

Serving on Empty

Introduction:

Have you ever run out of gas? I am talking of course about when you mow your lawn... Surely that wouldn't happen while you were driving a car right? Anyway...have you ever been mowing your lawn and you can hear your lawn mower start to sputter as you go on uneven grass, but you have just a little more to go, and you are as far from your gas can as possibly can be...

As we resume our study of the Gospel of Mark, the disciples' engines are sputtering. They need a break, yet instead of a break they have another opportunity to serve others. Thus the title, "Serving on Empty."

Theme: Jesus cared about those around Him.

1. Jesus Cared for His Disciples
2. Jesus Cared for the Crowd

Inter: Who did Jesus care for?

Trans: In Mark 6:30-44, we see Jesus caring specifically for two groups of people.

**I. Jesus Cared for His Disciples - vs. 30-32, 35-38**

**A. He Guided Them to Rest - vs. 30-32**

Take note of two repeated themes: Jesus goal of getting the disciples apart and going to a secluded place  
"by yourselves" "by themselves"  
"secluded place" v. 31, 32 "place is desolate" v. 35

Note the pattern in Mark of how Jesus took his disciples aside at different times

As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables. (Mar 4:10)

With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it; 34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples. (Mar 4:34)

Six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; (Mar 9:2)

28 When He came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?" (Mar 9:28, a demon)

3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, (Mar 13:3)

Discipleship needs time to be set apart, rest, process life, instruct  
Can happen in homes, restaurants, retreats, coffee shops  
Colleges, seminaries (do seminaries count as desolate places?)

Trans: Although Jesus tried to get the disciples rest, this time, it seems that they did not get it!  
People meet them at the desolate place, so Jesus serves and guides his disciples to as well

B. He Guided Them to Serve - vs. 35-38

The disciples make a legitimate point: people need to leave to get food

Jesus reply is probably absurd to them

feeding everyone would cost approximately 200 denari

1 denarius = 1 day's wage

the disciple probably thought of more reasons that this! (I can!)

From where? Who will get the food? How long will this take?

It does, however, seem that they have the money

The disciples serve, but they miss the lesson - v. 52

"Caring" for a disciple does not always mean the disciple immediately benefits!!

For example, consider Peter, who was there, and what he says

years later in 1 Peter 2:1-3. Consider how much Peter grew!

Read verses 51-52

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. (1Pe 2:1-3)

Illustration here? Trumpet, or mentoring with preaching (Matt, Pastor Collard)

Trans: Jesus Cared for his disciples by seeking rest for them and by pushing them to serve.  
When he saw the crowd, even though he and his followers were trying to get away, he served.

II. **Jesus Cared for the Crowd - vs. 33-34, 39-44**

A. By Teaching Them - vs. 33-34

People flock to Jesus, seeing him & the disciples traveling and running to the desolate place

Consider the following aspects of this story

"He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd"

Numbers 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; Ezekiel 34:10-16; Isa. 40:10-11

15 Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, 16 "May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, 17 who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the LORD will not be like sheep which have no shepherd." 18 So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; (Num 27:15-18)  
17 So he said, "I saw all Israel Scattered on the mountains, Like sheep which have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each of them return to his house in peace.'" (1Ki 22:17 NAU)

[the prophet says to Jehoshaphat and Ahab]

Please turn to Ezekiel 34:10-16

10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might, With His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him And His recompense before Him.

11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes. (Isa 40:10-11)

5000 men!

The region was an area of Zealot activity before and after this

According to Josephus, who was from the first century, Judas the Galilean caused problems in A.D. 6, and Galilee offered strong resistance to the Romans in A.D. 66-67 against Vespasian

So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by

Himself alone. (Joh 6:15)

Jesus' response? He teaches them

B. By Feeding Them - vs. 39-44

See similarities between this and 2 Kings 4:42-44

Note that feeding them was "necessary" because of how long Jesus had taught!

Note also the difference between Herod's feast and this one

Herod's was...

for his own benefit

Jesus' was...

for others

at his expense and the expense of his disciples

III. Conclusion

A. Consider how Christ developed His disciples.

Find ways to bring those you are discipling to desolate places

Remember that growth is slow, your investments might not be appreciated or recognized, and disciples might very well become frustrated with you!

B. Trust in the Good Shepherd. Christ will gather his sheep. Are you merely one who likes the care sometimes, or are you truly drawn to the Shepherd himself?

"I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd. (Joh 10:14-16)