

THE OVERFLOWING FULLNESS OF JESUS

An Exposition of Mark 6:30-56

By Pastor Brian Wilbur

Date: November 8, 2020

Series: Mark: Knowing and Following God's Son

Note: Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

The World is a Tough Place

As disciples, we are to be on mission with Jesus to the world – and the world is a tough place full of many tough places. There is no escaping the toughness and neediness of the world. We will encounter people who are in the grip of demons; and people who are caught in a web of deceit; and people who are afflicted with disease or, worse, with the dis-ease and un-ease of fear; and people who are addicted to sin. We will encounter people who are “like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34), like orphans without a loving father, like the sick without a doctor, like strangers with no place to call home.

The year 2020 has been laden with difficulty – and this difficulty is embodied in the events of the past week: a politically divided nation, such that whichever candidate won the election, about half the country was going to feel disoriented and threatened; a pandemic that is spreading far and wide and closer to home; and tightening restrictions in response to the pandemic. The world is a tough place.

Some Important Questions

The question is: Are we journeying to and through the tough places with Jesus *or* without Jesus? Are we be facing the harsh realities of a fallen world with confidence that Jesus is enough *or* with fear that our circumstances will undo us? In the hard places of deprivation and need, are we faithful to share our Lord's compassion with other people *or* are we empty-hearted and empty-handed? Do we believe that Jesus is enough? Do we believe that the Father's will is for Jesus to reveal His glory amid the dark and desolate places of our world?

THE SCRIPTURAL TEXT

Holy Scripture says:

³⁰ The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. ³⁵ And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. ³⁶ Send them away to 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 buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" ³⁸ And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." ³⁹ Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. ⁴¹ And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² And they all ate and were satisfied. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. ⁴⁴ And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, ⁵⁰ for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." ⁵¹ And he got into the boat with

them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded,⁵² for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴ And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him ⁵⁵ and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well. (Mark 6:30-56)

DOING LIFE ON MISSION WITH JESUS

Doesn't this passage give us insight into doing life on mission with Jesus? We get weary. Other people keep coming for help. Jesus tells us to serve these people, but we don't have the resources to do it. Jesus tells us to go to the next place, but as we are going we encounter resistance such that we can only "[make] headway painfully" (Mark 6:48). Then Jesus shows up in a strange and unexpected way – and although His presence makes all the difference, we find ourselves "utterly astounded" (Mark 6:51). But there is always enough for those who stay close to Jesus and continue to trust Him.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PASSAGE

This passage has three parts that hang together as a unit. In verses 30-44, Jesus feeds a hungry multitude. In verses 45-52, Jesus walks on the water. In verses 53-56, Jesus heals the sick. These miracles reveal the Lord's glory, power, and compassion. And they teach us a profound lesson: wherever the Lord is present, there is always enough. There is always enough for the disciples who are called to minister on the Lord's behalf, and there is always enough for the great crowd that is invited to taste and see that the Lord is good.

"And they all ate and were satisfied." (v. 42) *There is always enough.*

"And they [the disciples] took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish." (v. 43) *There is always enough, and then some!*

"And as many as touched it [the fringe of his garment] were made well." (v. 56) *There is always enough.*

This lesson is especially important for us as disciples who are called to participate in Jesus' mission. Jesus has sent us into the tough places of the world in order to *declare* His gospel and *demonstrate* its power. In the midst of a large and needy crowd, Jesus says to His disciples, "You give them something to eat." (v. 37) The question is: *How are we, who are so prone to weariness and weakness, going to feed a hungry world?* Well, stay tuned for the answer.

PART 1: FOLLOWING JESUS INTO A WILDERNESS OF NEED

As we look at verses 30-44, we find ourselves following Jesus into a wilderness of need. And there we learn that *Jesus is the Divine Shepherd who feeds His sheep.*

The Apostles' Short-Term Missions

Remember, back in verse 7 Jesus had sent out the apostles on short-term missions to the villages and towns of Galilee. And according to verses 12-13: "So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them." Then in verses 14-29 we were given a historical flashback to the beheading of John the Baptist. Now in verse 30 Mark resumes his discussion of the apostles' mission trip: "The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught." The apostles gave a missionary report to the Lord, who had sent them out.

The Apostles' Need for Rest

Perhaps the apostles were weary from their recent travels and labors. But the demands of ministry continued, as people "were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat." (v. 31) For Jesus and His team, people "coming and going" never stopped; the demands of ministry never let up. People needed all kinds of help – and Jesus could help them.

Even so, Jesus understood that His disciples needed to rest, and He invited them to do so: "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." (v. 31) Doesn't this give us a beautiful insight into our Lord? He has work for us to do – the gracious work of participating in His mission – but He doesn't intend to work us to death. He doesn't intend to work us to the point of burnout. In the Lord's economy, there is always a rhythm of work and rest: six days you shall work diligently, and on the seventh day you shall rest deeply. You need to "rest a while" on a weekly basis. You need to "rest a while" after busy seasons of ministry. You and your family need to "rest a while" during the course of the year.

If you have heard the Lord's call to go and labor and bear fruit, then you must also hear His call to "rest a while". The disciples heeded the Lord's invitation: "And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves." (v. 32) And the Lord went with them, as the following verses imply.

A Large Crowd in Hot Pursuit

Now even though there is this helpful lesson about rest in verses 31-32, the fact of the matter is that it didn't really pan out. As it turned out, the disciples' rest was limited to their time in the boat, because a large crowd was in hot pursuit. Just imagine the scene: people from all these lakeside towns and villages learn that Jesus and His disciples are boating across the lake from *Point A* to *Point B*. And they begin to run around the lake, and gather more and more people along the way, until there is a crowd of thousands rushing toward *Point B* by land. This is what is happening in verse 33:

"Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them."

As Jesus and the disciples drew near to the shore, they saw a mass of needy people – and their plans for rest had to be set aside. We don't know how the disciples felt about all this, but it is not difficult to imagine that they might have felt disappointed, overwhelmed, or even upset.

The Savior's Compassion

But we do know how Jesus felt. When Jesus was pressed by the interruptions and demands of a clamoring crowd, what came out of him was the compassionate heart of God!

"When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd." (v. 34)

Sheep need a shepherd's guidance and care. Orphans need a father's affection and love. The sick need a doctor's attention and treatment.

So often, sinful human beings hate the weak. This hate may take different forms. The strong and powerful and well-adjusted may avoid the weak, exclude the

weak, despise the weak, abuse the weak, exploit the weak, or manipulate the weak.

But Jesus is not like the world's rich and powerful. He actually cares. He feels compassion. His heart fills up with the currents of deep love that compel Him to act for their good. Unlike the self-absorbed politicians of Ezekiel 34, Jesus is the divine shepherd who seeks the lost, brings back the strayed, binds up the injured, strengthens the weak, feeds the hungry, and gives rest to the weary (Ezekiel 34:14-16). If you are becoming Christ-like, then you will feel compassion for those who don't know the Good Shepherd.

Compassion Expressed in Teaching

True compassion gets expressed in compassionate action. And there is a very important lesson for us here in verse 34, because sometimes we assume that compassion would manifest itself *first of all* in healing the sick or feeding the poor. And of course those are legitimate acts of compassion that Jesus Himself did. But in verse 34, Jesus' compassion manifested itself *first of all* – on this occasion – in teaching: “And he began to teach them many things.” Let that sink in. The fundamental need of lost, wandering, and needy sheep-like human beings, is truth. They need to be taught the truth about the living God. They need the nourishing words of God. They need to hear God's promises of grace. They need to be instructed in the good way and guided along the path of repentance. After David said, “The LORD is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1), he went on to say: “He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.” (Psalm 23:3) Sheep like us don't need to be coddled; we need to be taught. Life transformation happens through the renewal of the mind, which takes place as we are engaged by the truth.

By now we have seen a pattern throughout Chapters 1-6 that Jesus prioritized the preaching and teaching of the Word. And I just want to take verse 34 as one more reminder that Jesus addresses us as image-bearers of God. And part of our dignity as creatures made in God's image is that we have a mind – we are created to think, learn, and reflect. All too often in our fallen world, the powerful have their plots and schemes, and their success in no small measure depends on the ignorance of the masses. By way of contrast, I want you to know and understand that Jesus, God's Son, the King of the universe, wants you to think – He wants you to understand, He wants your eyes to be wide open, He wants you to see what is

really there. Later on Jesus will say to His disciples: “I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15) Jesus wants you to know what He is up to, and then as you are becoming a person of understanding Jesus wants you to participate in His mission. Paul’s prayer in Ephesians 1 is that the Father “may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know” about the wonderful things that God has in store for you and about His great power that is at work in your life (Ephesians 1:17-19). Jesus, the Good Shepherd, wants you to be well-taught so that you will live as a faithful and obedient disciple.

The Crowd is Hungry

All that is well and good, of course, but the hours do pass by, and physical hunger is a real thing. Thus we come to verses 35-36: “And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.””

Sending them away in order to catch a late dinner is sensible enough, but Jesus has a better idea: “Be he answered them, “You give them something to eat.”” (v. 37) These are very important words. If Jesus told you and your eleven teammates, in the midst of a desolate wilderness, to feed a crowd of several thousand people, what would you do? Would you obey the Lord’s instruction? Would you do it? Would you attempt to do it? How would you attempt it? Would you assume that you don’t have the resources to do it? And what resources would you draw upon anyway?

The disciples considered the resource of money: “And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?”” (v. 37) A single denarius was what a blue-collar laborer earned for a day’s work. So two hundred is a half-year of income. So maybe with a half-year of income you could buy enough bread to feed a crowd of “five thousand men” (v. 44), plus women and children (see Matthew 14:21). But the disciples aren’t in sync with the mindset of Jesus.

All too often, we size things up in terms of human possibilities, and we measure what money can buy.

But Jesus sizes things up in terms of divine possibilities, and He measures what the Father can give without money.

So Jesus asks the disciples: “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” (v. 38) After their little research, they answer: “Five, and two fish.” (v. 38) Is that enough?

A Banquet in the Wilderness

Well, Jesus had the crowd sit down in mid-sized groups of hundreds and fifties “on the green grass” (v. 39-40). Remember Psalm 23: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.” (Psalm 23:1-2) Then Jesus:

“[took] the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.” (v. 41-44)

He looked up to the Father in heaven, and with the Father’s smile upon Him, and with gratitude in His heart, He spoke forth a blessing. Perhaps His words resembled the ancient Jewish blessing: “Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.” With His eyes on the Father, praise in His mouth, and the bread in His hand, a miracle happened! He broke the bread and turned it into nourishment for thousands. He divided the fish and multiplied it for the good of all. What is the point? The point is *not* that we now have a way to produce food on demand. That would be too narrow a focus.

There are at least three lessons for us disciples who are seeking to follow Jesus on mission.

The Glory of Jesus

First, the miracle reveals the glory of Jesus. Let this sink in: *Desolate places are not desolate if Jesus is there.* You can have a barren wilderness with hardly any food, and without spending a dime, Jesus turns the barren wilderness into a banquet hall. What this means is that God’s kingdom is near! Jesus is the Divine Shepherd

who feeds His people! After the Lord redeemed the Israelites out of Egypt, He brought them into the wilderness – and He fed them with manna. It happened then, and it is happening again – the Savior has come! Isaiah 49:8-13 says,

⁸ “Thus says the LORD:

“In a time of favor I have answered you;
in a day of salvation I have helped you;

I will keep you and give you
as a covenant to the people,

to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages,

⁹ saying to the prisoners, ‘Come out,’
to those who are in darkness, ‘Appear.’

They shall feed along the ways;
on all bare heights shall be their pasture;

¹⁰ they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them,

for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.

And I will make all my mountains a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.

¹² Behold, these shall come from afar,
and behold, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene.”

¹³ Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!

For the Lord has comforted his people
and will have compassion on his afflicted.” (Isaiah 49:8-13)

The compassionate feeding of the multitude in Mark 6:30-44 is an enactment of Isaiah 49:8-13. “Joy to the world, the Lord is come” captures the idea!

The Sufficiency of Jesus

Second, the miracle reveals the sufficiency of Jesus. There is always enough. In fact, there is always more than enough. Jesus didn’t need the five loaves and two fishes – He could have spoken a feast into existence out of nothing – but He often uses us and our paltry resources to accomplish remarkable things. And that is part

of the lesson here, because Jesus wants us to be active participants in His mission. We are insufficient and our resources are insufficient, but Jesus takes our insufficiencies into His blessed hands, and makes something beautiful out of it.

The Secret of Ministry

Third, the miracle reveals the secret of ministry. I don't want you to miss this. In verse 37 Jesus said to His disciples: "You give them something to eat." My question is: Did they? And the clear answer is: Yes! The disciples are the ones who "set [the bread] before the people" (v. 41). Which means: they did it! They gave the large crowd something to eat! But how did they do it? They did it by operating in close fellowship with Jesus. Jesus gave the food to the disciples, and they set it before the people (v. 41). In other words, they fed the people out of the abundance of Jesus' resources. They took what He had given them, and that is what they gave to the people. It is a vivid picture of what Jesus said in John 15: "apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). But if we stay close to Jesus, we will find that He equips us to do what He commands us to do.

When it comes to ministry – which is the administration of spiritual food – in and of ourselves we have nothing to give. We are insufficient. But the command comes: Parents, feed your children. Pastor, feed your flock. Ministry leader, feed your students. Disciple-maker, feed the person you are discipling. Christians, feed the broken and malnourished world. The Lord says: "[Give] them something to eat"! Our reply should be: *Lord, give me something to give them!* And He will: He will break the bread and give to us "to set before the people." And the people will understand that it is the Lord who fed them. All the glory and sufficiency and nourishment came from Him. And yet, the remarkable thing is that the Lord made you a partner in His work. The Lord fed the five thousand men *through* the disciples, not apart from them. He didn't need them any more than He needed the loaves and fishes. But He invites us to share in His work! The secret of ministry is to humbly take what the Lord gives you, and set that – nothing more, nothing less – set that before the people.

Ultimately, Jesus *is* the Bread of Life – and His body was broken for us. He gave His body "for the life of the world" (John 6:51). It is our privilege and responsibility to take the good news of Jesus' sacrifice and offer it to our needy world.

Jesus reveals His glory in the wilderness, and on the sea.

PART 2: OBEYING JESUS ACROSS A RESISTANT SEA

Jesus reveals His glory not only in the wilderness, but also on the sea. Now as we look at verses 45-52, we learn about *obeying Jesus across a resistant sea*. If it were up to us, obedience would be the easy path. In fact, however, the path of obedience involves all kinds of obstacles and sink holes. We have to consider our steps and make the way straight for our feet. But we shouldn't be surprised when we meet resistance.

Jesus Prays

After the miraculous feeding, Jesus “made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd.” (v. 45) On this occasion, Jesus did not get into the boat with them: “And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.” (v. 46) Once again, we get a beautiful picture of the Savior's heart. What we see here is Jesus modelling what He taught in verse 31: “Come away by [yourself] to a desolate place and rest a while.” And what was Jesus' priority during His short retreat? Prayer – having fellowship with the Father. Prayerful communion with the Father was the control center of Jesus' life.

Jesus Visits His Disciples on the Sea

Meanwhile, the disciples are “out on the sea” (v. 47) in the middle of the night, on route to Bethsaida, which is near the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was able to see them from land, and “he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them.” (v. 48) Now let's just pause there. Remember, they are on the path of obedience: Jesus told them where to go, and that's where they are going. And on that path over the sea, they encounter resistance – the wind was strong against them, and they were advancing at a snail's pace. Were they frustrated? Were they impatient? Were they taking it in stride? We don't know. What we do know is that things got very interesting when Jesus showed up:

“And about the fourth watch of the night [that is, somewhere between 3am and 6am] he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, for they all saw him and were terrified.” (v. 48-50)

Picture the scene: it is relatively dark, either very dark if it was early in the fourth watch or some early morning light was just beginning to break through if it was late in the fourth watch; and they see someone walking on the water. With little or no light, a shadowy man “walking on the sea” might well be taken for a ghost. Perhaps it is prudent to say that sometimes Jesus shows up in surprising and unexpected – even disconcerting – ways. But understand this: Jesus is not only the Divine Shepherd who feeds His sheep, but also the Divine Lord who rules the sea. He feeds His *hungry* sheep, and He subdues the *chaotic* sea! And when the Lord draws near to us, we must listen for His Word: “But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” (v. 50)

Isn't it interesting that Jesus “meant to pass by them” (v. 48)? What does that mean? I don't know, many possible explanations have been suggested. I would only say that whatever it means, I don't think it means that He “meant to pass by them” *unnoticed*. The overall passage indicates that Jesus intended to minister to His disciples. So He “meant to pass by them” *noticed*, in order to help or strengthen or teach His disciples. But whatever the intent, Jesus was so attuned to the Father that moment by moment, and interruption by interruption, Jesus always responded rightly to the situation at hand. And the situation at hand is that His disciples were gripped with fear by an apparent ghost on the lake. And when His disciples are fearful, Jesus speaks. “Take heart”: take encouragement, take comfort. “[It] is I”: I am here. Therefore: “Do not be afraid.”

After He speaks this word of comfort, “he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased.” (v. 51) I love this quote from James Voelz: “Despite being the Lord of all creation, Jesus comes to his frightened disciples as a shepherd to his frightened sheep (6:34).”[1] Isn't this a comforting truth? Jesus comes to us as we struggle forward on the path of obedience.

The Slow-to-Understand Disciples

In the fearful trip across the sea in Chapter 4, Jesus “rebuked the wind” – “[and] the wind ceased” (Mark 4:39). This time the wind ceases, not because of Jesus' word, but because of Jesus' presence in the boat. And when the wind ceased at Jesus' commanding presence, the disciples “were utterly astounded.” (v. 51) This is not a compliment! When the unfaithful Herod heard John the Baptist teach, “he was greatly perplexed” (Mark 6:20). When the slow-to-understand disciples

experienced the wind-stopping power of Jesus' presence, "they were utterly astounded." (Mark 6:51) But they shouldn't have been. They should have understood the Lord's glory and grace, and in that understanding they should have had joy and peace. In verse 52 Mark tells us the reason for their perplexity: "for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened." (v. 52)

They were supposed to learn from the miraculous multiplication of the loaves. They were supposed to learn that Jesus is the Lord of glory who is with His people for their good. But they weren't getting it. They hadn't internalized the kingdom reality that Jesus is the Divine King who equips, helps, and sustains us as we follow Him. As long as we are with Jesus and in His will, there is always enough for us in every situation. But instead of resting in the glory and sufficiency of Jesus, instead of being quiet-hearted and thankful for the Lord's comforting word and presence, they are astounded, perplexed, confused, disoriented. And they are "utterly" so. They didn't understand – they didn't get it – and that was because "their hearts were hardened."

Jesus wants us to mature into seasoned saints who have depth of understanding and gratitude for all the bountiful, faithful, and unconventional ways by which He cares for us. That's the stride Jesus wants us to hit. And when we hit it, we are humbled but not astounded, thankful but not perplexed, joyful but not confused. For we have come to know that it is simply normal for the Lord to take care of us on the dim-lit and windy path of obedience.

What are you like on the inside? Do you swing on the pendulum from panic (v. 50) to perplexity (v. 51)? Are you have hit the sweet middle of abiding peace, always trusting the Lord both *before* and *after* He provides?

PART 3: SEEING JESUS MULTIPLY MERCY TO AN UNHEALTHY WORLD

Regardless of where each of us are at in the spiritual growth process, we must always remember that Jesus is a bottomless fountain of life for those who trust Him. He says, "Come away... and rest a while." (v. 31) He has compassion on the great crowd and takes time to teach them (v. 34). He satisfies the hungry with good things (v. 42). He comforts our fearful hearts, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." (v. 50) And finally, as we look at verses 53-56, we get to *see Jesus multiply mercy to an unhealthy world.*

We have already seen that Jesus is the Divine Shepherd who feeds His sheep. We have already seen that Jesus is the Divine Lord who rules the sea. Now we see that Jesus is the Divine King who heals the sick.

In due course their boat arrives in Gennesaret. There, like in so many other places, Jesus is “immediately recognized” (v. 54) and sought after. People

“ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.” (v. 53-56)

And so the passage ends where it begins – with so many people clamoring for help, like sheep looking for a shepherd who will bind up their wounds. And the lesson of the loaves carries through to the healing of the sick: *there is always enough!* For “as many as touched it [the fringe of his garment] were made well.” (v. 56)

The disciples might get weary, hungry, terrified, and confused, but Jesus is a never-ending supply of life to a dying world. You might get fatigued, empty, fearful, and perplexed, but with Jesus there is always enough. If we stay near Him, we will always have something useful to give to others. And He will make sure that there are always basketfuls of grace for us, too.

Let us pray.

ENDNOTES

[1] James W. Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26 (Concordia Commentary)*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2013: p. 441.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark (The New International Commentary on the New Testament)*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries Vol. 2)*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017.

James W. Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26 (Concordia Commentary)*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2013.

Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.