to come. There were many prophets called by God in the days of the OT. They were men in whom God had put a message to deliver to the people of Israel – messages about his nature – who he is - and his will – what they needed to do to respond rightly to him, to line up their lives with his greatness and holiness. They needed to leave their sins and come and live humbly before his holy presence.

The prophets were men who were, as it were, “carried along by the Holy Spirit,” to deliver a message from God to the people. Sometimes these prophets also performed miracles to confirm that they were men of God sent by God. They were men like Elijah and his disciple, Elisha. They set the stage for the coming of the Lord’s Messiah, the one anointed with the Spirit of God, the One coming who would suffer and die for the sins of his people, and who would rise from the dead and be the everlasting King of his people.

To set the stage for our text today, let’s go back to the OT and read about an event in the ministry of Elisha the prophet:

2 Kings 4:42-44 - <sup>42</sup> A man came from Baal Shalishah. He brought the man of God 20 loaves of barley bread. They had been baked from the first grain that had ripened. The man also brought some heads of new grain. “Give this food to the people to eat,” Elisha said.

<sup>43</sup> “How can I put this in front of 100 men?” his servant asked.

But Elisha answered, “Give it to the people to eat. Do it because the Lord says, ‘They will eat and have some left over.’” <sup>44</sup> Then the servant put the food in front of them. They ate it and had some left over. It happened just as the Lord had said it would.

Do you see the parallels in this account and the one today of Jesus feeding the 5,000? Elisha had 20 barley loaves and 100 men to feed. His servant said, “How can I put this amount of food in front of 100 men?” But when they had all eaten there were leftovers.

When Jesus fed the 5,000 men he only had 5 barley loaves and 2 fish, yet there were 12 baskets of leftovers. So Jesus continued in the prophetic tradition but his miracle was much greater than the one God did through Elisha. God indeed had spoken through the prophets in the history of Israel, but in these final days he has spoken not only to Israel but to all the human race in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**<sup>30</sup> The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. <sup>32</sup> And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.**

Luke 9:20 – this was Bethsaida, where Jordan empties into Sea of G – 4 miles direct sailing and 8 miles by foot.

**<sup>33</sup> Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.**

Disciples, “Oh no, look at all those people...we’ll never get any rest....  
But Jesus had “compassion on them.”

Cf. Matt. 9:36 -they were harassed and helpless, (C)like sheep without a shepherd.

Word means “bowels of mercy” – very depths of his being he felt pity and sorrow and compassion for these people.

## **I. Jesus is the Compassionate Shepherd**

This word used a number of times in NT describing Jesus’ deep compassion for people in need.

Examples of other uses of this word:

Matt. 20: 29-34

<sup>29</sup> And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. <sup>30</sup> And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “Lord,<sup>[e]</sup> have mercy on us, Son of David!” <sup>31</sup> The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” <sup>32</sup> And stopping, Jesus called them and said, “What do you want me to do for you?” <sup>33</sup> They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” <sup>34</sup> And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

Luke 7: 11-17

<sup>11</sup> Soon afterward<sup>[C]</sup> he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. <sup>12</sup> As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. <sup>13</sup> And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.” <sup>14</sup> Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.” <sup>15</sup> And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus<sup>[D]</sup> gave him to his mother. <sup>16</sup> Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us!” and “God has visited his people!” <sup>17</sup> And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

Exo. 34:6 - <sup>6</sup> The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, <sup>(H)</sup>“The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and <sup>(L)</sup>gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast <sup>(L)</sup>love and faithfulness, <sup>7</sup>

Jesus was compassionate because they were so “harassed and helpless”  
 -like vessels tossed about in a storm  
 -many distressing situations, worries, fears, problems

Cf. Heb. 4:15 - <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

**And he began to teach them many things.**

He addressed their situation not with healing but with teaching  
 -correct knowledge of God  
 -truth about God  
 - give them a God-ward perspective on their situations and problems

This had been his method since the beginning:

**Mark 1:14** – <sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;<sup>[E]</sup> repent and believe in the gospel.”

Matt. 4:23 - <sup>23</sup> <sup>(A)</sup>And he went throughout all Galilee, <sup>(B)</sup>teaching in their synagogues and <sup>(C)</sup>proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and <sup>(D)</sup>healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

John 8:2 - Early in the morning **he** came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and **he** sat down and **taught them**.

Matt. 6:31-33

<sup>31</sup> Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly

Father knows that you need them all. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

### **Some of content of his teaching:**

Matt. 5:43-45,48

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust... <sup>48</sup> You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

John 18:37 - <sup>37</sup> Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

**Acts 1:3** - <sup>3</sup>(E)He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

Jesus was compassionate in meeting their first and foremost need – to know the truth about God, about himself, about the kingdom of God.

<sup>35</sup> **And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. <sup>36</sup> Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” <sup>37</sup> But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.”**

This was a command.

**And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii<sup>[a]</sup> worth of bread and give it to them to eat?”**

This equal to 200 days of a laborer’s work.

<sup>38</sup> **And he said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.”**

John 6:9 “...There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish....

<sup>39</sup> **Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass.**  
Spring of the year.

<sup>40</sup> **So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties.**

I’ve wondered about the groupings...

Organized like Moses:

**Exo. 18:21-22** - <sup>21</sup> Moreover, look for (C)able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. <sup>22</sup> And (D)let them judge the people at all times.

Moses' order of tribes in wilderness camping... 12 tribes in order around tabernacle  
**Num. 1-2** – On north were Dan, Asher, and Naphtali; on east were Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, etc.

**41 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing...**

*“Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, king of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.”* (Followed by a 5,000 voice “Amen” – Hughes)

**and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all.**

Jesus involved his disciples in the distribution.

Jesus is compassionate not only in their spiritual needs, need of instruction in the truth, but in their physical needs – for food and sustenance.

Example: Lord's prayer

## II. Jesus is the Mighty God

Muslims' claims

Jesus, believe my works

Water to wine...

Dead organ to living organ – as Lazarus

Acts 10:38 -

how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about **doing good** and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Col 2: 15-16

<sup>6</sup> For by (I) him all things were created, (AN)in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether (AO)thrones or (AP)dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created (AQ)through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And (AR)he is before all things, and in him all things (AS)hold together.

Heb. 1:2-3 - <sup>2</sup> but (B)in these last days (C)he has spoken to us by (D)his Son, whom he appointed (E)the heir of all things, (E)through whom also he created (G)the world. <sup>3</sup> He is

the radiance of the glory of God and <sup>(H)</sup>the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power

Isa. 54:5 - For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is **his** name; and the Holy One of Israel is your **Redeemer**, the God of the whole earth he is called.

### III. Jesus is the Living Bread

**John 6:47-51** - <sup>47</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. <sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. <sup>50</sup> This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Jesus is greater than Moses....

#### **Striking parallels with words Jesus used in the Lord's Supper in Mark 14: 22-24:**

<sup>22</sup> And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." <sup>23</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. <sup>24</sup> And he said to them, "This is my blood of the<sup>[c]</sup> covenant, which is poured out for many.

Mark 6:41

<sup>41</sup> **And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing...**

**and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all.**

**Four actions:** taking, blessing, breaking, and giving to the disciples

God had ordained that he uses us to accomplish his work in the world: 2 Cor. 5:20

<sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

And 2 Cor. 4:7 - <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

<sup>42</sup> **And they all ate and were satisfied.**

All were contented and full.

Creative power of Jesus here. (he can do the same in our lives – see 2. Cor. 5:17 –  
 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.<sup>[6]</sup> The old has passed away;  
 behold, the new has come.”

**43 And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44 And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.**

Applications:

## **I. Jesus is the Compassionate Shepherd**

Heb. 2:17 -

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a **merciful and faithful** high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

A shepherd who understands your suffering, your heartaches.  
 He is not impersonal, but personal.

Suffering has a purpose:

Rom. 5:2-5 - we<sup>[4]</sup> rejoice<sup>[4]</sup> in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

If he does not heal you or deliver you, he will comfort you.

He has looked upon your lost estate and saved you. He sees your body weak from illness, age, wear and tear, and will restore it at his return.

## **II. Jesus is the Mighty God**

**To feed 20,000 people is an astounding miracle  
 He has already done the most needed and most difficult thing in your  
 behalf – died for your sins.**

He also has power to change your circumstances and since compassionate we have hope, according to his will and purpose.

1 Cor. 15:28 -

When all things are subjected **to** him, then the Son **himself** will also be subjected **to** him who put all things **in subjection** under him, that God may be all **in** all.



***He will guard your best interests for time and eternity by his power and wisdom.***

### **III. He is the living Bread**

<sup>22</sup> And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, **“Take; this is my body.”** <sup>23</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. <sup>24</sup> And he said to them, “This is **my blood of the**<sup>[c]</sup> **covenant**, which is poured out for many.

**...those who eat of him will live forever.  
In Lord’s Supper we eat of him afresh by faith...**

### **Jesus is the Compassionate Shepherd**

-look to him, cry out to him, be comforted in him

### **Jesus is the Mighty God**

-he has delivered you from slavery to sin and Satan and hell, and will bring you into his everlasting kingdom. He will sustain and help you all the days of your earthly pilgrimage.

### **Jesus is the Living Bread**

-He sustains you by his life, by the indwelling HS, day by day and hour by hour.

Feed on him through his Word, through the worship and teaching of the Church, and through your fellowship with people of God.

-Partake of him afresh in LS – he would feed you with himself – he in you, and you in him – fellowship continually, divine life continually working in your life - the very presence of Christ always with you- the living Savior living in you.

Be thankful and bless his name. Rejoice in your compassionate Shepherd, your mighty God, and he who is your living Bread.

Know he looks on you with his compassionate eye.

We worship him for his divine power.

We continually live by faith in him.

### Prayer:

*Wonderful Father, great is your salvation. Great is your beloved Son our Savior. Thank you for placing your eye of love upon us and bringing us into your blessed fellowship, now and forever. Amen.*

-by Jeff Gregory, Pastor  
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