

# He Won't Send you Home Hungry

7.22.18

Mark Series

Message 33

Mark 8:1–10 (NIV)

**8** During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, <sup>2</sup>“I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. <sup>3</sup>If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.”

<sup>4</sup> His disciples answered, “But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?”

<sup>5</sup> “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked.

“Seven,” they replied.

<sup>6</sup> He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so. <sup>7</sup> They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. <sup>8</sup> The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. <sup>9</sup> About four thousand were present. After he had sent them away, <sup>10</sup> he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

## 1. If you are hungry enough, you'll eat it.

A. Many of you know I'm a picky eater.

1. I'm not as bad as I used to be, but the list of things I don't like is still pretty long.

2. My mom and dad had different approaches to meal time.

1. Mom would fix things that catered to us kids.

2. Usually something we kids liked and would cause minimal fussing.

3. Dad often had a different approach:

1. I loved it when he fixed fried potatoes or chicken and noodles, because I like that.

2. But he also fixed things I didn't like and his response was, "Tough... If you don't like it you don't have to eat it."

3. And sometimes I didn't.

B. But when you are hungry, things taste better.

1. I've never known true hunger.

a. I may have said that I was hungry, but I've never known true hunger.

b. I grew up really poor, but there was always something to eat.

c. I may not have what I want to eat in the house, but there has always been food there if I was really hungry.

2. The problem most of us have is not that we are hungry but that we are full of things that are not good for us.

a. This is true whether we are full of junk food or our lives are full of just junk.

b. Hunger for the right thing is important:

1. Hunger pains remind us of our need to eat.

2. Hunger for a better life causes us to work hard.

3. Hunger for God leads us to pray, study, and worship.

c. Hunger is a reminder that something is needed.

d. Hunger and need are also prerequisites for miracles.

C. Today's passage features another miracle by Jesus.

1. This is the second time in Mark that Jesus feeds a large crowd.
2. Today, as we look at this passage, I want to emphasize the importance of being hungry for the things of God and God's willingness to provide both spiritually and physically.
3. We will look at this passage through 3 principles:
  1. Spiritual hunger is a necessary part of the Christian life,
  2. Our lack of resources is never a hindrance to God.
  3. Miracles are distributed from God through people.

## 2. Spiritual hunger is a necessary part of the Christian life.

### A. Being hungry brings out different reactions to people.

1. Babies cry when they are hungry.
2. Adults get cranky when they are hungry.
3. When we are on a trip, and we start feeling a little bit of hunger, many of us will pull our cars into the first gas station or restaurant we find in order to find something that will subside our desire to eat.
4. More than we realize, our hunger directs our mood, our decisions, and our destination.

### B. The crowd following Jesus had gathered for a noble purpose.

1. Unlike other crowds in the past that had wanted miracles, this crowd came to hear Jesus teach them.
2. Their spiritual hunger had driven 4000 plus people to find Jesus in a deserted location and to spend 3 days listening to Jesus teach them.
3. Many of these people had run out of food by this time and others had been fasting for a couple days at this point.
4. Their spiritual hunger had now put them in a position of physical hunger.

C. Jesus knows their need.

1. Jesus is compassionate and merciful, and He knows His people are hungry.
2. Jesus could have berated these people:
  - a. He could have berated them for not bringing enough food.
  - b. HE could have scolded them for poor planning.
  - c. But instead, Jesus responds to them with compassion.
3. Jesus decides to miraculously feed them.
  - a. Jesus won't punish people for desiring Him.
  - b. **There is a blessing God bestows when people place themselves in a position to hear and understand His Word.**
4. The people's hunger for Jesus led them to a place to receive a miracle from Him.

D. Without a desire for God, we will not experience the power of God.

1. If you have all of God you want right now, He will not give you any more.
  - a. If you don't see your need for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, you will never receive it.
  - b. If you don't want to witness to your co-workers, you will never receive the empowerment to witness to them.
  - c. If you never feel the need to change, you will never pray to be changed.
2. **People who have everything they need don't need a miracle.**
3. Some of us today haven't received from God lately because we haven't needed God lately.
4. Maybe you are so full of other stuff that you don't have time to realize how empty you are.

- a. How many of you have been so busy working that you forgot to eat?
- b. Many of us are so busy that we have forgotten how much we need to spend time with God!
- c. We fill ourselves so full of everything else that we have no room for God.
- d. If you are like me and want that part of your life to change, here in a few moments I'm going to invite you to join me to pray that the Lord will restore our hunger!

### 3. Our lack of resources is never a hindrance to God.

A. Jesus sees the need of the people and turns to His disciples.

- 1. Jesus knows they are hungry, and He gives His disciples the opportunity to address the situation.
- 2. The disciples state the obvious: We can't find enough food in a desolate place like this...
- 3. But Jesus already knew the situation.
- 4. What He was wanting from the disciples was two things:
  - 1. A declaration of need.
  - 2. And a profession of faith.

B. Jesus wanted His disciples to verbalize their weakness.

- 1. Jesus knew they couldn't feed all of these people.
- 2. But He wanted them to say it out loud.
- 3. How many of us adults have ever been in a meeting or at someone's house and your stomach starts to gurgle?
  - a. You hope they didn't hear it, but you know they did.
  - b. Then we feel embarrassed by it.
  - c. Usually, someone might ask "would you like something to eat? And we respond, No I'm fine...."

d. In the name of being polite, we deny our need.

4. Kids don't have this problem.

a. As soon as they are hungry, they will let you know it.

b. They don't care who is talking or where they are at.

c. They are hungry and they want to be fed.

5. Jesus already knows your needs, but He wants us to admit it.

a. This is why confession is so important.

b. If we confess our sins and our needs, Jesus is faithful and just to forgive and to meet those needs.

c. But He wants us to admit, aloud, that we are in need and that we can't help ourselves.

C. Then Jesus looks for an expression of faith.

1. Faith says, "I can't do this but I know someone who can."

2. The disciples didn't express much faith in this situation.

a. As we will see in a few weeks, they were still struggling with the lessons of faith.

b. But they brought to Jesus what they had, a few loaves of bread and a few fish.

c. And with Jesus, this small amount was more than enough.

D. Jesus didn't need all of this bread and fish.

1. Jesus could have fed them out of nothing.

2. Yet, Jesus often asks us to give what little we have to Him so He can bless it.

3. The miracle of feeding the 4,000 was not in the bread but in the blessing.

a. In the hands of the disciples, the seven loaves would have fed the disciples.

b. In the hands of Jesus, the seven loads fed thousands and there were seven basketfuls left over.

E. A Position of need is not a bad place to be.

1. If the people had not been hungry, there would have been no miracle.

2. When we are in a position of need, how often do we complain when instead we should pray?

3. We complain about our lack of resources instead of taking our situation to Jesus and asking Him to bless it!

4. Many of us here are in a place of need.

a. We need something to change.

b. Let your hunger drive you to Jesus!

#### 4. Miracles are distributed from God through people.

A. Jesus doesn't cause the food to be miraculously administered to the people.

1. Jesus blesses it, breaks it, and then He hands it off.

2. Jesus puts the miracle in the hands of His disciples and tells them to go and feed the people.

B. We often become the hands of Jesus in distributing miracles.

1. In my life, I have been blessed and I have been a blessing.

2. There is something incredibly exciting when God uses you to go and minister to someone.

3. But miracles can be a lot of work.

a. Jesus blessed the food and handed it to the disciples.

b. The disciples then walked around the hill, giving food to the people.

c. There was work involved in the distribution of the miracle.

4. We often think that miracles just happen, and sometimes they do.

a. But rarely do miracles happen without prayer.

b. Rarely do miracles happen without someone being led by God to go and "deliver" the miracle.

c. And, at times, your miracle is a response to someone having been a good steward of what they have been given.

5. Think about the fish and bread.

a. Someone made the bread and someone caught the fish.

b. Someone didn't eat it when they could have, they didn't waste it when it was theirs, and they carried it around with them for days at a time.

1. We know that Jesus COULD have produced bread out of thin air, but He didn't.

2. He used what someone had worked and cared for as the foundation of the miracle.

6. **Part of being a good steward is putting ourselves in a place where we can be the foundation for one of God's miracles.**

a. It's hard to be a blessing to others when you are broke all the time.

b. It's hard to speak a prophetic word to someone when you haven't talked to God in a long time.

c. It's hard to pray for others when you haven't been praying for yourself.

7. A few months ago, I watched a miracle happen here as God provided for our new air-conditioning.

a. The Lord raised \$46,000 in a matter of a few weeks.



- b. And not one dime came out of thin air, and not one dime came from outside of this body of believers.
- c. God used YOU to distribute the miracle.
- d. There truly was pain and sacrifice in those offerings.
- e. But as we gave of ourselves to the Lord, the Lord blessed and multiplied and provided.
- f. It was an exciting experience to give and see what the Lord did.

C. But we have to not only be willing to give but receive as well.

1. Don't be so prideful that you refuse the miracles of the Lord.
2. However the Lord desires to provide for you and bless you, you must be willing to receive and eat of it.
3. Verse 8 says that the people ate and were satisfied.
  - a. The Lord not only sustained them, He satisfied them.
  - b. And that is what God still does for His people today.

D. Not only were the people satisfied, but there was food left over.

1. We often refuse provision and blessings because we feel like we are taking from the other person.
2. But when God leads someone to be your miracle, the Lord provides for the giver.
  - a. The 7 loaves that belonged the disciples ended up yielding 7 baskets full of leftovers.
  - b. In God's economy, those who are led to give by the Holy Spirit are provided for in supernatural ways.
  - c. Obedience brings blessings that money can't buy.

### Closing: How's your hunger?

A. As we reflect on today's message, let us begin with our hunger.

1. When we are deciding what we want to eat, we often ask "How hungry am I?"

a. We don't want to waste the money on a grand meal if we are just a little hungry.

b. But we don't want a snack when we could put a hurting on an all-you-can-eat buffet either.

2. As believers, we begin by asking "Am I hungry?"

a. How often do I WANT to pray, go to church, or worship?

b. How intensely is my desire to become more like Christ as less like my old self?

c. What am I usually in the mood for? And are those things good for me?

3. Maybe you feel a craving in life like something important is missing.

a. You thought drugs, pills, a new relationship, a new job, or a new toy would fix it.

b. But it didn't.

c. If so, maybe it is your spirit crying out for God.

4. Whatever your situation is this morning, we all could use an increase in our hunger for God.

a. We all could benefit from being with Him more.

b. If so, we are going to pray with you and for you today to be hungry for and then satisfied with Jesus.

B. Maybe you are in need of a miracle today.

1. If so, we want to pray for you and with you.

2. We want to encourage you to bring that need to Jesus and then ask of Him to miraculously do what we cannot.

Let us pray!