

UNDERSTANDING THE LOAVES AND FISH

LAST WEEK'S MESSAGE

Read Mark 6

Have you ever noticed what **Mark 6:51-52** says about the disciples of Jesus? They were completely amazed at Jesus walking on water (**vv.47-50**) because they did not understand the miracle of the loaves and the fish (**Mark 6:30-44**). "Understand" in Greek is the word for "synthesize", which is to connect pieces of information and understand their significance and meaning. They had something in their hearts that prevented them from understanding (**v.52**).

MARK 6:7-13

Jesus was about to do something radical in His ministry. He sent out His disciples to multiply what He has been doing — that is, preaching the gospel — six times over. The same is being done today through us! But He is not sending us alone: we are to do His mission together just as Jesus sent His disciples in teams.

Before He sent them out, Jesus prepared the disciples for failure (**v.11**). As we follow Jesus, we also need to prepare for when things go wrong that we can shake off the "dust" and continue in the joy of the Holy Spirit. We should not have false expectations that followers of Christ will never experience failure, persecution, and hardship!

The disciples were instructed to take nothing with them except the gospel. They were to be dependent on those who welcomed them into their homes. Being holistic, they also ministered to the physical and spiritual needs of the people (**Mark 6:12-13**). Whatever little training they had, it did not discourage them because they had Jesus. If you know Jesus right now, you can tell others about Him today.

MARK 6:14-29

People were shocked when Herod killed John the Baptist. And Jesus, being John's cousin, was in danger of Herod killing Him as well, as Herod thought that He was the resurrected John the Baptist. Many people came to console Jesus over John's death, but they wanted to also know what Jesus would do in response to what happened. (**Mark 6:21**).

MARK 6:30-44

Wanting peace and quiet, Jesus brought His disciples to a remote place so they could be by themselves. However,

the crowd followed them (**vv. 33-34**). As utterly exhausted as Jesus was, He had compassion for them. The disciples wanted to send the people away (**vv. 35-36**), but Jesus said to feed them.

What happened next was the historical enactment and fulfillment of Psalm 23! The place had green grass for people to sit on (**v. 39**). The Good Shepherd (Jesus) makes His sheep (people) lie down in green pastures beside still waters and prepares a table (food) for them in the presence of their enemies (Herod's spies). The disciples focused on the lack of food to feed the crowd (**Mark 6:8**) but Jesus told them to look at what was available: five loaves and two fishes. Jesus blessed the food and 5,000 men were fed — even leaving 12 baskets of leftovers.

MARK 6:45-52

After dismissing the crowd, Jesus sent the disciples ahead of Him and prayed by Himself. He then walked on water towards where the disciples were straining against the waves. When the disciples saw Him, they thought He was a ghost. They may have thought that because Jesus was left alone and Herod's men might have killed Him! When He spoke to the terrified disciples, He told them, "IT IS I" which is the same as "I AM", God's name as He told Moses. Jesus gave bread from heaven, walked on water, calmed the sea, and told them that He is "I AM", yet the disciples didn't know who He is because they did not understand the significance of what it meant.

Even when we know a lot about Jesus, His teachings, life, and miracles, we can miss out on the single biggest thing: who He is. When we go through dark valleys, become discouraged, experience defeat, we can harden our hearts. We can resist Christ's call. But if we know what Jesus has done for us, we will want to get to know Him and love Him more. He's the Savior, the Lord God, who is the compassionate Shepherd who loves His people and makes provision for them. It is God who will turn our hearts to Him (**Psalm 23:3**).

Is He Your Savior, Friend, and your ever-present Help in trouble? Is He at the center of Your life? If not, you need Jesus in your life. Surrender to Him as your Savior and Lord today.

last week's memory verse

for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid."

MARK 6:50

discuss this message

- How does this challenge me?
- How does this encourage me?
- What do I need to change?

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God loves you.

He desires for you to have a meaningful
life with Him in the present and gain
eternal life with Him in the future.

*Know therefore that the Lord your God,
He is God, the faithful God, who **keeps
His covenant and His lovingkindness** to
a thousandth generation with those who
love Him and keep His commandments
– Deuteronomy 7:9*

God is holy.

We are sinful, and our sin separates us
from Him.

*Everyone has sinned and is far away from
God's saving presence. – Romans 3:23*

God is merciful.

*In His love, He made the only way for
us to be reconciled to Him: through His
son, Jesus Christ. Jesus had to die on the
cross for our sins and be raised to life for
eternity.*

*But God demonstrates His own love
toward us, in that while we were yet
sinners, Christ died for us. Much more
then, having now been justified by His
blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of
God through Him. – Romans 5:8*

*I am the way, and the truth, and the life;
no one comes to the Father but through
Me. – John 14:6*

God is gracious.

By placing our faith in Jesus Christ, we
are forgiven of our sins and saved from
eternal death.

*For God so loved the world, that He gave
His only begotten Son, that whoever
believes in Him shall not perish, but have
eternal life. – John 3:16*

*For by grace you have been saved through
faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift
of God; not as a result of works, so that no
one may boast. – Ephesians 2:8-9*

**Would you like to place your faith in Jesus
Christ today?**

Lord Jesus, I need You. I confess that I
am a sinner. I believe that You died on
the cross to pay for all my sins. With Your
help, I will turn away from my sins. Please
come into my life and be my Savior and
my Master. I accept Your gift of eternal
life. Make me the kind of new person You
want me to be. Thank You for giving me
eternal life. Amen.

God keeps His promises.

You can be sure that you have eternal life
when you trust in Jesus.

*And the testimony is this, that God has
given us eternal life, and this life is in His
Son. He who has the Son has the life; he
who does not have the Son of God does
not have the life. These things I have
written to you who believe in the name of
the Son of God, so that you may know that
you have eternal life. – 1 John 5:11-13*

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