

Date: Sunday, January 3, 2021 Scripture: Mark 6:30-44

Transcript

Mark chapter 6 the title of this sermon this morning is **The Compassion of Christ**.

D.L. Moody tells a story of a little boy who attended a Sunday school in Chicago. When his parents moved to another part of the city, this little boy still attended the same Sunday school, although it meant a long and tiresome walk each way. A friend asked him why he went so far. And he told him that there were plenty of other Sunday schools just as good near his home. They may be as good for others, but not for me was his reply. Why not? The friend asked. The little boy replied, because they love a fellow over there.

That church was a church that reflected the heart of Christ. They love children. They loved people. They cared for them. And that's to be the heart of Christ's church today, that we would be those who love others. That we love our children, as our children are in Sunday school right now. We care for them. We love them and we point them to Christ.

Moody went on to say "If we could make the world believe that we love them, there would be fewer empty churches, and a smaller proportion of our population who never darkened a church door."

As we'll see in our text this morning, we're going to see the heart of Christ. That Christ loved people. He had compassion for people. And although these people that He ministers to in our text this morning, they wouldn't believe in Him. They couldn't deny the fact that Jesus showed concern and care and compassion for them.

It was God in the flesh who revealed the heart of His Father. He had a love for the world. A love for people.

This morning I want us to see the heart of Christ as He ministered, both to the needs of His apostles and also to the needs of the world. And so we will pick up in Mark chapter 6 and verse 30.

And we're going to see **three ways that Christ shows love for others**, three ways that Christ shows love for others. Mark chapter 6.

And look at verse 30.

1. Our first point this morning is His concern for the apostles.

Verse 30 says this.

The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) 32 They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves. 33 The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them.

Now, if you remember weeks ago as we studied in verses 7 through 13, Jesus at that point had sent the disciples out. He had sent the disciples out to go and preach the gospel. They were on a preaching tour and He sent them out to go, not only to preach the gospel, but to cast out demons and to even heal many people. He gave them the power and the authority because He has all power and all authority and their job was to go out and to proclaim Christ. So they go out on this ministry. They go out. And they go and preach the gospel.

They spread the gospel all over as they would take the gospel and spread it throughout the world. That would be their job. When Christ -- after Christ dies and is buried and then resurrects and then ascends to heaven, the mission would be handed to the apostles and their job is to go and preach the gospel, and so He's preparing these guys for this time to go and preach the gospel. And they've gone out, and they've done it. They've preached all around Galilee. They were on a preaching tour.

But these guys come back and they've still got more to learn. They haven't mastered it all, even though they've gone out on a preaching tour and they've healed people and they've cast out demons and preached the gospel, they still had more to learn.

So they returned from that preaching tour and they meet up with Jesus, most likely in Capernaum. In the city where it was their headquarters. If you remember, in our study of Mark, Capernaum was the headquarters where they ministered.

But they gathered together with Jesus because they want to tell Jesus all the things that they had done.

Jesus knows what they have done because He went. He sent them out to go and preach and cast out demons and heal right, but they gathered together because they want to tell Him they're excited. "We gotta tell you Jesus, all the things that had happened as we went around and preached the gospel..."

But notice as they come and gather back together with Jesus, Jesus doesn't say to them "Hey, great job guys. Now here's your next task." Which we so often do with people who work really hard, right? "Hey, great job, wonderful job. Now here's what I got for you next."

Jesus doesn't do that. We burden people with more and more things, but Jesus understands what these guys have been through. He understands how much energy it takes to go out and to preach the gospel, and to cast out demons and to heal people. I'm sure these guys have experienced rejection as they've gone and proclaimed the gospel and called people to repent of their sin and put their faith in Christ.

As I'm sure many of us here have experienced rejection before, for proclaiming the gospel. These guys knew what rejection was. Their preaching tour was not easy. It was hard. And they come back from their mission trip, and they're tired and they're worn out. And so Jesus said to them, "*come away by yourselves to a secluded place and let's rest for a while.*" You guys need some rest. Jesus is concerned for them. He's concerned for His disciples. He cares for them. He loves them, and he knows what it's like to be bombarded with people.

They were so bombarded with people when they had returned that they don't even have time to eat. People are gathered together all around Him. They don't have time to eat, and Jesus knows exactly what that's like, right?

As we've been studying through Mark, Jesus as He goes and proclaims the gospel and preaches -- thousands of people come and gather around Him, they press in on Him. He understands what it's like to be bombarded with crowds. Just as these guys are bombarded with crowds.

He knows what it's like to go and preach to the masses, just as they have preached to the masses. He knows what it's like to heal the sick and the demon possessed, just as they have done. He understands it takes a lot of hard work to go and do what they have done, and so he shows concern for them and he says guys, let's go away. You need some rest. I know you've been through a lot. I know it's been hard to go out and preach the gospel, especially to those that reject you and turn away from you guys. Let's go and rest.

He's concerned for them. He wants them to get away for some rest and relaxation. And so what do they do? We'll look at verse 32. *They went away in the boat.* They get in the boat and they go out now on the Sea of Galilee. They go from Capernaum, and they're headed now out onto the sea in this boat.

Luke tells us in Luke 9:10 that they had headed for the shores of Bethsaida, which was about a 6-mile trip. So they're going from Capernaum over to Bethsaida, headed over there on this short trip, and off they go there. They're heading out to this secluded place where they can go and get some rest because Jesus is concerned for them.

He wants them to get away from the crowd and the only way that they could get away from the crowd at that point was to jump in a boat and get out on the sea. Let's get in the boat and head out. So they do, and they're off to Bethsaida. They go. But as they head out on the Sea of Galilee the crowds are there, gathered together on the shore. And they're watching from the shore and they're seeing this boat head out onto the Sea of Galilee and they see Jesus out there and they see the apostles out there with Him in the boat and they're watching everything that goes on with these guys.

These guys are able to get a little bit of rest. But really, as we'll see, the only rest that they're able to get is that little 6-mile trip on the boat. They're not going to be able to be secluded away from the people for very long as we'll see in our second point. So we see Christ has concern for the apostles. He's concerned for them and their well-being after they've gone in a long preaching tour.

2. Let's look at our second point. Our second point is His compassion for the crowd. His compassion for the crowd.

Look at verse 33.

33 The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

Jesus and His disciples are out on this boat and as they go out on the sea, the crowd is gathered together on the shore and they're watching Jesus and they run ahead. They see where Jesus and His disciples are going and they run ahead, off to Bethsaida to meet Jesus, so that when He comes into the port, when He comes, parking the boat in there, they could be there to meet Him.

They get to the shore before Jesus and the disciples get there. Jesus gets to the shore, the crowds are there. And think about this. Think what Jesus could have done, what did He tell the boys? What did He tell the disciples? *"Guys, we're going to go away and get some rest? Go to a secluded place"* so as He gets to the shore, think about what He could have said to the people. As the crowd gathers around Him, *"People I know you're here to see me and to see the 12. But guess what? We gotta go get some rest. Shoo. Get outta here. Go away. We're trying to get somewhere."* He could have said that to the crowd.

Jesus doesn't say that. Instead, He feels compassion for them. Jesus doesn't get annoyed with the crowd. He doesn't get upset with them. He's gripped with compassion for them as they come and seek Him and seek the 12 apostles.

One commentator says this is an illustration of that wonderful love that never sought its own, but always forgot its own needs, and worries, and sorrows, and sympathy, and care for the burdens and sorrows of other people. That was the heart of Christ.

He had compassion and care for other people, and instead of being annoyed with them and saying, *"Listen, I don't have time for you right now. I'm spending time with the 12"*. Jesus shows compassion for these people, because He's a compassionate savior.

Why else? Why does Jesus feel compassion for this crowd? Mark tells us. He tells us because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Perfect illustration of someone who was completely lost. These people were totally lost. They were like sheep without a shepherd. You understand sheep. There is no animal that is as dependent upon a human being than a sheep is with a shepherd. Without the shepherd, sheep will wander and they get lost. Without a shepherd, the sheep won't know what to eat.

In fact, often times they'll take themselves to go feed on the bad food and they'll get sick. So the shepherds got to lead them to the good food. Without a shepherd to lead the sheep to water, the sheep will die of thirst. They won't search out water for themselves. The shepherd has to lead them to the water. Without a shepherd to fend off the wolves, the wolves will come in and they will devour the sheep.

And sheep are so dumb that they will literally gather themselves together in a herd, and they'll come together when the wolves gather around basically to say, "Hey, take your pick, whichever one of us you want. We're all here gathered together." They'll do that. And so they need a shepherd to go and fend off the wolves to get them away, to get them out of there. Sheep are totally dependent upon their shepherd.

That's why Psalm 23 is so important for us to know, to memorize Psalm 23, Christ is our Great Shepherd who leads us and feeds us and protects us. He's the one who leads us to water. He leads us to the green pastures. He's the one who guides us, and we must be dependent upon Him.

Just as sheep are totally dependent upon the shepherd, we are to be totally and completely dependent upon Christ, who is our Great Shepherd. Jesus saw these people, though, as sheep without a shepherd. They're lost.

Maybe you're here this morning you're like one of these lost people. Sheep without a shepherd. You're lost. You don't know the Great Shepherd. You don't know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Turn from

your sin this morning and put your faith in Jesus Christ, who is the Great Shepherd who came to give His life for you.

He came to die on a cross and pay for your sins. Sins that you can't pay for. He came to offer eternal life and He calls you to come and to submit your life completely and totally to Him as the Great Shepherd.

If you haven't done that this morning, do that. Come to the Great Shepherd in repentance and faith in Him and receive the good news of eternal life.

These people were lost. They're wandering aimlessly. They had no one to point them in the right direction. In fact, the so-called shepherds of the day were who? Scribes and the Pharisees, right? The scribes and the Pharisees were the so-called shepherds who were leading these people astray. They weren't leading people toward Christ, they were leading them away from Christ.

Sadly, we live in a day today where there are many so-called shepherds on our secular and Christian radio stations, in our bookstores, on our TV's, who are leading a lot of people astray. They're deceiving people and they're using deception for their own selfish desires.

Listen, beloved, don't listen to those false shepherds. Stay fixed on Christ and His Word. Don't follow after those false teachers. Keep your eyes fixed on the Great Shepherd who will never lead you astray.

Gods established His church. God's given shepherds over your own soul to watch over you and to care for you. That's our job, as elders here at Faith Bible Church, to be shepherds and to guard you and protect you and to love you and to feed you God's Word. That's our job, that's what we've been called to do. To shepherd and to care for you. And that's why it's so important for you to be a part of the church. To be here, involved in the church, so that we as elders can love you and shepherd you and be involved in your life, and care for you. Because that's what we desire to do - to lead you to Christ.

We won't lead you astray. We will point you to Christ. That's our job. That's our responsibility. That's what we have been called to do as elders, because we desire to care for your soul. We love you. We love you and we want the best for you. And that's what the shepherd wants. He loves his sheep and he wants the best for his sheep.

Jesus sees this crowd and He knows that they need a shepherd. They need a shepherd to lead them to the truth. And so that's what Jesus did. He led them to the truth. Look at the end of verse 34 – it says:

“...and He began to teach them many things.”

Jesus began to teach them. Teach this large crowd who were sheep without a shepherd. They were lost, but Jesus was there to teach them the truth. He fed them spiritually. He's the Great Shepherd, the true Shepherd.

What does He feed them? What does He tell them? Luke tells us in Luke chapter 9 in verse 12 it says *“He began teaching them about the Kingdom of God.”* He was teaching them about spiritual things about the Kingdom of God and how to get into the Kingdom of God. He was also there to heal those who were sick. But His job was there to point them to the truth and to say *“Look, you are lost and you are headed to hell. But listen. I'm here to tell you I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me.”*

That's what Jesus Christ preached to them. He called them to repent of their sin and to put their trust in Him. He taught them the truth. That's what a shepherd does. Points them to the truth. And that's what Jesus, our compassionate Shepherd does -- is He cares for the needs of others.

Now when it says *"He began to teach them many things"*, as you see at the end there of verse 34, *"He began to teach them many things."* This "many things" here could be translated "at length" or "for a long time."

You think that I teach for a long time? Try sitting under the ministry of Jesus. He preached for a long time. Many, many things that He had to teach the people. Try sitting under the ministry of the apostles.

Paul was preaching so long that he had a guy fall asleep sitting on a window. He fell asleep and he fell out the window and died. Then Paul goes and he brings the guy back to life and you know what he does after that? He keeps preaching. He preached all night long.

You think Sunday morning is long. You have no idea of the preaching ministry of Jesus and the disciples. That's what they were called to do. To preach and to feed people and to lead them to the truth. That was their heart. It was a desire that they had, and that's what Jesus was doing. He was teaching, and He's healing these people for a long time because he's a compassionate savior. He loves them. And he cares for them, and He cares for the needs of these people.

But it starts to get late. As Jesus is there teaching these people and healing them it, it gets late and look at verse 35 says

35 When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and it is already quite late; 36 send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But He answered them, "You give them something to eat!" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them something to eat?"

Now what's interesting here is that the disciples are the ones who come to tell Jesus it's late, like Jesus doesn't know, right? Jesus just want to let you know it's getting late. The people are getting hungry. They come to Him. They start the conversation. They realize what's going on. They're out in this desolate place. They're not near the city of Bethsaida... they're outside of the city of Bethsaida and they didn't have immediate access to food. Bethsaida the town was close enough where they could send the people into town and have them go and get something to eat.

So the disciples come up with a plan, and they tell Jesus, *"Jesus, we got a plan. Here it is. Send them away. Send all of these people away so that they can go and buy their own bread."*

Now to you and I, that sounds like a good plan, right? You got thousands of people -- will talk about how many people there were. Possibly up to 20,000 people that are gathered around Jesus there. And they come up with this plan. Sounds like a good plan. Just just send them away, let them go get something to eat because it's late and they're hungry.

That wasn't Jesus plan. In fact, He responds to the disciples in verse 37, He says *"you give them something to eat!"* Us: *"Jesus, do you know how many people there are here? You want us to give them something to eat? Thousands of people and all of these people need something to eat because they're hungry?"*

It's like that feeling that you get at a restaurant when you're there with a large crowd and someone looks over at you and says, "You're paying right?" Startled right? That's how these guys were. They're startled, and so what do they do? They come up with their own plan. Plan B. Alright, we got it. We got a plan here. OK, Jesus? You don't want us to send the people away. Well, let's see how much it will cost to feed all of these people. Plan B.

John tells us in his version of this story, John tells us that Phillip is the mathematician. That Phillip is the one who calculates out about how much it would cost to feed all of these people and the number that he comes up with is 200 denarii. 200 denarii. But that would only get them a little bit of bread, so we could feed everybody just a little bit. They're hungry, will give them a little bit of food. It will cost us about 200 denarii.

Now, in order to understand how much that would be, we've got to understand what a denarii is. How much is a denarii? A denarii is one day's wage. One day's wage. And so here in Minnesota, if you didn't know, on January 1st, minimum wage just increased. Small business is now minimum wage is \$8.21. You own a small business. There you go. You got to start paying them \$8.21. So if we take \$8.21 and multiply that by 8 hours a day we come up with \$65.68. Times that by 200 and we get \$13,136.

That's about how much it would cost to feed all these people. \$13,000 in our modern-day currency. And that's without taxes being taken out, by the way. And so after they do the calculations, the disciples don't think Plan B is going to work. 200 denarii is a lot of money.

Now Jesus knows exactly what He's going to do at this point. But He's teaching these disciples a lesson. Remember, they've come back from a preaching tour they've been out ministering all on their own, but are they ready to go? Not yet. They still got more to learn that Jesus is teaching them at this point.

You would think that they would understand after going out and healing people, and casting out demons with the power and the authority that Jesus has given to them, and understanding the power and the authority that Jesus has. You would think, at this point they would understand Jesus can make food. But they don't.

They missed it. Still at this point, they got more to learn. Look at what it says in verse 38.

38 And He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go look!" And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." 39 And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass. 40 They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties.

Now, even though Jesus tells them to go and gather food, they're probably thinking, "Oh yeah, plan C. Why didn't we think of that? Why don't we just go ask people? See who's got food? Anybody has some food will gather it all together and then we'll just start feeding the people. Good plan Jesus. Alright guys, let's go and find out how much food there is?" so off they go -- out to the crowd, and they go and they begin to search for all this food. Maybe the people will have enough food that we can gather the 20,000 people together and we can feed 'em all. Let's go see how much food we can find.

What did they find? A little boy with five loaves of bread and two fish. It's all they're able to find. These guys still don't get it. They still don't understand. Five loaves and two fish. "Still not enough to feed the people, Jesus. We could feed maybe a family with five loaves and two fish, but we can't feed all these people."

But Jesus commands the disciples to have these people go and sit down. He says guys go command the people to sit down, sit down in the green grass. At least they have faith enough to obey Jesus at this point. Right? Think about that. They've come back with five loaves and two fish.

And Jesus holding the five loaves and two fish says *"Now go tell the people to sit down."*

What's He gonna do?

Jesus, don't you know they're hungry? Let's go back to plan A – send them into town so they can get something to eat, but He doesn't do that. They obey Jesus at this point and they have the people go and sit down. And they split everyone into groups of hundreds and fifties.

One commentator says it would be like it would likely be 50 rows of 100. As verse 44 tells us, it was just counting the men. It would sit them like this to make distribution of the food a lot easier. We just do 50 rows of 100 people. We can distribute this food much easier.

But they have 5,000 men. That's just the men, that's all they counted were the men. 5,000 men not counting the women and children. So you have possibly up to 10 to 20,000 people gathered here in this field, all sitting on this green grass waiting to be fed. And there's Jesus standing there with five loaves and two fish.

And all the people gather. Sitting down. Waiting to receive a meal. But then, our compassionate savior, He takes the bread and look what it says in verse 41.

41 And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food and broke the loaves and He kept giving them to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all.

Jesus takes the bread and the fish there. And He looks up to heaven towards the Father. And *"He blessed"* -- that's what it says. There in verse 41 *"looking up toward heaven, he blessed."* If you have a NASB, NASB you'll see the words *"the food"* in italics there.

The reason why those words are put in italics there is because they're not in the original Greek. It's not in the original manuscripts, and so the translators have added that in there in order to help us understand what's going on. And what they've done is they've added *"the food"* there and it says that *"He broke the loaves and He kept giving them"* ... you see again in italics *"to the disciples to set before them."* They've added those words in there to help us understand the context in what's going on, but they've added *"the food"* in there at Jesus. Bless *"the food."* But most likely what Jesus did is when He looks up to heaven. He just blessed, meaning He gives thanks to God.

You wonder why when we sit down at a meal, we gather around the table and we give thanks before we eat. Because that's what our savior did. Before He.. "Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Father, for providing for us." Because every good and perfect gift comes from the Father. Thank you, Father, for this food. Thank you for the many ways that you have blessed us.

Every meal that you have in front of you, every single meal that you partake of is a blessing from God. And our job is to be like our Savior. And to give Him thanks. For all that He's done for us, but what He's provided for us.

So there's Jesus giving thanks to the Father for five loaves and two fish. Think about this, five loaves and two fish with 20,000 people in front of Him.

"Thank you, Father." He knows what he's about to do. He's grateful for the food. He's grateful for what God has provided for these people.

Jesus took the bread. And these five loaves were not loaves like our modern day loaves that we would go and buy from the grocery store. Not a big old loaf of Wonder Bread. That's not what it is that Jesus is holding in his hand, not five of those. These are small biscuits.

So like those biscuits that you had on Thanksgiving, those little biscuits, that's what it was. Five biscuits and two fish. And he broke up the bread. He broke up these, these biscuits and he divided up the fish and He gave them to the disciples to go and distribute to the people.

Now think about this.

You've got 20,000 people that are sitting around in a field. You've got five loaves and two fish, and Jesus is feeding all of these people. How is this happening? Jesus doesn't have an oven behind him. He's not baking loaves in the oven and pulling them out. And here's for another family. And here's for another family...

Jesus is there literally creating food as He is giving it to the disciples. Here is more and here is more. And here is more. What? "What oven did you get that out of Jesus?"

"I didn't get it from an oven. I created it because I'm the creator of all things. I spoke all of this into existence. Don't you realize the power and the authority that I have guys. Here you go, here's some more bread. Oh, by the way, the fish...you guys, fisherman, you didn't have to go back there to the Sea of Galilee and catch a bunch of fish. I'm feeding these people with fish that were never caught in a net. I'm creating fish."

And He creates the fish and He keeps handing them out and giving them over and giving them over as He is creating food for these people. These people are eating fish that never swam in a sea. They are eating bread that was never baked in an oven. Think about the power and the authority that Jesus has and the compassion that He has as He looks out and He sees all of these people who are hungry.

And He says, "I've got the plan guys. I know you try to come up with your own plan. You send them away. Sounds good, but no, it's not the plan that I have. 200 Denarii ...no. Guys listen, I'll make the food. I will provide for them because I love these people. I care for them. They're hungry, they have need and I want to give to them."

Not exactly what He does. He makes all of this. He's the creator God, and He makes it, all of them. All of this, and he gives it away to all of them. But Jesus doesn't just give every person a small piece of bread and a small piece of fish. Look at verse 42. It says "*they all ate and were*" What? "*Satisfied*"

They all ate. And they were satisfied everyone was full. It's that feeling that you have after your Thanksgiving meal. Right? Satisfied, full, ready for a nap. That's how all 20,000 people felt. They were totally satisfied and He provided everything that they needed at that moment. Compassionate savior. Loves them. He cares for them. And He meets their needs. He met their physical needs that day.

Not only their physical needs, but even as we saw, He met their spiritual needs as well. It was even more important for them to have their spiritual needs met. But Jesus out of a heart of compassion even meets their physical needs.

I want to pause right here and I want to talk about compassion ministries. compassion ministries. You probably heard of compassion ministries (soup kitchens, those kinds of things, homeless shelters, all that) where the hungry can come and get food and all that kind of stuff.

As a church, as churches, we should provide for people. We should give to others. We should be a compassionate people who reflect the heart of our savior in giving to others who have needs. But listen. We must remember as our Savior did, to focus on people's spiritual needs before we meet their physical needs.

Soup kitchens should be open. Why? To preach the gospel and to give them food. But not just to give them food and leave them full, let them leave full without hearing the gospel. They will leave full and headed right to hell. With compassion ministries our focus and our job is to preach the gospel. It's another way that we can go and proclaim the gospel and meet the spiritual needs that people have.

That's what we're called to do. That was the heart of our savior. He was there to meet their spiritual needs and then meet their physical needs. We must remember that. You support compassion ministries – it's a great thing to support compassion, compassion ministries. But look at them, research them, call them, ask them what do you do?

Do you preach the gospel to them? Because that's what they need the most. And that's what we must do. Preach the gospel to people. And meet their physical needs. That was the heart of Christ. That's what He did that day. Not only met their spiritual needs, but He met their physical needs as well.

3. And so not only do we see His concern for the apostles and His compassion for the crowd, but finally, we'll look at point #3. His care for His own. His care for His own.

Look at verse 43.

43 and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. 44 There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

Jesus gets done here feeding these 5,000 men plus their wives and their children. 20,000 people, possibly there, and He looks to His own disciples. These twelve guys who have been serving these people this entire time.

Jesus has been creating bread. He's been creating fish and He's given it to the disciples and they go out and dish it out to the people they are serving the people. But He understands these guys are hungry too. They need something to eat. And so what does Jesus do? Continues to create enough food where He's got 12 baskets leftover. 12 baskets.

Why 12? Because the 12 disciples... every one of them got a basket full of food to eat. They're tired. They're worn out. They've just come back from a preaching tour and now they're out, ministering to all these people and Jesus is still concerned for them. And He provides for their needs right there and gives

them 12 baskets. Full of food. Each one of them is provided for. Each one of them is given the food that they need to eat.

What a compassionate Lord. What a caring and loving Father that we have...who cares for the needs of His own? And he cares for you and I. Our God cares for us and He's met our needs, has He not? He has met every single one of our needs. And He continues to care for us. And He loves us.

That's what we need to have as well. A heart of compassion. Just as Christ has a heart of compassion for the people.

In closing, I want us to turn over to John chapter 6.

Turn in your Bibles over to John chapter 6.

John gives us his account of the feeding of the 5,000. There's one of...this is one of the only accounts that we get that is given to us in all four Gospels. Every one of them, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all give us an account of the feeding of the 5,000. And in John chapter 6, John gives us his account of the feeding of the 5,000, but look over in verse 26 and what it says there.

Verse 26 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."

You ate of the loaves and were filled. Then Jesus goes on in verse 48, look at what it says, in verse 48, Jesus says *"I am the bread of life."*

Look, they want.. they were hungry. They wanted food to eat. Jesus fed them and He says you seek after me because I feed you physical food. But He says look,

"48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die."

Eat of me. I am the bread of life. Come to Me, give your life completely over to Me and I'll give you life. He says in verse 51

51 "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

I've given my life so that you might have eternal life. That's what I've come to give. But then look in verse 64 says

64 "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him."

And what was the result of this? This message that Jesus proclaimed? When He says, "I am the bread of life?" I know you seek me for the physical bread, but I am the bread of life. And Jesus says. But I know that there are some of you out here in this crowd. Some of you Jews who are here that do not believe.

There are many people who are even following Jesus as His disciple, not as a disciple like the 12 disciples, but as a follower of Christ who were sitting under the teaching of His ministry, His teaching ministry, and learning from Him. And they're there and they're listening to Jesus and they're following

after Him. But Jesus says, look, I know some of you are here and you won't even believe. What's the result?

Look at verse 66.

66 As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. They left him.

They turned their back on Jesus. He says you only seek Me for the, physical bread. You don't believe me. You haven't come to know Me as Lord and Savior. You just want the good stuff. You just want the blessing. But you don't want Me.

Sadly, there are many people who are in our churches that have that exact same attitude with Christ. They want the blessings of Jesus. They want the bread that Jesus offers. They want the good life. They want all of the good stuff.

That's what we talked about in Equipping Hour this morning... They love the good promises, but the promises of persecution. Oh, we don't like that. Jesus says, look, come to Me for Me. Come to Me for eternal life. I will give you the greatest gift that you could ever have, that's way better than bread that's going to fill your stomach for a couple hours. I will give you eternal life, but you must follow after Me.

Don't come to Christ for the blessings. Come to Christ for Him. Follow after Christ and Him alone and we know the result of that is that we will receive blessing from Him, but don't seek Christ just to go after the blessing. Seek Christ for Him.

That should be our heart. That should be our heart as a as a church and that's what our churches should be filled with. But sadly there are many people who don't do that. We must come after Christ and seek after Him who is our compassionate savior.

What was Jesus teaching these disciples these days? When He's there with them. On this day is He's feeding the 5,000. What was it that Jesus was teaching the disciples? He taught them first of all, not only to trust him, but he was teaching them also to have compassion for others. Just as Christ has compassion for others.

Now look, we're living in a time in the United States where our nation is divided. There's turmoil. There's fighting and there's wars going on amongst people. I understand right has become wrong, and wrong has become right. Many of our streets have turned into war zones and people are using social media as a weapon to devour others.

But I also know how Christ treated those who denied Him. Those who would, say later on, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!" It was these people who would yell that. But what did Jesus do? He loved them. He had compassion on them.

There are many people in our nation in our state in our city who are lost. There are lost sheep without a shepherd. And our job is to be compassionate to reflect the heart of our savior towards them. Sadly there are Christians who want to go to war with people instead of win them to Christ. There are people who want to hammer the world with their opinions instead of show them the heart of Christ. They want to go to combat with the lost instead of show them the compassion of Christ.

Look your neighbor's greatest need is not becoming a Republican or becoming a conservative. Your neighbor's greatest need is Christ. That's their greatest need. And our job is to reflect the heart of Christ to the people around us and to tell them "Look, don't come to Christ just for the bread. Come to Christ for Him because you are lost and you need a savior." That's our job. Is to show a heart of compassion, just as Christ was compassionate towards these lost people who would one day reject Him and yell, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" And you think rejection is hard for us?

Think about what Christ went through all that He went through to pay for our sins to save us as they yelled, "Crucify him!" He looked down and said, I love you. I love you. I love you. He's a compassionate savior.

And He has loved every one of us, has He not? He has called us, and has saved us, and He's given us eternal life, and our job is to reflect that heart of Christ and to go and show compassion towards others.

Are you quick to condemn? What? Do you call people to Christ? Are you quick to slander, or do you share salvation with others? Are you annoyed with the lost, or do you answer them with compassion and grace and love, longing to see them come to Christ?

That must be our heart. That's what we must do. Reflect the heart of Christ to a lost and dying world who are lost sheep without a shepherd. Many people never come to Christ because we've turned them away. But may we beg and plead with people and show them the heart of our savior!

And call them to come to our savior for salvation. That's what we've been called to do. May we live with a heart of compassion for other people, as our savior had compassion for others.

Let's pray.

Father. Thank you. Thank you, thank you for our compassionate savior, who loved us and gave His life for us. Father is there is division in our nation right now. So we see the lost who are deceived and seeking after that which is wrong. Father, give us a heart for them. Heart of compassion. Love them. Care for them. Be concerned for them. And point them to our savior. Help us to be bold and courageous and speak the truth because we know that truth and love go hand and hand.

Father give us words that are filled with grace and compassion for them, but words that are filled with truth. Father help us to go from here to live out heart of our savior to a lost and dying world. May You use us as those who go and proclaim the gospel to lead them to the Great Shepherd. That they might come to know You. Not for our glory, but for Your glory alone. We pray all of this in the name of our savior. Amen.