

May 31, 2015 Mark 6:30-44

O. INTRO:

*The most powerful day of my life so far was also the most miserable day of my life so far.

*I won't tell the entire story because I have told it before.

*Easter morning, 2009 I was to deliver the message at the outdoor sunrise service in Iraq.

*I stood underneath the concrete grandstands at the soccer field in the dark of the early morning and I prayed "God what have you done to me?"

*I looked at my notes I had prepared...they looked like empty words, so I tossed them.

*I was discouraged, anxious, I felt desperate...and I had to go speak to a large group of discouraged, anxious, hungry people.

*I was not afraid of speaking...In fact...I didn't really care that morning about much of anything...esp what people thought of my.

*I scratched a few words on a piece of paper...feeling like a dead man on the inside...I preached a simple Sermon on the Gospel.

*And God's presence and power came to that place...I could see it...and in the weeks and months that followed it was clear from the impact that God had moved.

*But as I spoke and watched, I felt like an outsider observer watching God "feed" his people.

*I realized...this is not about me...whether I feel "up to it" or not...this is about the shepherd taking care of his sheep.

*The good shepherd feeding them through another of his empty, hungry sheep...me.

Mark 6:30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. 31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

*The boys are back from their mission trip and they are excited to tell the story.

(Mark 6:12)

-They had preached and a lot of people responded.

-They drove out many demons

-Saw a lot of physical healing

*What would this reporting session have looked if you were there?

*"Sir, here is our mission report. We had 107 converts, 10 exorcisms, and 30 verified physical healings...pending further questions this concludes my brief."

*No...

*"Hey Jesus, you should have seen it...it was amazing, people were weeping and repenting...I couldn't believe it."

*"Yea, and remember that little girl who was sick, the one whose dad was the skeptic...she was healed, right there... and then the dad fell to his knees wanting to know how to turn his life around...everyone broke down...even Peter."

*That's exactly what it looked like...this was cool, amazing stuff...they were excited to tell Jesus all about...and I am quite sure he was excited to hear about it.

*As they are telling the stories...the crowds begin to press in, so Jesus, like any good leader sees the need to take care of his people.

*"Hey, get back in the boat (their floating refuge) and let's go get you guys some rest and some food...but keep talking, I'm listening."

32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. 33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

*So, with a head wind, and the disciples in no hurry to make landfall (they are enjoying the time with Jesus)...the crowds are able to travel around the lake and are waiting on shore for them to arrive.

*I can imagine the disciples were pretty irritable by this point...tired, hungry, tired of people.

*But these folks will not give them a break.

*Now, the excitement of ministry, seeing God moving and people responding...gives way to the reality that...**the need is unending.**

*And to the reality that that this unending need...exceeds their mere human capacity.
-physical, mental, spiritual.

*I'm sure we all have felt this way...serving, helping, giving...it doesn't end!

*It can fill like trying to empty the ocean with a Dixie cup..."how is this making any difference?"

*Some stand on the sidelines and ask: "If it doesn't end...why even begin?"

*That's why we are not driven primarily by the vastness of the need but rather the love of God manifest to us and through us.

*When we are "need driven" we will eventually become overwhelmed, possibly burned out, disillusioned.

*When we are "love" driven...God has loved us, we will love others...our ambition is faithfulness.

*We don't focus on the need...we look to our stewardship.

"It is required that those who have been given a trust be found faithful." 1 Cor. 4:2

*Youth Horizons has two homes, building two more...that will house around 32 boys someday.

*"Only 32! Have you seen the numbers on how many children there are out there in need?"

*You see, the need driven mentality by itself...immobilizes us.

*Love driven approach...mobilizes...

*"Yes, but have you seen how these kids, our own kids...our stewardship, our opportunity...have you seen how they are being loved and changed?"

*"Have you met them? They are worth every ounce of effort, every dollar spent."

*There are many people so far from God...the need is overwhelming...we can be immobilized by the need.

*But love...which is practical, not theoretical...is expressed in the concrete here and now of the person God puts in front of us.

***Story of boy throwing starfish in the ocean...matters to that one.**

*This person I am talking to right now, serving right now.

*This person is never a piece of an overwhelming mass of humanity...but rather my opportunity, my stewardship...my expression of God's love to me and through me.

*Look at Jesus...certainly he knew how great the need was...and yet he was continually moved with "compassion"... "love in action"...to individuals...not masses of needs.

34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

*How did Jesus see a large crowd?

*As individual sheep and he was their shepherd.

*He would even tell a story about a shepherd with a lot of sheep who went looking for a single lost one...and was overjoyed when he found it.

So he began teaching them many things. 35 By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. 36 Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

*Jesus has compassion on his guys...he knows they need rest and time to debrief.

*However the good shepherd has compassion on all of his sheep...not just his twelve.

*He sees them standing in a confused mass, scared, hungry...sheep without a shepherd...and he moves to action.

*Take this narrative and the one from last week and put them together...what is wrong with the picture?

*Who is supposed to be leading this people? I mean, who is their human authority?
-Herod

*Well, what's he up to?

*Hanging out in the palace, down south...throwing himself a party, watching pretty girls dance, beheading prophets.

*While his people are desperate for leadership...the human leader is playing, and indulging himself.

*The people turn to a young prophet, 30 or so years old...because they looking for someone to lead them.

*There is an entire other message just in the contrast between Herod the appointed leader(who is taking care of himself) and Jesus the anointed leader(who is taking care of others)...but we will move on.

*So what does Jesus do?

*He begins to instruct them in the truth...he leads them in their "thinking" in the direction that their lives need to go.

*Remember he did many miracles, but those were always to validate his message...signs pointing to the truth.

*A physical healing...would never last...people will eventually grow sick and die anyway.

*The amazing miracle of feeding them that was about to occur was even more temporary.

*How long does a full stomach last before it is empty and crying out for more again?

*But to give people the truth of the gospel...to show them the way God designed them, the kind of life they could live now and forever...that was a gift that was permanent in its results.

*So when he landed...he did not immediately launch into healing and feeding...but teaching.

*Evidently the people were aware of the power of his teaching and their own real need...because they are hanging around in a remote place and the day is about to turn into night.

*As this happens the disciples are concerned that if the sun does go down and the large crowd (5,000 men, no telling how many women and children were included) did not start back towards civilization they would be forced to go without food.

*So they warn the Lord..."Hey Jesus, send these people away so they can go and purchase some food for themselves."

*Jesus never lacked situational awareness...he didn't say "Oh, yeah, I was so caught up in my teaching I didn't notice...how stupid of me."

*Without missing a beat he said..."**You guys feed them.**"

*It's not a stretch to think that Jesus was having some fun with them here...

-"Hey, if they are hungry, you guys feed them. You were just telling me stories of all the cool stuff you experienced...go for it!"

*I don't mean he was mocking them...but its hard for me to imagine Jesus **not** smiling when he saw the looks on their faces when he said this.

*By the way...if the Jesus you hold in your mind doesn't ever or rarely have a smile on his face...you probably have an image that does not match the reality of who Jesus was and is.

*Surely, he was smiling when the boys were telling their stories...and do you think little children would flock to him...if he had a "no" face?

*By and large, it is my experience children and adults are not drawn to frowns.

*So Jesus spent a great deal of time smiling...I'm sure of it...because he had a lot to smile about.

*And having a lot to cry about (which he did) did not preclude him from all the things he had to smile about.

*At any rate...whether he was teasing them or not...he moves on to astonishing them.

***Because he really meant it when he said "You feed them."**

*Actually he intended to feed them, and he was going to allow his guys to take part in the process.

38 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five — and two fish." 39 Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. 41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. 42 They all ate and were satisfied, 43 and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. 44 The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

*Many, because of their own presuppositions, not because of any rational basis find this story unbelievable.

*I want to offer some thoughts for those listening that have intellectual struggles with the gospel...not to belittle you but to hopefully offer some help.

***Let's talk about this miracle.**

1. Mark specifics that they sat on the "green grass".

-Mark does not waste words, so why say this...I mean what other color would the grass be?

-Well I guess it could be brown...which is part of the point.

*He is telling us details to let us know:

a. It is spring, when the grass is green in that part of country.

*This is an important part of his purpose for the entire narrative...this is Passover time...and this story is about the Passover lamb...more on that shortly.

b. This story is real, the green of the grass stood out in the mind of Peter as he told this story to Mark.

2. All four gospel writers tell this same story...it is the only miracle they all tell.

*This story was widely distributed and written down within the lifetime of many of those present.

*That means in a land with a relatively small population there were over 5000 eyewitnesses.

*If it didn't happen...many would have been able to debunk it.

*But they didn't, the story stood and spread...because it was true.

3. Some say this was a miracle of sharing.

*When the disciples gathered the little bit of food, folks felt guilty (or moved to generosity) and pulled out their own picnic lunches...shared.

*So this turned it into a spontaneous, massive potluck dinner.

*So 5000+ people who ran around the lake on the spur of the moment, carried enough food to feed every man, woman, and child until they were full and then had twelve baskets full left over.

*That's not what happened.

*All four writers would not have included this in their books and it would not have spread orally like it did...if it were merely a story of a potluck in the wilderness.

4. What about the miracle itself. Isn't it unbelievable?

*Why?

*Terry, you are belaboring the point, move on...we believe.

*Have patience with those with real, intellectual struggles...they might be helped by this conversation.

*Tell a story that might give perspective:

*What if you landed on earth from another planet and on your planet...bread appeared in your front yard each morning...it always had, for as long your world's history reached back and could remember.

*Scientists on your planet had come to describe this process in scientific terms...they could tell you what happened in the molecules and how they came together to make bread appear...it was all a very "natural process."

*Of course on our planet that would be considered a "miracle"

*On your planet there is need to refer to a supernatural being...to explain "bread" appearing...the scientists had figured it all out.

*But now you arrive on our planet and you see us put a grain of wheat into the dirt.

*You watch us as wait for water to fall from the sky and for photons to transmit energy into the seeds.

*Then the seed dies and out comes a stalk with many, many wheat grains.

*Those grains are collected, crushed, cooked, and turned into bread, and pies.

*For my gluten free friends...substitute rice or some other food you find delicious...same principle.

*You, our friend from another planet, look at all this and you are amazed...this is a miracle...this is super natural.

*A seed, and dirt, water falling from the sky...turn into bread? What?

*My point...what we call natural is merely what is normal...what else would it be if it happened on a regular basis.

*But what is natural remains...amazing, we just have become accustomed to it...and we have assigned names to the processes...so we believe those names have eliminated the wonder and the fact that it was all designed.

*We think the naming of things is the same as explaining things...why is all this here, and why does it happen like this?

*What is normal (that we call natural) is what happens most of the time...but there is no reason why the normal cannot be superseded....miracle.

*Jesus, who made this physical world and designed those very processes...simply altered those processes in this instance in order to communicate important truth to them and us.

*So, no, it is not unbelievable that God in human form could make bread and fish in an instant rather than taking the time of the normal processes.

***LET'S GET TO THE POINT...WHY IS THIS STORY SO IMPORTANT?**

*I heard this story in Sunday school as a kid.

*I probably drew some little picture...it was probably bad. I was and remain horrible at drawing.

*I remember how I heard these kinds of stories...Jesus fed the crowd in a sort of a magical way.

*I remember vaguely thinking Jesus is special...but I had no real sense of Jesus being practical in my own life.

*Cool story, but I was not particularly impacted by it.

*I mean, my mom could feed quite a few people, as a kid I was amazed by that.

*She could turn a few bags from Dillons into a table full of food.

*But the reality is we are not meant to be impressed with the "trick" of multiplying loaves and breads.

*That was never the point of the story.

*Mark's telling of the story and the very words he chooses are meant to lead us to something bigger than a single, massive Lord's Diner in the desert experience.

*Think about it...these people were not in desperate straights...they could have walked to nearby places and purchased food for themselves.

*Besides, even if they missed a meal or two...they were not going to die.

*There is much more here than just meeting the very temporary needs of some hungry stomachs...this is a living sermon...he is acting out the gospel.

*From the Exodus to the Cross...this is Jesus connecting history...showing them and us THE POINT.

*This event perfectly illustrates the Lord's connection with God's activity in the past, present and future.

*It paints the picture of the gospel.

*The gospel was prefigured in the OT, revealed in the NT, and will be ultimately fulfilled in the future.

***Exodus was the most important event in Israel's history**...it was their defining moment.

*Exodus...God's miraculous rescue of his people from bondage through the wilderness into the land of promise.

*The New Testament is full of connections between the Exodus and the gospel.

*Jesus shows up over and over in those connections:

1. He is the Passover lamb...his blood is shed so we escape the wrath of God.
2. He is the good shepherd...exceeding the great shepherd Moses

3. He is the life giving bread provided for them in the wilderness

*On and on

*This is not historical revisionism...this is what the entire OT and Exodus event, unfolding over many centuries pointed forward to.

*When Moses was about to die and was not able to enter the Promised Land he asked this of the Lord regarding his replacement.

Num. 27:15 Moses said to the LORD, 16 “May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community 17 to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the LORD’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.”

*Sound familiar...in the short run...that replacement shepherd, turned warrior leader was Joshua.

*In the larger view...this shepherd was Jesus...who will, by the way...return someday as a warrior leader...not just a shepherd.

*Let's look at a single NT passage that makes this connection between the exodus and Jesus in multiple ways.

1Cor. 10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

*A bit confusing, I admit: here's the bottom line:

*Israel experienced:

-God's presence (leading them under the cloud)

-God's protection (taking them through the sea)

-God's provision (providing food and water in the desert)

*Baptized into Moses means that as they followed God's anointed leader (Moses)...Immersed in his leadership(baptized) in so doing they were united to God.

*Following God's anointed leader...meant they were joining God himself.

*Moses prefigured Jesus who would open the way for lasting life in God.

*NT says we have been baptized into Christ...united with (immersed in) him.

*Through following Christ, God's anointed one...we have relationship with God.

*The spiritual food and drink was real food but it is called "spiritual food" because it was given miraculously...so it was them experiencing the grace of God.

*He was providing what they could not provide for themselves...this is grace.

*The real food and real water were pointing forward to the reality of Christ.

John 6:30 So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? **31** Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” **32** Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **34** “Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.” **35** Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

*The Captivity and the Exodus was a centuries long "preview" of the coming attraction that was and is Jesus.

*Look at Hebrews passage, where Jesus is the "new and improved" Moses.

Heb. 3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. **2** He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house. **3** Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

*Moses was the hero of heroes to the Jews but he was the house of faith...Jesus is the builder of that house of faith.

*The builder always exceeds the building in greatness.

Exodus motif is here:

1. A wicked and murderous leader: Herod
2. The people are in the desert, wilderness
3. Lead by a good shepherd: who brings organization to his scattered sheep (Ex 18...Moses)
4. Who provides for food for them...miraculously
5. He is God's Presence, Protection, and Provision

*Then Mark practically shouts the connection between what Jesus is doing here in this mass feeding and what he will do on the cross.

Mark 6:41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves...to be given to the people, who ate and were satisfied.

*Sound familiar?

1 Cor. 11:23 The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

APPLICATION:

*This is all very fascinating but where is the application?

***In the statement..."You feed them."**

- *Remember when Jesus said this...the disciples were tired, and Mark says they were hungry themselves...
- *There are so many hungry, hurting, lost people...the need is overwhelming.
- *I am empty, hurting...I don't have what it takes to feed them.
- *In this context Jesus says "You feed them"
- *In so doing...you and I will experience God.
- *Let me tell you what I am not saying..."Go give more money to programs and ministries that take care of people's needs." or "Give more money to homeless people."
- *By all means give money away to ministries that help people...
- *But the application of "You feed them" means...join God in what he is doing to care for people.
- *He will do what only he can do...but he invites you to join him.
- *But this will often mean living beyond yourself.
- *We cannot look at our lives, our capacity, our feelings of adequacy or energy or ability and conclude...I can't feed them...I have nothing.
- *We will see God move in power most often in situations that we are beyond our own resources.
- *This is easy to say...but it can be terrifying to live.
- *What people most need is the gospel...to hear it clearly announced and to see it clearly lived.
- *"You feed them" of course was Jesus saying..."I'll feed them, you get to participate"
- *What do you want? What do I want?
- *To live a life that is neatly within the bounds of my own capacity, fixed by the facts of my feelings and my resources...then die having lived a life easily explained and mostly void of God's power.
- *Or live a life that joins God in what he is doing...troubling, terrifying, beyond our ability...but a life that experiences God in his power?
- *That is the application...you figure out what it means for you..."Hungry, tired, with limited resources...feed them."

SMALL GROUP NOTES
May 30, 2015 Mark 6:30-44

Intro:

1. Have you ever felt immobilized or discouraged by the "need" in the world? Have you felt like your effort or contribution was so small compared to the amount of need that it didn't really matter much?

-If so, can you describe why?

-If no, can you describe what helped you avoid feeling this way?

2. Has your "mental picture" of Jesus -often/sometimes/seldom/never- included Jesus with a smile?

-A mental picture is not "reality" as such but it is our perspective on "reality."

-So, how we "see" Jesus is a good snapshot of what kind of person we believe Jesus was and is.

-Do you believe he was and is a person who would be frequently "smiling"?

3. If you do not believe he was a person who smiled a lot...why do you believe that?

4. If you do believe he smiled a lot how do you think he was able to do so in light of the enormity of the need and sinfulness of the world he lived in?

5. Where do you feel you need more balance in your own life? Seeing the need, responding to the need, or "smiling" in a world full of need?

Read:

Mark 6:30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. **31** Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

Mark 6:32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. **33** But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. **34** When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

Mark 6:35 By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. **36** Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

Mark 6:37 But he answered, "You give them something to eat."

They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

Mark 6:38 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five — and two fish."

Mark 6:39 Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. **40** So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. **41** Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. **42** They all ate and were satisfied, **43** and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. **44** The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand

Discuss:

1. The Exodus event was the most important even in Israel's history. What are some key comparisons and similarities between the Captivity/Exodus/Conquest of Canaan and the gospel?

*What about this passage in Mark specifically?

2. Moses was Israel's greatest leader. He was called "God's friend". He learned to lead by becoming a shepherd. What are some comparisons you can see between Moses as the human leader of God's people and Jesus as the divine leader of God's people? What do you think Heb. 3:3(below) means in this context?

Num. 27:15 Moses said to the LORD, **16** “May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community **17** to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the LORD’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.”

Heb. 3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. **2** He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house. **3** Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

3. This passage in 1 Cor. can be confusing but it is important. It describes God's presence, protection and provision for his people in the Exodus. How does Jesus fill all those roles in our lives now?

1Cor. 10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. **2** They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. **3** They all ate the same spiritual food **4** and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

4. This passage from John clearly ties together the gospel and the Exodus. What did Jesus mean by his statement that those who come to him will never go hungry and those who believe never be thirsty?

John 6:30 So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? **31** Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” **32** Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **34** “Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.” **35** Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

5. There is a famous quote that reads... "The Gospel is in the Old Testament 'concealed' and in the New Testament 'revealed.'"

*What does this mean and how does it apply to this passage/discussion today?

6. Mark was very careful with his selection of words. He did not make up anything that did not happen but as in all historical narratives the historian has to select what he or she will tell based on the purpose for telling the history. Mark clearly told the details that pointed to the purpose of this event. What was the purpose? (read the two passages below)

Mark 6:41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves...to be given to the people, who ate and were satisfied.

1 Cor. 11:23 The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

7. If this were merely a story of a miraculous feeding it would be interesting but not transformative. The power of the event is in the fact that it communicates the gospel.

-Why is this more important than a physical miracle?

-What are the implications for all of the Lord's miracles in terms of their ultimate purpose?

-What might be an application for "miracle" seekers today?

Apply:

*People will often struggle with believing in and/or acting like one or more of the following is true about God:

-He is Real

-He is Good

-He is Powerful

-He is Wise

*In practical terms (meaning impact on your actual choices and thinking) is there one or more of those qualities that you personally struggle with?

*How might some intentional reflection on this narrative today and on how God has woven together all of human history and brought it together in the gospel impact your ability to have real confidence in God?

*If we are going to give our lives away in ways that exceed our own limitations we must learn to trust God in deeper and deeper ways.

*This requires training our minds to trust. One way to do that is to "remember" what God has done in the past.

*Either as a group or in pairs "remember" in prayer what God has done in history...human history as a whole and your personal history...to reveal his existence, goodness, power, and wisdom.

*Maybe you could use a favorite Psalm as a framework for your prayer. (I included one below if you would like to use it)

Psa. 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. 3 There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. 4 Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, 5 which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. 6 It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat. 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the

LORD are sure and altogether righteous. 10 They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. 11 By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. 12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. 13 Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression. 14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

THE GOSPEL OF

MARK



**“FOR EVEN THE
SON OF MAN
DID NOT COME
TO BE SERVED,
BUT TO SERVE,
AND TO GIVE
HIS LIFE AS A
RANSOM FOR
MANY.”**

MARK 10:45

J. STILL

Mark 6:30-31 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

Mark 6:32-33 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

**"It is required that those who have been
given a trust be found faithful."**

1 Cor. 4:2

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

Mark 6:34-37 So he began teaching them many things. By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” But he answered, “You give them something to eat.” They said to him, “That would take eight months of a man’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

Mark 6:38-44 “How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five — and two fish.” Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

Did this really happen?

1. The “green” grass
2. Plenty of eye witnesses
3. Miracles are unusual, not impossible

***The "gospel," not a
"miracle meal" is the point***

**Num. 27:15-17 Moses said to the LORD,
“May the LORD, the God of the spirits of
all mankind, appoint a man over this
community to go out and come in before
them, one who will lead them out and
bring them in, so the LORD’s people will
not be like sheep without a shepherd.”**

1 Cor. 10:1-4 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

God's presence

**(leading them by the pillar of cloud and
fire)**

God's protection

(taking them through the sea)

God's provision

(providing food and water in the desert)

John 6:30-35 So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.” Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

Heb. 3:1-3 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

Mark 6:41-42 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied.

1 Cor. 11:23-24 The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

***He is a good and brilliant
shepherd.***

***He loves you and he knows what
he is doing.***

