



***Sermon-Based Study Guide***  
*Prepared by Rev. James R. Wilson, D. Min.*  
*Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church ♦ June 27, 2010*

**Sermon Title: The Feeding of Five Thousand**

Sermon Text: Mark 6:30-44

Related Texts: Ezekiel 34:1-6 and 22-24

**I. Start It – Connecting With One Another**

When it comes to rest, re-creation and refreshment, what has been meaningful and helpful for you? What is your favorite vacation spot?

**II. Introduction**

After a parenthetical account of John the Baptist and his martyrdom for having been faithful to the message of the Kingdom of God, Mark returns to recording the events that followed Jesus sending out the twelve as apostles of the Kingdom. Let's see what takes place.

**III. Study the Text – Read the Gospel of Mark 30-44**

- 1) The passage divides at verse 35. Looking over **verses 30 through 34**, how would you describe:
  - 1) the excitement of the apostles?
  - 2) the concern Jesus has for his apostles?
  - 3) the continuing popularity of Jesus?
- 2) How do you experience time with Jesus - "by yourselves... in a quiet place... to get some rest?" Why is it important for you to ensure that you experience such times? How can you ensure that you will?
- 3) Look at verse 34. What is the relation between Jesus having compassion on the people and Jesus beginning to teach the people? In other words, how is teaching the word of God an act of true compassion? How can you be a teacher of God's word to your friends, family, neighbors, others?
- 4) The second part of this passage centers on the large crowd – **verses 35 through 40**. Try to imagine the scene – a large crowd (we later see it was over 5,000 men plus women and children) listening to Jesus teach. What does this suggest about both what and how Jesus taught?
- 5) The hour grows late, it's dinner time. How does the solution posed by the disciples in verse 36 differ from Jesus' solution found in verse 37? What is the attitude of the disciples toward the crowd? Why does Jesus' solution seem impossible to the disciples? How do you respond to hearing about the needs of people that seem to be overwhelming and impossible to meet – for instance 6 million AIDS orphans in Kenya?

- 6) How does Jesus solve the need according to verses 37 through 41? What is his part? What is the role of his disciples in meeting the need?
- 7) Take a look at Ezekiel 34:1-6 and 22-24. What is God's response to the unfaithfulness of the leaders of Israel who have failed to be the shepherds of God's people? How does the scene of verse 39-43 show Jesus and his disciples as the true shepherd of Ezekiel 34:22-24?
- 8) Did you notice something lacking in this account? There is no record of how the crowd and disciples reacted to such a miraculous event. Why do you think this is the case?
- 9) Is it possible that the people did not realize Jesus has miraculously multiplied the small amount of food? Did the disciples?
- 10) What is significant about the 12 baskets left over? How does this add to the picture of Jesus and his disciples being good shepherds of Israel?
- 11) Picture the scene in your mind's eye. The tired disciples-apostles wanted to the people to leave so they could find some rest. Now the scene is 12 groups of 100 or so people being cared for as a shepherd cares for his flock. It's pastoral, refreshing, renewing... restful for the people who are "Like sheep without a shepherd."
- 12) Through all these events, how were the disciples' whose sense of reason saw only an impossible situation (verses 36-37) challenged to see Jesus' faithfulness in the face of the impossible?

#### **IV. Pray It - Reflection and Responding in Prayer**

How would you assess your heart for people to hear the message of God's love and God's Kingdom that has been made known through Jesus Christ? Do you care that people are like sheep without a shepherd - that is, they are living apart from God without the hope of an abundant and everlasting life?

Do you feel like the disciples - "just send these people away so we can rest?" Or, do you see the compassion of Jesus in your heart - "they are like sheep without a shepherd... let's do something?"

What do you have to offer people that points them to Jesus and meets their other needs? Can you trust that Jesus will use that in order to help others come to know and trust in him? Can you trust that your action will be used by Jesus to make a difference?

---

*Reason is a marvelous gift, but the relationship between reason and faith is often strained. It is not just that faith may require us to act beyond the stable conclusions of reason, but that reason may also be the stepping stone to sarcasm and cynicism. In the guise of sarcasm or cynicism, reason undermines not just what we believe but how we act. Ultimately, the certainty of faith comes not from our reason but from God's faithfulness... we must watch for the one who is faithful in the face of the impossible... and be attentive to the voice that calls us to act.*

Ronald J. Kernaghan, Mark