

SATISFIES

MARK 6:30-44

(Prepared by Gene Thompson using LifeWay's ETB materials.)

1. Can anyone share a time when God provided for you or someone you know in an unusual way? In today's study we're going to see how Jesus provided for a crowd of people in a miraculous way as well.
2. Have you ever attended a banquet with 5,000 people in attendance? In the first part of Mark 6 Jesus was rejected in His hometown of Nazareth, then He sends His 12 disciples out two by two, to minister. Then Mark inserts the story of how John the Baptist was killed by Herod. This brings us to our focal passage for today.

REST! Read Mark 6:30-32

So, verse 30 was a "post-ministry meeting."

1. What did they report to Jesus? (All that they had done and taught.)

I would love to have been there to hear the excitement in their voices about the healings, casting out of demons and how the people responded to their teaching.

Verse 31 is significant. This is already the third time in Mark that the crowds and busyness of Jesus and the disciples are mentioned—We saw it in 1:33 and last week in 3:20, now here we see it again—they didn't even "have time to eat."

2. Have you ever been so busy you didn't even have time to eat? (I usually make time to eat! But I have had a few times when I was so busy, I didn't have much time to eat. That's how they were: really busy!)

Jesus knew they needed time to rest. This issue of rest is an important one—but often overlooked in our busy society. In our culture it is almost "shameful" to get rest. Perhaps that is one reason one of the Ten Commandments addresses a day of rest. We need daily rest—time with God every day; and a good night's sleep!; we need a weekly rest; we need occasional longer periods of rest we call vacations. Rest is important.

3. How can we recognize when we are exhausted? (We get cranky; our immune system begins to shut down and we get ill; we get depressed; etc.)

Vance Havner says, "If we don't come apart, we will come apart."

4. What impact can that have on the way we minister to others? (We may get to the point that we just say to ourselves, "I don't want to see or hear from anyone.")
5. What points do you see in what Jesus told His disciples? ("Come away" "by yourselves" "to a secluded place" "and rest" "for a while.")

Each element of what Jesus said is important. There are times when we need to "recharge" physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. We need to identify ways we can find rest in each of these areas of life. True rest doesn't come to us apart from Jesus. In a spiritual sense, trusting the sacrifice of Jesus to cover our own sinfulness and justify us in the sight of God brings rest!

Though Jesus tried to give the disciples the opportunity to rest, the crowds kept coming. We need to see how Jesus responded.

RESPONSE! Read Mark 6:33-34

1. How do you think you would have felt as you got out of the boat and saw the large crowd waiting for you? (Let's get back in the boat and go to the other side.)
2. What here do we see that expresses the neediness of the people? (They ran around the bank to where Jesus was going.)

3. What three things did Jesus do here? (He SAW the crowd; He FELT COMPASSION for them; He began to TEACH them many things.)
4. Why did Jesus have compassion for them? (“They were like sheep without a shepherd.”)

Read Matt. 9:36; Matt. 14:14; Luke 7:13; Luke 10:33-34; Luke 15:20.

5. Jesus saw, felt compassion, and did something about it. What are we supposed to do? (See—feel compassion—and act!)
6. Think about the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. What might have been your response? Not look, fail to feel compassion, or just fail to act.)

Let’s be like Jesus: let’s not make excuses, but rather ask God to help us see needs of people around us; feel compassion for them; and then do something about it!

RESOURCES! Read Mark 6:35-38

1. How had Jesus already satisfied the crowd? (He taught them many things. Wouldn’t you love to have been there!)
2. What were the disciples concerned about? (It was late, and the people evidently had no food with them. “It’s time to break up the meeting and send the people home.”)
3. What was Jesus’ response to them in verse 37? (“YOU give them something to eat!”)
4. Don’t you think you would have been like the disciples, ready to send them away?

One writer says: “Don’t slough off the responsibility for people’s well-being to someone else. YOU take responsibility for it. Perhaps one of the biggest failures we have as Christians is that we don’t take personal responsibility for ministering to people. If God has shown you a need maybe He wants you to meet that need. Too often we think it is the pastor’s job, or some other staff person, or the teacher’s job, or so on!

5. We should all ask ourselves: What need have I seen that I am burdened about, and maybe I have been thinking, “Who should do something about this?” Maybe we should be asking God, what do you want ME to do about it? I pray God will help each of us to “see, feel compassion, and take personal responsibility to “do something” about the needs He shows us!
6. Why are we prone to focus on problems instead of considering what God can do? (We live by sight and not by faith all too often.)
7. What practical things can we do to trust Jesus more when we have a problem that seems impossible to solve? (Pray!)

RELIEF! Read Mark 6:39-44

1. What would have happened if Jesus had said, “Come up here, we have bread and fish for you”? (Wal-Mart black Friday.)
2. Why do you think Jesus asked them to see what they had? (Perhaps because it demonstrated that they didn’t have enough to feed these people on their own. If there had been a lot more the disciples may have said, “look what a great job we did at stretching it out.”)
3. Is organization important? (You better believe it! Jesus though so, He had them set in groups of hundreds and fifties.)

So the food was distributed in an orderly, well-organized manner. It was not going to be a chaotic rush to get in line. 1 Cor. 14:40, “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

4. What are some ways organization can help in God’s work in a church today? Our motto is “Large enough to serve you, small enough to know you.” We are large in number in our worship services but small in our Bible studies—Sunday School. And in Sunday School is where ministry takes place. It is vitally important!

Organization helps us keep track of people: who’s missing from Sunday School; helps us stay on budget; helps us know where people can serve.

5. What did Jesus do with the five loaves and two fish? (He took them, looked up to heaven, blessed and broke them and gave them to the disciples to serve the people.)
6. What tells us they didn't have to skimp as they served them? (They were all satisfied and had leftovers.)
7. Is there anything you are dealing with that's too big for you, and that you need Jesus to do? (We are all most likely dealing with such a situation right now.)
8. Do you think there is any significance to the fact that they had 12 baskets left over? (Each disciple had helped serve the 5,000 and then had a basketful left for himself. That alone would be a miracle.)
9. How do we find genuine satisfaction with all the things that Jesus provides? (Express a thankful attitude for all God does for us and His provision—no matter how much or how little.)

CHALLENGE!

- We should make sure we and others find rest.
- We need to feed upon the truth of God's Word daily.
- We can look to God to provide when facing a challenge.
- We should find satisfaction when Jesus uses us.

1. Which of these four application points is the most difficult for you right now?
2. What principle from today's study can you use to resolve that issue in your life?

Close with prayer!