

Other than the resurrection of Christ, this is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels

Context: Jesus sent out the 12; 'King' Herod hears about Jesus (John the Baptist is beheaded)
This event is meant to stand in contrast to Herod's feast, which resulted in debauchery and death

DISCLAIMER: this is indeed a passage about God's provision...but it's a lot more than just that- it's about Jesus being the one all the scriptures and its promises point to-

Mark 6:30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all that they had done and taught.
They're excited. But as we'll see, they're also exhausted.

Mark 6:31 He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest for a while."
For many people were coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

John 6:4 tells us that *the Passover* was near (festival commemorating the Exodus).

That's important for 2 reasons: -It explains why many were coming and going
 -It gives greater significance to the miracle about to happen
 Keep the Exodus in mind

Mark 6:32 So they went away in the boat by themselves to a remote place,

Note that Jesus doesn't just call His disciples to GO OUT, but also to COME AWAY

The rhythm of the Christian life is to serve others in God's power, and rest in His presence

V31- COME AWAY- the invitation to draw close to Jesus
BY YOURSELVES- the invitation to draw away from people/ places
REMOTE PLACE- the invitation to lay aside distractions
REST FOR A WHILE- Jesus cares about our physical, emotional, mental & spiritual renewal

One of my all-time favorite quotes is from [Carl F George](#)-

"What I offer to others is provided by an overflow of what I have received from the person of Christ Himself"

Illustration- Ministry (=serving others on God's behalf) is like this. You can't give what you haven't received

Do you spend time in prayer, the Bible, worship. Corporately AND Individually

Brag on Me!- remote place is in the closet --- she's coming out with overflow!

Here's the hard truth: You can't be away with Jesus and let Him refresh you if you're always on your phone, with your friends, at your hobby, on the clock picking up OT, binge watching Netflix, etc.

When we withdraw to be with God,

- we are given the strength for all He calls us to do & who He calls us to become
- we are given insight and wisdom for the paths that lay ahead
- we are given comfort and healing for all our wounds and hurts
- we are given assurance for all our doubts

If you forfeit withdrawing to God, you forfeit all He has to offer in the remote place.

It's why some of you are running on empty

On the other hand, if all you seek is to withdraw to God (study your Bible, pray long prayers, never miss church) but it never results in going out and serving others with compassion, you have missed the point of His presence.

2 Corinthians 12:15a I will most gladly spend and be spent for you.

We don't spend time with the Lord as an alternative to avoid spending ourselves for others.

Mark 6:33 but many saw them leaving and recognized them, and they ran on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them.

How did they arrive faster on foot than the boat going directly across?

It's likely the wind wasn't in their favor- as if they weren't already tired and hungry enough!

Mark 6:34 When he went ashore, he saw a large crowd and had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then he began to teach them many things.

You would think that because of hunger and fatigue, Jesus would be irritated or annoyed by the crowds.

Jesus' most natural response to human need is compassion not condemnation

That should encourage all of us- God's not annoyed with you because you're needy

'...like sheep without a shepherd'- it's not that there weren't enough priests to go around, there's a whole religious system in place; the problem was that religious leaders were not doing what they were supposed to be doing:

Bringing people closer to God.

This observation from Jesus is the key to the upcoming miracle. If the people don't have shepherds that will draw them close to God and care for them, God Himself will care for their needs and teach them the way to Him

- During the Exodus, when Moses is about to die, he asks God not to leave the people w/out a shepherd
Numbers 27:16-17 "May the Lord, the God who gives breath to all, appoint a man over the community ¹⁷who will go out before them and come back in before them, and who will bring them out and bring them in, so that the Lord's community won't be like sheep without a shepherd."
Then God appoints Joshua, whose name btw, is a variant of the name 'Jesus'
- Right before the Exile, God proclaims an indictment against the leaders of the people for their harmful and selfish leadership
Ezekiel 34:23 I will establish over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will shepherd them. He will tend them himself and will be their shepherd.

Jesus is the greater Moses; the greater Joshua; the greater David;

He is the good shepherd of **Psalms 23** of which this passage in Mark shares many aspects with

Isaiah 49:10 They will not hunger or thirst, the scorching heat or sun will not strike them; for their compassionate one will guide them, and lead them to springs.

Mark 6:35 When it grew late, his disciples approached him and said, "This place is deserted, and it is already late.

Perhaps you are in a season like this- it's deserted, and it's late, and there's hunger pains. It is here where God works

Mark 6:36 Send them away so that they can go into the surrounding countryside and villages to buy themselves something to eat."

There's a real urgent need, and the disciple's solution is to send people away-

may this never be the church's solution, because it's not Jesus'.

Mark 6:37 "You give them something to eat," he responded.

Keep in mind, the disciples themselves have not even eaten at this point!

I find this moment hilarious. But **John** tells us (6:6) that Jesus was testing the disciples.

Sometimes God asks us to do something, not because He needs what we have,
but because He needs us to see what He can do with what we have

They said to him, "Should we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"

200 denarii= 200 days' pay for a laborer (they're being smart with Jesus. They failed the test)

Mark 6:38 He asked them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." When they found out they said, "Five, and two fish."

Jesus doesn't intend for them to find enough to meet the need, but to find just how short they are and realize how much He is about to supply

We don't measure need against our resources alone, but against our Redeemer

We bring what we have and trust that the Good Shepherd will provide what we lack

Again, for Context, this isn't just a miracle about Jesus feeding a group for a day. It's about revealing who Jesus is- 2 OT passages help us:

- Moses needs to feed millions

Numbers 11:21-23 But Moses replied, "I'm in the middle of a people with six hundred thousand foot soldiers, yet you say, 'I will give them meat, and they will eat for a month.' ²²If flocks and herds were slaughtered for them, would they have enough? Or if all the fish in the sea were caught for them, would they have enough?" ²³The Lord answered Moses, "Is the Lord's arm weak? Now you will see whether or not what I have promised will happen to you."

- Elisha needs to feed a room full of prophets

2 Kings 4:42-44 A man from Baal-shalishah came to the man of God with his sack full of twenty loaves of barley bread from the first bread of the harvest. Elisha said, "Give it to the people to eat." ⁴³But Elisha's attendant asked, "What? Am I to set this before a hundred men?" "Give it to the people to eat," Elisha said, "for this is what the Lord says: 'They will eat, and they will have some left over.'" ⁴⁴So he set it before them, and as the Lord had promised, they ate and had some left over.

Moses represents the law; Elisha represents the prophets = The Old Covenant

Jesus is the usherer of the New Covenant. He is the fulfillment of the Law & Prophets.

Mark 6:39-40 Then he instructed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass.

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

Once again, the picture here is an echo of Israel's encampment in the wilderness

Mark 6:41-42 He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves.
foreshadowing the Last Supper and the ultimate endless provision of Himself

He kept giving them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all.

⁴²Everyone ate and was satisfied.

God's Abundance Exceeds the Need

Not only is there is enough for those in need, there is more than enough for the givers

Mark 6:43-44 They picked up twelve baskets full of pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴Now those who had eaten the loaves were five thousand men.

How many disciples? 12. How many baskets are left over? 12. In the end, they had more than they begun with.

When we allow God to work through us to meet the needs of others, we find He meets our needs as well

Did you notice Jesus ‘*kept giving the disciples...to set before the people*’?

How will the physical needs of others be met in our context?Through the disciples of Jesus
James 2:15-16 If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food ¹⁶ and one of you says to them,
“Go in peace, stay warm, and be well fed,” but you don’t give them what the body needs, what good is it?

1 John 3:17-18 If anyone has this world’s goods and sees a fellow believer in need but withholds
compassion from him—how does God’s love reside in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or
speech, but in action and in truth.

Christians and churches ought to care for people’s needs, both spiritual AND physical

- Care offering
- Helping Hands Ministry
- Safe Parking; Tiny Home Village

David E Garland- *“Modern disciples are no different from Jesus’ first disciples, however, and frequently cannot see that even when they are drained physically and financially, they have the resources to help others. They are challenged to tackle impossible problems with limited resources and to discover the possibilities of God. Before we can say ‘There is nothing that we can do; send them away,’ we should first ‘go and see’ how many loaves we have.... When Christians on average give about 3% of their income to the church and even less of their time in direct ministry, we know that we do have enough, but we are keeping it for ourselves.”*

2 Questions to Reflect on:

- 1. Where is God calling me to serve the needs of others?**
- 2. Am I relying on His presence for rest and His power for service?**

Some people burn out- they never rest

Some people rust out- they never work

Some people fall apart- they never take time apart

But some people give out of what they received from Christ, and find they are refreshed with more

**Main Point: The physical needs Jesus meets, speak of who He is,
and reveal the greater spiritual needs He alone can satisfy**

The feast in the wilderness simultaneously points back to the old Exodus
and it points forward to the eternal fellowship in the Kingdom of God
Jesus is the greater Moses leading a greater Exodus

John 6:33-35 For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ Then they said, “Sir, give us this bread always.” ³⁵ “I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again.

Jesus provides strength for the workers, rest for the weary, and abundance for the needy.

BULPEN-

For the illustration, will need:

One pitcher filled with water with the label 'Christ'

At least 2 cups (not transparent)

One diaper

'remote' (NIV quiet)- *érēmos* – an *uncultivated, unpopulated* place

Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd; I have what I need.

²He lets me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside quiet waters.

³He renews my life; he leads me along the right paths for his name's sake.

⁴Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord as long as I live.

William Barclay- *"The Rhythm of the Christian Life: The Christian life is a continuous going into the presence of God from the presence of men, and coming out into the presence of men from the presence of God."*

Little in the hands of Jesus is always more than enough.

Ezekiel 34:8-11 As I live—this is the declaration of the Lord God—because my flock, lacking a shepherd, has become prey and food for every wild animal, and because my shepherds do not search for my flock, and because the shepherds feed themselves rather than my flock, ⁹therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord!

¹⁰“This is what the Lord God says: Look, I am against the shepherds. I will demand my flock from them and prevent them from shepherding the flock. The shepherds will no longer feed themselves, for I will rescue my flock from their mouths so that they will not be food for them.

¹¹“For this is what the Lord God says: See, I myself will search for my flock and look for them.

John 6:14-15 When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, “This truly is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” ¹⁵Therefore, when Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Isaiah 55:1-2 Come, everyone who is thirsty, come to the water; and you without silver, come, buy, and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without silver and without cost!

²Why do you spend silver on what is not food, and your wages on what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and you will enjoy the choicest of foods.