

## **Mark 6:30-44 – Giving Food To The Needy.**

Spurgeon, Brink, Calvin, TSK, Handfuls, Robertson, GreekLexicon, Family, JFB, Geneva, Poole, Gill, Vincent, Gray, PNT, Voytek, Beggs, INT, Rienecker,

Brothers and Sister in Jesus Christ: This miracle we have before us today is the only miracle recorded in all 4 Gospels. Why do you think that is? I think it is recorded in all 4 Gospels because it is extremely important. You see, many miracles were done to show Christ's mercy to the sick or needy, or to show Christ's power to confirm what he said, but this miracle was intended to picture Christ's **care for the needy, to show his power, as well as to illustrate the message of salvation.** This is what you will hear explained today.

Our headings are:

**Food for the Soul**

**Food for the Body,**

**Food for the Future**

Our goals are: That knowing **the Lord Jesus cares for your body and soul,** that you will **not worry about the future.** Instead, you will **concentrate on your Christian duty,** and so bring glory to the one who bought you with his own blood.

### **Food for the Soul**

34 And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and **was moved with compassion for them,** because they were **like sheep not having a shepherd.** So He **began to teach** them many things.

**1. From Verses 30-33, we see Jesus wanted to spend time with his disciples to eat, rest, and talk** – hungry from being without food for a long time, tired from all the walking they did, and eager to talk about what had happened on the missionary trip the disciples made to neighboring towns to practice preaching the Gospel.

**But Jesus and his disciples could not escape the people who outran the boats in which he traveled and got to where Jesus was going before he did.**

**Some ran far and fast because they wanted relief from sickness and hoped for a miracle. But more ran far and fast in order to hear the Words of life Jesus spoke.**

**The Jews were like sheep without a shepherd for a long time.** Jesus called the leaders “blind guides who would strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!” Matthew 23:24.

**Yes, they had many Rabbis (teachers), but they were blind guides** who could not instruct the people in truth. The people were about to perish for lack of knowledge...were it not for Christ.

**Proverbs 29:18** Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint;

(Not “vision” (KJV) – but God’s “revelation” (NKJV) - the people perish.)

The Jews were not only in a physical desert, but a spiritual one also, with no one to care for them.

**2. Seeing the people’s desperate and demonstrated need, Jesus had compassion of them, and through his hunger, tiredness, and busy-ness, he taught them: Who they were, who God was, what he came to do, and how they could receive his benefits.**

Gill: “Jesus **postponed a private advantage for the public good.**”

Philosopher: “You give but little when you give of your possessions; it is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”

**3. This was a large number of people who wanted Jesus to teach them and answer their questions.**

According to John, it was near the Feast of the Passover, so they were many people who intended to go to Jerusalem. Instead of going to listen to the bad shepherds there, they headed to hear the true shepherd of Israel, chasing after him with great zeal.

**4. Lessons:**

**a. Thank God for his Word.** God’s Word is food for the hungry. It is medicine for the sick. It is a whip for the stubborn. It is instruction for the ignorant.

**b. Many people think that the greatest thing they can do to someone who is hungry is give him food, but his greatest need is always the Gospel.** Some like to think that just writing a check is best. Some think the best thing they can do for their children is to give them food, clothing, housing, and good education. God

disagrees. Those are good things, but the Word of God must be there at the top! (BTW, this is why we write cards and quote Scriptures to people who suffer. Giving clothing is good, but caring for the soul is a greater need.)

**c. While there are many who mock the Word of God, the Lord's chosen ones desperately need to hear the Word of God so they can be saved.** Take God's Word to them. Ask: "Do you want to learn about Jesus?"

### **Food for the Body**

35 When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late.

**1. Evening sneaked up on the people as they intently listened to Jesus, eating up the food for their souls, so the disciples became concerned, realizing that the people did not have food and water all day.**

In this kind of desert heat, it was easy to faint from a lack of water. And there were no stores nearby as this was away from towns. And **they could not go to the Gentiles for food**, for if they did, they could **not celebrate the Passover**. They would have become ceremonially impure.

36 "Send them away, that they may **go into the surrounding country and villages** and buy themselves bread; **for they have nothing to eat.**"

**2. With these concerns, the disciples asked Jesus to send the people away to get food in neighboring towns. The disciples forgot who Jesus was!**

**Because they forgot who Jesus was, they doubted** that the one created life, recreated life which fell into sin, and who did great miracles - like opening the eyes of the blind, could provide food for the hungry listeners.

**Because they doubted Jesus' ability,** they showed a lack of care.

37 But He answered and said to 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 them something to eat?" 38 But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "**Five, and two fish.**"

**3. Instead of following the disciples' idea, Jesus told the disciples: "You give the 12,000 people something to eat."**

This was the heart of the Shepherd, caring for the flock, for he knew their needs, all their needs. He didn't pass the buck.

Jesus, the true Shepherd, **never sends away his sheep hungry. How could the Fountain send people away to look for water? How could the Bread of Life send people away to look for food?**

**What is the spiritual significance of this?**

**a. Jesus was teaching his disciples to learn to stand in the gap for the people.**

This was just preparation for what was to come later: They were to feed the souls of his people.

**John 21:17** He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

**b. Jesus was teaching them that they did not have what his people needed.**

They had to look outside themselves. The disciples quickly protested as they did not have a year's wages to get everyone a meal. (The KJV incorrectly translates denarius (a day's pay) as "pennyworth." No one ever worked for a penny.)

**The significance was in the 200 denarii!** Two hundred denarii was the normal price paid as a dowry for a bride or a widow...so the disciples had to pay the price for the bride...but they couldn't! What a lesson to learn! **Even the little they had was too little to satisfy the great need of the people.**

39 Then He commanded them to make them all **sit down in groups** on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties.

**4. Unfazed, Jesus told his disciples to divide the people into fifties and hundreds and make them sit on the grass.**

**What is the spiritual significance of this?**

**a. Everything was done decently and in order** so no one would be missed.

**b. There was going to be a plentiful supply from the hand** of the Lord.

The word “group” literally means “banquet.”

41 And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, **He looked up to heaven,** blessed and broke the loaves, and **gave them to His disciples to set before them;** and the two fish He divided among them all.

**5. After praying to his Father, Jesus broke the bread and divided in among his disciples to distribute to the hungry people.**

The usual prayer was: ‘Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, Who hast made bread to come out of the earth.’

**What is the spiritual significance of giving the bread to the disciples?**

**The spiritual lesson was that the disciples, as they received the bread and fish and shared it, were the ones entrusted with the task of feeding the sheep of the True Shepherd.** This is what you see when we celebrate the Lord’s Supper.

42 So they all ate and were filled.

**6. So the thousands ate and were satisfied.**

**What is the spiritual significance of the Jews eating and being filled?**

The Jews **believed that it was not a true meal if one were not filled, so the spiritual picture was richer.**

Psalm 107:9 - For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.

**7. Lessons:**

**a. You must have the heart of a shepherd and bring the food you receive from the Chief Shepherd to those under your care!**

**Fathers and elders are specifically commanded to feed the young.** God help you if you receive much from him and don't pass it on to your family. And all Christians must take the food life to those need it. If you ever doubt the Lord's compassion, read Psalm 23 and John 10, and see how the Lord is the Good Shepherd who never abandons his sheep.

**b. Remember that the source of the knowledge of everything you have – physical or spiritual- is the Lord, not you,** including your rice and broccoli. So **thank God before you eat it.** Your hands and skill are powerless without the working of God. And when you have a spiritual meal of the Word, **pray for it to be useful to your soul.**

**c. Do not give the resources God has given to you randomly.** Give to good causes. Give to organized causes. There are too many organizations that waste good money.

### **Food for the Future**

43 And they took up **twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish.** 44 Now those who had eaten the loaves were **about five thousand men.**

#### **1. After everyone had eaten (according to John – as much as they wanted), there were leftovers**

The word "fragments" means "broken pieces." It doesn't refer to bread on the ground, but the pieces broken by Jesus and in the 12 baskets of his twelve disciples. I am not sure where that idea developed. No one would pick up food from the ground and store it. "Took up" is better translated "carried away." So there was an abundance so others could enjoy more later and share with others. Further, the Jews **believed it was not a true meal if there were not leftovers.**

#### **So what is the spiritual significance?**

**a. There is enough nourishment for the world.** Jesus' flesh and blood were sufficient to satisfy your needs.

**b. The disciples had to share that abundance with the world.** It has often been seen in the Mount of the Lord, Jehovah-jireh, that the Lord will provide! (Like the ram God provided for Abram so he did not have to kill his son.)

**2. It was a large number that ate from Jesus spiritually and then physically.**

There were probably 12,000. The 5000 mentioned were “men” specifically, not “men” generically. (Matthew confirms this.) The 12 basketfuls of leftovers was a number that signified all! The needy were filled.

**3. Lessons:**

**a. Politicians use the power of the law to steal from those who have and give to the poor, but God forbids that.** Yet, you must share what God has given to you and in a way that pleases him. The deacons help to supervise this work.

**b. You must come each Sabbath to God’s house for spiritual food so you can share with others.** Feed your family daily, so they can be strong and resist the Devil, the world, and their flesh. Without a regular diet of truth, you and your family will become malnourish, and will eventually die.

**c. God’s resources know no limit!** There are never too many people! The spiritual pie is limitless.

**Conclusion:**

Jesus saw the great need of the Jews who ran with great effort to get to where he was. They wanted him to teach them. For too long they had been without a good shepherd who would faithfully teach and lovingly correct them. The shepherds of the Jews plundered them and used them for their own benefit. Now Jesus was a salve on a burnt arm. His words reached their souls’ need and they learned the way back to God. He cared for their bodies. He cared for their future. What compassion for the needy!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. Set your eyes on your Creator who daily gives you good things, and set your eyes on the cross and see what it took for you to get a renewed soul.**

**2. Shout the praise of the Lord for the abundant provision for your body and soul.**

**3. Share of the goodness of God's hand with the needy of this world.**  
**Share the physical and spiritual food God has given to you so they can be nourished and live.**

Finally: You must come to Christ if you want to receive his benefits. You must run to him like the Jews ran. Only in Jesus Christ do you have the Words of Life. Everything else is pretense. Everything else is false. And the food from Christ is free. It is free for you. Christ paid for it.