

Meeting the Needs of Thousands!

Mark 6:31-44

Series: Christ our Focus

1. Introduction – We last left Herod’s banquet only to be privy to a banquet in the desert with Jesus.
 - a. Herod’s banquet is to meet his needs and promote himself.
 - b. Jesus’ banquet is to meet the needs of the people around him.
 - c. This banquet is the only miracle repeated in all four Gospels.

2. Verses 31-32 – A time of rest
 - a. Verse 31 – after ministry it is important to take time with Jesus.
 - i. The prerequisite of discipleship is being with Jesus.
 - ii. The greater the demands on us as ministers, the greater our need to be alone with Christ.
 - iii. Ministry’s demands can be quite exorbitant – no time to eat.
 - b. Verse 32 – desolate – by themselves

3. Verse 33 – Sometimes the need follows us
 - a. Notice that they followed him and interrupted him
 - i. How will Jesus react to this interruption?
 1. Will he bid them leave?
 2. Will His heart be open?

4. Verse 34 – The heart of Jesus is an ever compassionate heart.
 - a. Jesus does not bid the crowd to leave but instead he looks upon the crowd with compassion
 - i. This Greek word for compassion is *splangnizesthai* – and it is only used of Jesus in the New Testament
 - ii. **John 6:37** All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
 - iii. How is the compassion of Jesus manifested—He begins to teach the crowd—
 1. He meets their greatest need
 2. The big need in this story is not that of physical food but of spiritual food.
 - b. Compassion should drive us to ministry!
 - i. Jesus sees a whole people without a shepherd, direction, or a leader.

- ii. Are we driven to meet the need of the people around us.
5. Verses 35-36 – The disciples foresee a crisis brewing
- a. The disciples are being practical
 - i. This mass of humanity has a need that they cannot fulfill so this mass of humanity should be sent away to make their provisions.
 - ii. This verse then becomes a great indictment against those of us that see a wayward soul and refuse to help because we are insufficient within ourselves.
6. Verse 37 – Jesus does not relieve the crisis but only makes it worse.
- a. The call of Jesus to his disciples is quite simply; you meet the need.
 - i. That is his call to us as well—even when we feel unable or inadequate for the task
 - b. The disciples object—they do not have the resources, gifting, and/or ability to help this crowd.
 - i. They are absolutely correct.
 - ii. They cannot imagine how to meet such a great need.
 - c. The disciples, like Moses, see the impossibility of the request
 - i. **Numbers 11:13** Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me and say, 'Give us meat, that we may eat...**Numbers 11:22** Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, and be enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, and be enough for them?"
7. Verses 38-40 – A very true lesson for them and us.
- a. Verse 38 – What do you have?
 - i. Christ asks them for the totality of their provisions.
 - ii. The totality of their provisions is laughable; they cannot possibly meet the need of 10 people; let alone thousands.
 - iii. Christ asks you, what do you have?
 - 1. Some of us have small faith:
 - a. **Romans 12:3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each

according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

iv. God has gifted us all and given us provisions; He multiplies these provisions

b. Verse 39-40 – in groups – little by little

8. Verse 41 – the impossibility of Christ

a. He gives thanks for what His disciples bring to him –

i. It is insufficient and yet he gives thanks for their little and then multiplies it.

9. Verse 42 – They all ate

a. Each ate until he was full

b. They were satisfied

c. Instead of begrudging how little we have, let's give thanks for what He is going to do with our meager efforts.

d. An incredible truth – this miracle of meeting the needs of the hungry—a parallel to evangelism and reaching out to the lost—required both human resources and the disciples

i. Preaching require the same—**Mark 16:15-20** And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. (16) Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. (17) And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; (18) they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." (19) So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. (20) And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.]]

ii. **1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

iii. **2 Peter 3:11-12** Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of

holiness and godliness, (12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

10. Verse 43 – twelve baskets let over

- a. When we are done, there will be more left than when we first started.

11. Verse 44 – 5,000 men

- a. The multitude could conservatively be estimated between 10,000-15,000.

12. Benediction –

- a. **John 1:16** For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.