

THE GOOD SHEPHERD CARES FOR THE SHEEP

--MARK 6:30-44--

INTRODUCTION:

There is only a small number of the vast number of miracles recorded in the Gospels, miracles that occurred during the ministry of Jesus. Of those recorded for us only two are recorded in all four Gospels, one is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the other is the miracle recorded in our passage today, commonly called the feeding of the five thousand. Jesus performed this miracle near the end of His Galilean ministry, and it served as the climax to His time in Galilee. This miracle was the most extensive of Jesus' miracles and more than just an amazing demonstration of the divine nature and creative power of the Lord Jesus, it also was an illustration of His merciful compassion and tender care. In this passage we truly see Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd.

I. HE RESTORES MY SOUL (Mark 6:30-32)

- a. If you remember earlier in this chapter Jesus had commissioned the twelve _____ and sent them on their first short-term ministry trip.
- b. With the exception of Judas Iscariot, all of the apostles were from _____ and would have at least been familiar with the villages to which they were sent to preach the gospel.
- c. This morning's passage opens with the apostles _____ and gathering around Jesus.
- d. Even the trip in the _____ as they sailed gave the apostles and Jesus a short reprieve from the pressure of the crowds. (Luke 9:10)

II. HE GUIDES ME IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Mark 6:33-34)

- a. The _____ along the shore in Capernaum saw Jesus and the Twelve get into a boat and begin to sail away. (John 6:2)
- b. Even though Jesus had wanted to get away with the Twelve so they could _____, this crowd now made that impossible.

- c. In Israel _____ were a mainstay of agricultural life, everyone understood the dangers faced by sheep without a shepherd. (Luke 9:11)
- d. Jesus was not only teaching the people, but according to the parallel passage in Matthew fourteen he was also _____ the sick. (Matthew 14:14)

III. YOU PREPARE A TABLE BEFORE ME (Mark 6:35-44)

- a. Mark does not inform us as to how long Jesus was teaching the people and healing the sick, but as the _____ began to wane, He was approached by His twelve disciples.
- b. Understand that when the disciples described the place where they were as _____, they were not implying that they were in a desert place.
- c. Can you imagine the look of _____ on the disciples faces when Jesus responded to them.
- d. "*And He [Jesus] said to them, 'How many _____ do you have? Go look!'* And when they found out, they said, '*Five, and two fish.*'" (Mark 6:38, NASB95) (John 6:8-9)
- e. Jesus turned back to the crowd and instructed the people to sit by _____ on the green grass.
- f. I am sure the disciples were _____ Jesus just as intently as the people to see what He would do next.
- g. Mark concludes this account by informing us that this meal of bread and fish was eaten by _____ thousand men. (Matthew 14:21; John 6:14)
- h. Jesus refused to be a permanent source of free meals, but He was willing to be an eternal source of _____ nourishment. (John 6:66-69)

CONCLUSION:

The people who had experienced the miraculous meal provided by Jesus were right to identify Jesus as the Messiah, but again they misunderstood the purpose of His coming. One day Jesus Christ will return to establish His earthly kingdom with all the promised power, provision, and protection prophesied by the Old Testament prophets,

but this first coming had a different purpose, Jesus Christ the Son of God came the first time “*to seek and save the lost*” (Luke 19:10, NASB95) and “*to give His life as a ransom for many*” (Mark 10:45, ESV). The people who ate the miraculous meal wanted to make Jesus their political king even if they had to by force, Jesus was willing only to be spiritual King to those who believed in Him. As generous as He was in the creation of food, Jesus intended the visible display of His power and compassion in the physical world to be the symbol of His might in the spiritual realm. The Good Shepherd’s willingness to give physical rest was a symbol of His offer to give spiritual rest. The Good Shepherd’s desire to teach the truth highlighted the fact that He is the truth. And the Good Shepherd’s readiness to create bread and fish was evidence of His ability to provide spiritual food for those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. The Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Bread of Life, as such those who believe in Him will be eternally satisfied.