

Enough Faith and Compassion to Go Around

5.6.18

Mark Series

Message 27)

Mark 6:30–44 (NIV)

³⁰ The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. ³¹ Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. ³³ But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

³⁵ By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. ³⁶ Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

³⁷ But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”

They said to him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

³⁸ “How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.”

When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.”

³⁹ Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.

⁴¹ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³ and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken

pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴ The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

1. This ministry to the 5,000 was born during a time of needed rest.

A. The disciples had just returned from their mission's trip.

1. They were sharing with Jesus all of the victories and stories from this season of ministry they had experienced.
2. They had experienced great victories and now they were tired.
 - a. If you are never tired from ministry then you probably aren't engaged in meaningful ministry.
 - b. If you never rest you are neglecting God's Word for your life.

B. On their return, Jesus recognized the disciples' need for rest.

1. Jesus himself suggested that they get away from the people to rest a while.
2. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is not given to prevent you from needing rest.
3. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is given to bless your work and to bless your rest.
4. I'm learning to never take a nap without the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

C. When we are tired, the first casualties are faith and compassion.

1. The disciples have just come back from a great ministry experience.
2. Now they are tired.
3. It's a good tired, but still tired.
4. Even though their previous trip was successful, there was still more ministry before them.

5. In today's passage, Jesus demonstrates not only his power once again, but also His compassion.

6. It is my prayer for us today that the Lord will refill our compassion and faith today.

2. Jesus' had compassion for the people.

A. Jesus and the Disciples were trying to get away from the crowds.

1. They were on their way to rest and recuperate.

2. But the crowds followed them.

3. What was so important about this crowd that caused Jesus to stop what He was doing and minister to them?

B. The Crowds are important because they are made up of people.

1. Humans have a way of dehumanizing each other.

a. My psychology classes in college taught me that we use labels to help minimize impacts.

b. We use labels all of the time to process information quicker and easier.

c. Let me give you one example:

1. The past couple of years, we have intentionally ministered to the needs of single-parents.

2. It is much easier for society and communities to use labels to degrade and dehumanize this group of people.

a. Dead-beat,

b. Freeloaders,

c. Problems

d. These are all terms that society has used to dehumanize single-parents and to skirt responsibility.

3. If we can keep these people in a "crowd", we don't feel responsibility to help them.

d. But if you have worked any of these outreaches, you know that these labels are wrong and unfair.

1. Single-parents are not problems to be solved but people.

2. We have taken some flack in the community at times but we must never apologize for loving people like Jesus.

2. When Jesus looked at the crowds, He saw beyond the faceless crowds and saw their humanity and lostness.

a. Jesus knew the destinies of these people.

b. These were people who were created in His image.

c. They were not problems to be solved but people to be loved.

d. Mark says that Jesus was moved with compassion.

C. Pity never leads to a solution, compassion does.

1. Jesus didn't feel pity.

a. "Poor people, they are so pitiful."

b. "Oh, if the government would only release some more money they could have a better life."

c. This is not what Jesus thought or felt.

2. Compassion causes you to share the hurt of the people and moves you to do something about it.

a. You won't move out of your comfort zone for someone you don't care about.

b. But you will move heaven and earth for someone you love.

- c. Jesus LOVED the people.
 - 1. Not just the crowd.
 - 2. People were not a statistic.
 - 3. Jesus LOVED the people.
 - 4. And He was moved with compassion.
- d. Pity does not move us, compassion does.

D. It was their lostness that moved him with compassion, not their physical hunger.

- 1. Often the focus of this passage revolves around the miracle of food.
 - a. But this is how the passage starts.
 - b. Jesus looked at them and saw that they were lost and without someone to guide them.
- 2. Jesus knew they needed what HE could give them.
 - a. These people were searching for answers.
 - b. They needed guidance and clarity in the midst of a confusing world.
 - c. They needed to know TRUTH and discern the lies.
- 3. Before we had cell-phones, do you remember when kids would get lost in a crowded store or theme park?
 - a. The picture of a little kid, crying in their lostness, looking for mom or dad in a crowd of strangers causes most of us to stop and speak kindly and lovingly.
 - b. We ask, "are you lost?" and through their tears, they let out a yes.
 - 1. They don't know their address, they don't know where to go, that is why they are lost.

2. And usually, there is a frantic parent searching for their child.

3. Often it is the compassion of the parent and the compassion of the adult who helps lead the child to the parent.

c. Here we have this picture:

1. The people are lost and don't know how to get back to where they belong.

2. Drugs, relationships, media, life have separated our friends and neighbors from the God who loves them.

a. We must not allow labels to dull our sense of compassion and responsibility to those around us who are hurting.

b. Labels such as:

1. Democrat or Republican.

2. Millennial or snowflake.

3. Drug-addict or sinner.

c. **The only label that matters in Christianity is Lost or Found.**

3. Unless we will have compassion long enough to STOP and care, many of these people will never find the loving Father that sin has caused them to lose sight of.

d. On this day, Jesus stopped and loved the people.

E. Jesus' compassion led Him to teach the people.

1. Do you love people enough to teach them the truth?

a. Teaching takes time.

b. You can't teach anything of importance in 30-seconds.

2. Jesus didn't give them a 30-second blog post.
 - a. Jesus sat down and taught them for hours upon hours.
 - b. He took time to lovingly explain and display the Truth for them.
 - c. If the only thing the Church gives the world is better social programs, the people will remain lost and without a shepherd to guide them.
3. Shepherds provide all the care a flock needs.
 - a. Sheep are not like cattle.
 - b. Sheep depend upon the shepherd to:
 1. Find and scout out the best grass.
 2. Protect from predators.
 3. Bind and heal wounds.
 4. To know when to stay and when it was time to move.
 - c. This is the function of the Church in the modern world.
 1. The world can't hear the voice of Jesus without us.
 2. The Church should provide a stabilizing influence in the community.
 3. The World needs Jesus and we have to be willing to teach the Truth in a posture of compassion.

3. What should we do when the demands of compassion are unreasonable?

- A. Jesus' teaching lasted all day.
 1. Late in the evening, the disciples appear on the scene.
 - a. It is possible that Jesus had given them the day off to rest.

b. Now they come up and tell Jesus to send the people home so they can find something to eat.

c. It is as though the disciples didn't think that Jesus noticed that the people were hungry.

2. Jesus knew the situation.

a. **The same eyes that can see lostness in your soul can see the hunger on your face.**

b. Jesus' compassion was not limited to the spiritual life of the people.

c. Jesus' compassion extends to every part of your life.

1. Physical.

2. Financial.

3. Emotional.

4. Spiritual.

d. There is compassion and power available for every part of your life.

3. The disciples asked Jesus to send them away.

a. They didn't want the people to be hungry.

b. They were concerned that some would pass out on their journey and be unable to make it home.

c. What they were asking was reasonable and even compassionate.

d. But it wasn't supernatural.

B. Jesus said, "You feed them".

1. Jesus' demand was unreasonable considering the situation.

a. The disciples knew how much it would cost to feed the people.

b. The size of the crowd measured in the thousands (5,000 men plus wives and children).

2. Elsewhere, it was mentioned that 200 denarii wouldn't be enough to feed them.

a. The cost to give everyone a taste would cost 200 days pays for an average worker.

b. $\$7.25 \text{ per hour} \times 8 \text{ hours} = \58 -day minimum wage. $\$11,600$ to give everyone a taste of food.

c. I can guarantee that it was not in the budget to feed these people.

3. Jesus' statement was unreasonable.

a. They only had 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

b. This wasn't much food for the 12, and it wasn't anything for a crowd this size.

C. The disciples were overwhelmed by the task.

a. They could work 200 days and not provide enough food for one meal.

b. The immensity of the task overwhelmed them and no amount of budgeting, stewardship, capital campaigns or the like would be enough to provide for this one need.

c. The people were hungry NOW and Jesus turns to the disciples and tells them to feed them.

D. Jesus knew they could not do this, but he wanted them to say it out loud.

a. To the disciples, the demand was unreasonable.

b. **Whatever the Lord asks of us is reasonable when he asks it.**

1. Romans 12:1, Paul tells them to present their bodies as a living sacrifice....which is a reasonable service.

2. How can living a life wholly committed to God be reasonable?

3. God is able to provide whatever He asks of you.

E. Jesus wanted them to recognize the impossibility of the moment in order to show them HIS power.

a. Jesus knew this was impossible for them.

b. At this moment, He wanted His disciples to admit that THEY could not do it.

c. What they didn't know yet was that Jesus is able to take what you have and accomplish whatever purpose He wants with it.

d. Jesus starts with what they have.

1. They have a few loaves and a few fish.

2. With Jesus, this is enough.

4. The miracle of feeding this crowd began in the hands of Jesus.

A. Jesus took the loaves and the fish and He blessed it.

1. Miracles don't begin in your hand, they begin in God's hands.

2. If you need a miracle in your life, put it in God's hand first.

a. If you need healing, trust the issue with God first.

b. If you need your finances blessed, put them in God's hands first.

c. IF you have a loved one who is lost, stop being their Savior but put them in the hand of Jesus.

3. Jesus took the bread and fish, blessed it, and then divided it out.

a. What God blesses is able to produce far outside of natural and human laws.

b. It is His blessing that we need first and foremost.

B. Jesus blessed the food, but it was the disciples who distributed it.

1. Jesus didn't go up and down the crowd.

a. Instead, Jesus told the disciples to get the people organized.

b. Then He blessed the food and gave it to the disciples to give away.

2. The miracle started with Jesus and found its expression through the ministry of the disciples.

a. It is a little hard to determine exactly how this happened.

b. Perhaps the disciples had to keep coming back to Jesus for more fish and bread.

c. Or maybe the disciples took their pieces and kept giving, and giving, and giving.

d. The method does not determine the miracle.

e. The miracle was that Jesus was able to accomplish a mighty work of compassion through a meager sacrifice.

5. Will you be faithful with what the Lord has given you?

A. The Lord has a work for you that is beyond your abilities.

1. If you are doing the Will of God no amount of budgeting, planning, or strategies will be enough to accomplish His will.

2. That's because it is His will, not yours.

3. His plan, not ours.

4. His power, not mine.

B. The Lord will ask you to do things that are FAR beyond your present resources.

1. When He does, what is asked is not for you to give up or despair.

2. What He asks is for you to give to the Lord what you do have and to ask Him to bless it.

C. We are living in a day and age of faith.

1. We must believe God for the job ahead of us is too big for our resources.

2. The need ahead is greater than our compassion.

3. The world needs Jesus, and we are called to give Him freely and with abandon.

Closing: Checking our Compassion and Faith.

A. This morning, how is your compassion?

1. Do you spend more time weeping than you do in judgment?

2. When was the last-time you smelled like cigarette smoke, been bombarded with profanity, and confronted with a life of sin?

3. Do you spend more time delegating the needs and concerns of people than you do in prayer to help solve those needs?

4. How aware and concerned are you of the lostness of your street or neighborhood?

5. Are you moved by pity or compassion for the lost?

B. This morning, where is your faith?

1. Are you trying to accomplish only what fits in your budget?

2. In your prayer time, are you asking God for more or for less?

3. When you pray do you ask God to multiply that which is in your hand?

C. This morning, I want you to join me in asking the Holy Spirit to lead me to a place of compassion and faith.