

Commentary on Mark Chapter 6 verses 30-56, by Chuck Smith 1.16.22

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January memory verse, Jeremiah 32:26-27 (NKJV)

²⁶ Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

²⁷ "Behold, I *am* the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"

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Jesus had sent his apostles out to minister. And now, they come back from this preaching mission.

And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and [they] told him all [of the] things, both what they had done, and what they had taught ([Mar 6:30](#)).

They were sharing with Him the marvelous meetings, the conversions, the healings, the power, the glory of their experience of going out in His name and preaching His gospel. Having received their reports,

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and [let's] rest a while: for there were [so] many [people who were] coming and going, and they had no leisure [time], so much as to eat [not even enough time to sit down and eat] ([Mar 6:31](#)).

Now, they have enough time to grab something as you're going by the table, but in those days eating was a big ceremony. You sat down and you really made a big deal out of eating. And they didn't have any time for that. They were being too pressured by the crowd. So, Jesus, seeing the pressure, the weariness, invited them to go over to the other side of the lake where it was more of a deserted area that they might just rest. It probably sounded great to the disciples.

And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him [They knew who it was], and [so they] ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them ([Mar 6:32-33](#)),

Now, Capernaum is at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. It's only about six miles wide; you can see all the way across the Sea. And so, it was easy for them to watch the direction the little boat was going. And so, they just ran around the upper end of the island. And as they passed through Bethsaida, Koraisan and those cities, people no doubt questioned them where they were going. You know, if you see someone running and you think, "Well, what's going on?" You see a group of people running and you say, "Hey, what's happening?" "Oh, Jesus is going to be landing over here on the other side." "Oh, alright." And so, a big group of people joined them out of each of the cities. Until finally, when Jesus landed with his disciples, there were at least five thousand men beside the women and children that were waiting for the little boat to dock. At this point,

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I can imagine that the disciples were rather irritated with the inconsiderate nature of the people. "You know, don't you realize that we're needing rest, we want rest, we need to get away? We want to relax." And you're tired, easy to get irritated. And I'm sure that the disciples were irritated with this crowd.

And Jesus... was moved with compassion toward them ([Mar 6:34](#)),

Rather than being irritated, it touched Him; it touched His heart. "Oh, these blessed people, so hungry for God, a real experience with God." And He was moved with compassion, because He looked at them in an entirely different light. Whereas the disciples were perhaps looking at them as a nuisance, Jesus saw them as poor little sheep without a shepherd. They don't know where they're going; they're lost. They have no defense.

because they were as sheep not having a shepherd [but He saw them as sheep without a shepherd] ([Mar 6:34](#)):

And because He had the heart of a shepherd, it touched Him; it moved Him.

and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent [getting evening], his disciples came unto him [with a problem], and said, [Look,] This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed [it's getting late], [Lord: you better] send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, give ye them to eat [Well, give them something to eat]. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? [What do you mean? You want us to go into town and try and buy five thousand dollars worth of bread, so we can feed these people?] He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. [Well, how much bread do you have? Go out and check.] And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. [So, they went out and checked and they came back, and they said, "Well, there's a little kid here that has five loaves and two fish. That's all we've got."] And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and fifties. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled. ([Mar 6:34-42](#)).

That particular Greek word translated *filled* would be better translated *glutted*, literally translated glutted. "They all ate and were glutted." I mean, they ate until they couldn't eat any more.

And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men ([Mar 6:43-44](#)).

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So, the first of the two recorded incidences where Jesus miraculously fed the multitude with just a few loaves of bread. Here, five thousand men beside women and children, probably ten to fifteen thousand people being fed by five little sandwich loaves and two little fish. But then, collecting, that's the interesting thing, collecting twelve baskets full of the fragments after everyone was glutted.

And straightway [immediately] he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray ([Mar 6:45-46](#)).

A busy day. You try to escape for rest. You arrive on the shore and there's ten thousand people waiting for you. And so you give of yourself until it's late in the evening, and then you perform the miracle. Now you must really be ready for that rest. He ordered His disciples to get into the ship and to head back over to the other side, passing by Bethsaida to get on over, while He Himself sent away the multitude of people. But then, you need rest. And how did He find His rest? He departed into a mountain to pray. He found strength always through prayer. It was a place of rest and a place of strengthening. Oh, that we would learn the strength of prayer. Again, one of the greatest encouragements to pray or the greatest display of our need for prayer is the fact that Jesus prayed. Now, if He felt prayer was such an essential part of His own life, being who He was, how much more essential is prayer to us? If He felt that He could not get along without it, how in the world do you think you can get by without it? Prayer surely is one of the most neglected spiritual functions in the body of Christ. It's something that you need to seriously consider. I am certain that the world would be much better off today if there were more people praying. Our lives would be much better off if we prayed more. God help us. There's tremendous power that has been made available to each of us, but we must take advantage of it through prayer.

And when even was come [it was now night], the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he [was] alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing ([Mar 6:47-48](#));

I told you see the Sea of Galilee is not very wide at that point. It is possible that it was a full moon night. If so, on a full moon you can see across the sea and everything that's on the sea. That full moon is so bright over there you can't believe it. And you could see them as the moon, of course, was reflecting across the water.

for the wind was contrary unto them [a wind had come up and it was against them] ([Mar 6:48](#)):

But they were rowing. Now, I like this, because they were in this position because Jesus had commanded them to get in the ship and go. Obeying the command of Christ, they were actually being put in a position of strain. You who think that by following the will of the Lord everything is going to be just so rosy, peaches and cream, you've got another think coming. Jesus ordered them to go across the sea against the wind, against the

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storm. He put them in this position of toil and strain, and they were already weary and tired. But I love their dogged obedience.

Now, it would have been a lot easier for them to just turn the boat around and row with the thing on back, you know. "Why try and fight this, you know?" Because you're rowing and you're not going anywhere, you know. Here's the candlelight of Bethsaida off to the right side and, I guess if you're going backwards it'd be off to your left side. But, you know, you're rowing and the lights are still in the same place after an hour. "Oh, no. But Jesus told us to go." And they were in this condition because they were obeying the command of the Lord. I love it.

And the Lord sat there watching them. He saw them toiling in rowing, the wind was contrary. Now,

and about the fourth watch of the night ([Mar 6:48](#))

I mean, He really let them go at it for a while, because the fourth watch of the night begins at 3:00 in the morning. The fourth watch is from 3:00 in the morning to 6:00 in the morning. So I mean, these guys had really been going at it, and Jesus just sitting there watching them. "Lord, it's not fair."

And about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them [acted like he was just going to walk right past them] ([Mar 6:48](#)).

Someone asked me if I thought that Jesus ever laughed. I think He has a tremendous sense of humor. You know, they're toiling, they're rowing and all, and He comes walking across the sea; you know, just like He doesn't see them, like He's walking right past them.

But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out [thought it's got to be a ghost, and they started crying out in fear]: for they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and [they] wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves [feeding of the five thousand with just the five loaves and two fish]; for their heart was hardened ([Mar 6:49-52](#)).

It was just, they saw it, but they didn't.

And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew [near] to shore ([Mar 6:53](#)).

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So, they didn't go to Capernaum, but actually a little south from Capernaum to the area of Gennesaret, which is near the little area of Magdala from which Mary Magdalene came.

And they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him [as soon as they got out of the boat, the people recognized him], and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought [they begged] him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole ([Mar 6:53-56](#)).

So that woman who had first touched the Lord sort of opened up an area where many people then came to the place of releasing their faith by touching Him. "And as many as touched were made whole."