

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Feeds 5000

Mark 6:1-44

Opening

Gathering: Share examples of when God has provided well beyond human abilities.

Today's Focus: Jesus tested and taught His apostles to trust in God's providence instead of looking to their own limitations.

Key Verses: *When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.* Mark 6:34

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. John 6:51

Opening Prayer

Lesson = One of few stories recorded in all four gospels

Street Experience (*Mark 6:7-13*)

Why did Jesus appoint 12 of His many disciples to be apostles? = *Apostolos - one sent forth*

Mark 3:13-15 = For intensive training to go out and represent Him

How did Jesus test their training after a year of working with them?

Mark 6:7 = He sent them out two by two, Gave them the power & authority they needed

How did He make sure they would see the Spirit working instead of taking credit themselves?

Mark 6:8-10 = Take only yourself and the Spirit will take care of you, no extra baggage

How did He prepare them for rejections they would face? = Reject Christ & lose Abraham's inheritance

Mark 6:11 = Told to shake dust off feet as Jews did when leaving Gentile territory

How did their street experience turn out?

Mark 6:12-13 = They covered the land and showed Christ's healing hand

Herod's Paranoia (*Mark 6:14-29*)

How effectively did the apostles get the word out about Jesus?

Mark 6:14a = Word even got to King Herod (Herod Antipas, ruled Galilee)

Did people understand that Jesus was the promised Messiah (Christ)?

Mark 6:14b-15 = Some thought He was John the Baptist, others Elijah, others a prophet

Who did King Herod think Jesus was?

Mark 6:16 = John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded

Did this scare or intrigue Herod?

Luke 9:9 = He was intrigued and wanted to see Jesus to check Him out

Did Herod ever get to see Jesus?

Luke 23:6-12 = Yes, and he was disappointed when Jesus didn't perform

What prompted the situation that led to Herod beheading John the Baptist?

Mark 6:17-18 = John condemned Herod for stealing brother's wife (Herodias), was imprisoned

Was Herod just trying to quiet John, or did he intend to get rid of John for good?

Mark 6:19-20 = Just wanted him quieted, Herodias wanted him dead

How did Herodias get an opportunity to get rid of John for good?

Mark 6:21-25 = Her daughter (Salome per Josephus) danced & was promised anything

How did Herod respond to this outrageous request?

Mark 6:26-28 = Didn't like it, but carried it out to save face in keeping his promise

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News Reaches Jesus (*Mark 6:30-32*)

What did the followers of John the Baptist do when John was killed?

Matthew 14:12 = They buried his body and then told Jesus what had happened

What other news was reaching Jesus at the same time?

Mark 6:30 = The twelve apostles were returning and telling about their experiences

How did Jesus respond to the news of His preparer's death?

Matthew 14:13a = He went away by boat to be alone

Did He go by Himself?

Mark 6:31-32 = He also took His disciples so they could get some rest from their travels

Where did they go? = Bethsaida was 3 miles NE along the Sea of Galilee coast from Capernaum

Luke 9:10 = Solitary place outside of a town called Bethsaida (*house of fishing*)

Why would Jesus take His apostles to Bethsaida to rest and mourn?

John 1:44 = Peter, Andrew and Philip were from Bethsaida

No Rest for the Weary (*Mark 6:33*)

How relaxing was it for Jesus and the apostles when they arrived at this solitary place?

John 6:1-2 = A great crowd followed Him

What might have helped add to the size of the crowd?

John 6:4 = People were beginning to travel to Jerusalem for Passover

Did Jesus and His apostles at least have a little time of rest before the crowd reached Him?

Mark 6:33 = No, they were there waiting; Gathered others as they ran through the towns

How did Jesus respond to this lost opportunity for rest from the crowds?

Matthew 14:14 = He had compassion on the crowd and ministered to them

Was this an isolated incident or was Jesus frequently unable to rest because of crowds?

Mark 3:20-21 = He rarely had time for Himself, He always gave Himself to the people

Why was He so fast to ignore the concerns of His family for His welfare?

Mark 3:31-35 = He saw the people in the crowds as His family members

Did Jesus understand that His ministry did not include time for Himself?

Matthew 8:20 = Yes, *the Son of man has no place to lay His head*

The Shepherd (*Mark 6:34, Ezekiel 34*)

Why did Jesus have compassion on the people when He needed rest Himself?

Mark 6:34 = *They were like sheep without a shepherd*

Didn't the people have priests, Levites and rabbis to shepherd them?

Ezekiel 34:1-4 = These shepherd neglected their sheep and took care of themselves

What happens to people when they have no shepherd?

Ezekiel 34:5-6 = They wander aimlessly and succumb to attacks by Satan's predators

What did God decide to do about these worthless shepherds?

Ezekiel 34:7-10 = Fire them and hold them accountable

How did Jesus explain that these inept shepherds would be held accountable?

Matthew 18:5-7 = Better to die a horrible death than to cause someone to sin

What did God decide to do about this hopeless situation?

Ezekiel 34:11-16 = He would find and gather His lost sheep and shepherd them Himself

Did God say how He would shepherd His sheep?

Ezekiel 34:23-24, 31 = He would send David (the Messiah) to care for them

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Dinner Time (*Mark 6:35-37*)

What concerned the apostles as the day drew on?

Mark 6:35-36 = People should leave so they can find food in small villages

Where did they get the idea to be concerned for the people's stomachs?

John 6:5 = Jesus had put the idea in Philip's head even as people were still arriving

Why did Jesus raise this question? = Jesus found ways to build people's faith in everything

John 6:6 = As another test for His apostles who had seen God provide on their travels

How did Philip respond to Jesus' test?

John 6:7 = He thought of human limitations and not of God's power

How did Jesus reply when the apostles couldn't figure out the problem on their own?

Matthew 14:16 = He gave them another chance to respond in faith

Just A Snack (*Mark 6:38*)

How did Jesus help guide the apostles into a faith-building experience?

Mark 6:38 = He had them take inventory of the situation's human limitations

Where did they find the little food that they did?

John 6:8-9 = A boy had 5 small barley loaves and two small fish

Note: This bread and fish constituted a poor man's snack

Barley bread was only eaten by the poor people who couldn't afford decent grain

Loaves were small flat cakes that were broken (not thick enough to slice)

Fish were like sardines and eaten on bread, highly salted for preservation & taste

Headcount (*Mark 6:39-40*)

Did Jesus give His disciples even another chance to respond in faith? = Green grass - Spring

John 6:10 = No, it was now time for Him to teach them through this experience

Was there 5000 men or 5000 people? = Jewish women & kids ate separate from men in public

Matthew 14:21 = *5000 men, besides women and children*

How did they estimate about 5000 men?

Mark 6:39-40 = He had them sit in groups of 50 & 100 to help distribution

How did the people later show that they misunderstood this for a counting of military force?

John 6:14-15 = Planned to make Jesus king; Esp. now that king killed God's servant (John)

What A Snack (*Mark 6:41-44*)

How did Jesus further make sure the apostles saw God's hand in this miracle?

Mark 6:41 = He first thanked the Father, then had the disciples distribute the food

What was the miracle? = Only history before the Passion recorded by all 4 Gospels

Mark 6:42 = *All ate and were filled* (KJV – not just satisfied, but filled)

What other aspect of this miracle further worked faith into the apostles?

Mark 6:43 = They picked up twelve basketfuls of left-overs, one for each apostle

Spurgeon: *When Jesus took the loaves, it was not only to multiply, but also to dispose of them. They were distributed by Christ. He did not believe in multiplication unless it was attended by division. Christ's additions mean subtraction, and Christ's subtractions mean additions. He gives that we may give away. If you have received the truth from Christ, tell it out!*

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Another Faith Building Experience (*Mark 6:45-52*) = Next Week's Lesson

- Did Jesus continue to teach the people after they had eaten? = Sent disciples to town in boat
Mark 6:45-46 = No, it was getting late and the people should find shelter
- Were the disciples just moving the boat to a dock in Bethsaida for the night?
John 6:16-17 = No, they would pick up Jesus there and head on to Capernaum
- How was Jesus setting up for another faith building experience?
Mark 6:47-51 = He walked on water to them and calmed the storm
- What test of faith did Matthew add in his account of this story?
Matthew 14:28-31 = Peter stepped out in faith that quickly faltered
- Why did Jesus find it necessary to provide this experience right after feeding the 5000?
Mark 6:52 = They had not gotten the message behind the miraculous feeding
- Did this experience help?
Matthew 14:33 = Yes, they worshipped Him and called Him the Son of God

The Bread of Life (*John 6:22-60*)

- Did the crowd go back home or continue on their ways to Jerusalem?
John 6:22-24 = No, they went looking for Jesus
- Would they be able to find Him in Capernaum?
Mark 6:53 = No, they landed at Gennesaret – midway between Capernaum and Magdala
- How did Jesus turn this searching into a teaching opportunity?
John 6:25-27 = He tried to refocus them on the eternal food from God
- What specific works are needed to get this eternal food?
John 6:28-29 = Only faith in Christ
- Did the people understand what Jesus meant by food from God?
John 6:30-31 = No, they thought He was referring to the manna God sent in the desert
- How did Jesus explain the bread from heaven to the people?
John 6:32-35 = *I am the bread of life*
- How are we to receive this bread from heaven?
John 6:48-58 = Feed on Jesus and His word to receive eternal life

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. How completely do I trust God to provide for me when I am doing His work?
(*Mark 6:7-10; Genesis 22:1-14; Nehemiah 9:20-21; Isaiah 43:20-21; Matthew 6:25-34; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Timothy 6:17*)
2. When have I recognized and relied upon God's compassion?
(*Mark 6:30-34; Exodus 33:19; Judges 2:18; Nehemiah 9:26-31; Psalm 103; 116; 145; Matthew 11:28-30; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; James 5:11*)
3. What sheep have God entrusted to me and how good of a shepherd have I been?
(*Mark 6:34; Deuteronomy 11:18-21; 2 Samuel 5:1-3; Ezekiel 34; Zechariah 11:4-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4*)
4. When have I tried to handle impossible situations on my own instead of trusting God?
(*Mark 6:37; 10:27; Numbers 20:1-12; Deuteronomy 1:26-33; 1 Samuel 13:6-14; Daniel 3:16-29; 6:23; John 12:35-36; 14:1-3*)
5. How often do I feed on Jesus (the bread of life) and His Word?
(*John 6:35-58; 1:1-5; 4:10-15; 5:39-40; 20:31; Luke 22:14-20; Acts 17:11; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:14-17*)