



HICKORY GROVE

BAPTIST CHURCH

Jesus Satisfies

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Mark 6:30-44

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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.”

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.

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 that 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 more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

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 distribute to 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.

(Pastor prays)

There are several podcasts that I like to listen to. I don't listen to many, but just a few. One of them is a podcast named *A Short History Of*. If you even like history just a little bit, you will love this podcast. The guy that does it tells these stories in just a captivating way. He has an English accent so it makes him sound really smart. If you have an English accent, you sound smart. It's a great podcast if you like history. I also like *The Briefing*. Albert Moeller does the briefing from a Christian worldview. If you want a quick view of the news, I sometimes will listen to *The Morning Wire*. But for the last few days, I've been listening to something new. The podcast's name is *Christianity and Liberalism*. John Stegemerten told me about this podcast. He's not only a worship leader but a great pastor and teacher and theologian. This podcast, *Christianity and Liberalism*, is based on a book by the same name written 100 years ago by a man named J. Gresham Machen. That book explores in-depth who Jesus is, according to the Bible. And how who Jesus is, according to the Bible, determines the trajectory of our lives.

Now I bring that up because it's the very first thing I thought of when I saw what was going on in Mark chapter six. This whole chapter is leading up to a question: Who is this man? You might remember the disciples have been throughout the towns where they've been teaching and preaching. They had the power of God to cast out demons. Who is the One they're talking about?

The word about Jesus had risen so high that in verse 17 we found out about Herod. Herod is afraid that this person Jesus is a ghost; the ghost of John the Baptist, whose head he cut off.

Who is this man? Here, Mark gets his information from the apostle Peter, and he pauses in the story to show us a miracle like no other. In this passage, Mark clears the air and he shows us that Jesus is not someone to follow, not a teacher to listen to, not a prophet. Jesus is God. Mark clears the air with this miracle and lifts Jesus up for us to see. It's important that you grasp the knowledge that...

There is Not A Need That Jesus Cannot Meet

Not one. There's not one person who's walked into this building today with more hurt, more grief, more shame, and more sin than Jesus can bear and take away. As we go through this passage, I want you to get the story that is most important. It's not that you hear the words I say, but that you hear the Word of God. So as we walk through this story, I want to just go back and point out a couple of things. Join me there in verse 30. This story is such a powerful one. It's the only miracle story found in all four Gospels. Mark tells it with brevity and precision. He starts at verse 30 by telling us that the disciples came back to report to Jesus. Do you see that the apostles returned to Jesus? It's the only time in the book of Mark that you find the word *apostles*. That is an office that Jesus set apart. He gave them authority to cast out demons and teach the Bible. He gave them the authority to cast out demons so that people would know that what they were teaching had authority.

When the apostles are gone, the authority that men and women might have had to cast out demons and to perform miracles is gone. Now, our authority is the Bible. The apostles came back to Jesus and they reported all that they had been doing in verse 30. They told Him everything that they had done. They gave an account. In verse 31, He said to them, *Come away by yourselves to a desolate place*—that is, wilderness or desert—and *rest a while*. And then Mark tells us why. Many people were coming and going; there is a lot of

activity around Caesarea Philippi. There were so many coming and going that they had no leisure, no time even to eat, they were so busy.

A lot of you workaholics, you work so hard that you forget to eat lunch, or you skip lunch. You get some sort of junk food. Now it's showing up in your metabolism. Or your metabolism is good enough that it doesn't show up on your body yet, but you feel it. Here is a reminder: you are not superhuman. Jesus says to the disciples that they have been doing great work. They probably are carrying the grief of John the Baptist being killed. And Jesus says that you've got to pull away. So they get in a boat and they go off to a desolate place. It turns out, though, that everybody sees them going. This is when your vacation is spoiled. So you see in verses 32-33 that they all went to a desolate place. The people from other towns are running around the shore of the Sea of Galilee. They're following them. They're sort of projecting where they're going to be. They're moving so quickly. In verse 34, they're waiting on the shore.

Have you ever planned a trip or getaway or retreat? You look forward to it all this time, and then something happens. It can really take your soul away. They were told they were going to get away to a desolate place, and yet it's not desolate. Everybody's waiting on them, and then look at Jesus. Here's a picture: Jesus is the Perfect One, the God-Man. Not is He just God, but also a perfect human in fellowship with God. He was perfectly human and never sinned. He kept the law as our substitute. I would have gotten out of the boat and resented the people on the shore, but not Jesus. Verse 34 says that He had compassion. He thought to Himself, *They're like sheep without a shepherd*. And He starts to teach them.

What a beautiful picture. What did He teach? Mark says in verse 34 that He began to teach them many things. Don't you wish Mark would have just expanded just a little bit? Mark, tell us what He taught. Was it the Sermon on the Mount? Was it parables? What is He teaching here? We don't know, but the sun got high in the sky and started to go down in verse 35. In verse 35,

when it grew late, the disciples as the apostles—the twelve of them—are trying to take care of business. They're looking out for problems, and in verse 35, the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Look, this is a desolate place. There's not any food here. Why don't we break camp for the night? You've done a great job teaching, but why don't we now send them away while there's still daylight? They can go to towns and villages and find something to eat."

This is the pivotal point, verse 37. Jesus turns it now and answers them: "You give them something to eat." It's good for us to remember our inadequacies. It's good for us to remember, as Jesus points out, where we are. And they say with sarcasm, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread...?" That's eight months' wages. They're being sarcastic. They're saying, "If we had \$40,000 we couldn't buy enough." The other gospel tells us that they say they couldn't even buy enough for everybody to have just one bite. So in verses 38-39, Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" John tells us that a little boy had a packed lunch. His mom had put some fish and five loaves—the loaves are going to be pita bread, five of them. She made them to put in his little *Evil Knievel* lunchbox and sent him off. Remember those metal lunch boxes with the thermos inside and a clip to keep it down? I carried the thermos to school because I needed more room to put some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in there. So the kid shows up with his lunch, and they take his lunch and bring it to Jesus. This is what we have: two fish and five loaves.

Here's the point: You have nothing for the possibly 20,000 people here. How is this going to feed them? That's the point that Jesus made with the disciples. So in verse 39, He tells them to have everybody sit down. Here's good administration in verse 39. Put them in the green grass here. Now you're hearing the Shepherd talk. Put them in groups of fifties and a hundreds. That makes it easy to count. That's how we know there are 5,000 men, and then Jesus does the miracle. It's unspectacular the way Mark describes it in verse 41, he just tells us straightforwardly that Jesus takes the loaves, He looked up

to Heaven like a good Jewish leading, teaching man would. He's looking up to Heaven to remind them to get their eyes up to God. In verse 41, He broke the loaves.

And here's the picture of the Eucharist. He gave a blessing and started to pass out the fish and bread. We don't know how the miracle will happen. Did it happen with Jesus? Did it just keep passing from one basket? Did the people know what was happening? We don't know. But what we do know is in verse 42-43: that everybody ate everything they wanted. They had plenty to eat. They were satisfied and there was enough. Here's God's kindness that shows up now and then, there was enough that the Twelve had 12 baskets leftover, and everybody had lunch the next day.

So what do we do with this? I'd like to take a step back and look at it in two ways. On the one hand, we need to talk about us. What does this show about us? What does this say about me? What does this say about you? Because every Bible story says something about you. But every Bible story is not about you, it's about God. What does this story say about Jesus? Let's start with us. Here's the first one, #1:

We Are People in Need

We're in need. You walked in this morning with needs that I can't see. What do we need? Well, in verse 30 we see...

We Need Accountability

We need accountability. Verse 30 is when the disciples come back and they report what they've been doing. They give an account. Now, when you hear the word *accountability*, sometimes it can have a negative feeling about it because oftentimes it feels like you're going to be asked hard questions of all the sins you committed last week. That is not accountability, that's just confession. Accountability is giving a testimony. It's giving an actual account of what God is doing. It is honest, frank, and joyful. It is to joyfully talk about what God has done, and that's what they're doing in verse 30. One of the

things that we need to do is just give an account of what has God done in your life. We are people in need. We need accountability. We need something else.

We Need Rest

Isn't it interesting? The guys came back from teaching and preaching in verse 30 and they get back to Cesaria and it doesn't slow down. There is never a vacation, and they need a vacation. They came home and hoped things would slow down a little bit, but it didn't. And so Jesus in verse 31 says to them that they need to come away a while. Come away by yourself to a desolate place and rest. We need rest. We need to rest physically. Some of you have a pace that you cannot keep up with. You need rest. Some of you are carrying the weight of the world. I mean, when you carry that much stress for that long, the truth of the matter is that we're reminded that we are not superhuman. We are not God. We are in need of rest. We need to stop. Some of your minds have been racing, some of you are carrying such grief, and this passage right here is reminding you that you don't have to do that by yourself. You don't have to keep going. We are people that need accountability. We need rest. Let me show you something else we need.

We Need Perspective

So, Jesus, in verse 31 tells the disciples that they need to go off for a little bit of a retreat to a desolate place, a wilderness place. Now when you hear the word *wilderness*, you ought to think about what happened in Exodus, because Jesus is going to become the new Moses. Just as Moses led God's people into the wilderness, and there they were fed, Jesus leads the people into the wilderness. There they are fed. Jesus will be a new and greater Moses. But before we get to that, we need perspective, because in verse 32 and 33, after they've planned their retreat, they've been promised time away. They get to the shore, and everybody has followed. And it's terrible. Look, there's a reason I don't invite all of y'all on my vacation. If you ever planned a trip or retreat or time away, and then it fell apart, you know the resentment. You know when you need time away and you are finally going to get it and it doesn't happen. My impulse is not healthy. I've had the hardest time with this one because

Jesus will show us how it's supposed to be done. He will have compassion. We'll get to Him in a moment, but we need perspective. We need to remember if you preach and teach and believe in a sovereign God, that God is completely in control—that He is working out His purposes in your life through the major events and the minor events—then when something happens that is an absolute inconvenience, we have no right to complain. When something happens that is a terrible inconvenience, we need a different perspective. This is our Father's world. He is in complete control. He is working out His own purposes in every event of life. And if He is working out His purposes and something has happened, we cannot complain. We need a different perspective, and that is to see that God is in complete control and He is working. We need to look back now. Look back at your life, so that you can look forward to the windshield to God's sovereignty and trust. But we look back and that is God's providence. That's what He's done. You can look back through some of those inconveniences back there and see that that was God working. We need perspective. What else do we need?

We Need A Shepherd

We need a Shepherd. Jesus, when He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, and this is what He felt. They are like sheep. The fences have been broken down and there's nobody taking care of them. We need a Shepherd. We need guidance. We need care. The gospel says we need rescue. We need protection. What else do we need?

We Need To Be Fed

This is known as the Miracle of Feeding the 5,000, which probably should be not just 5,000. That's 5,000 men, but women and children are there, too. There may be 20,000 people. But if you'll notice in verse 34, the very first thing that Jesus does is not feed. The very first thing He does is teach. Do you see that? He taught them many things. We need a steady diet of God's Word. The written Word points us to the Living Word, which is Christ. Here is a picture of the Living Word, Jesus, teaching the Written Word—the Word of God. We need to be fed. And if you are grazing on a Sunday, and then you're

grazing again on another Sunday, and there are days in between that you've not eaten anything spiritually, then you're dying on the vine. You're weak. There's a reason you can't resist temptation. There's a reason you keep falling. There's a reason there's been no spiritual growth. There's a reason your perspective in life is not changing. It's because you're not eating. We need to be fed. There is something else: We need to trust God.

We Need To Trust God

We need to trust God. The pace of the narrative picks up now in verses 35 and 36. After Jesus' teaching in verses 35 and 36, we see that we need to trust God when we are trying to solve problems. Look at the disciples in verses 35-36. They are trying to solve a problem. That's what they're doing. They say to Jesus, *Now look, the sun is going down. We need to send everybody away so they can find something to eat.* It is a legitimate concern if Jesus is not the Son of God. We need to trust God when we're trying to solve problems. We need to trust God when we realize our inadequacies. Do you see what Jesus says to them in verse 37? They say to send everybody away to get something to eat, and Jesus says to the disciples, *You give them something to eat.* One of the very first steps of growing as a Christian is you realizing your inadequacy—your need for God to intervene, your need for grace, your need for strength, your need for healing. We realize and we trust God when we give everything we have in verses 37-40. Jesus asks what they have and the disciples go and look, and they have a little boy's lunch that they bring back. They have two fish and five loaves, and they give those to Jesus. You look at the crowd, maybe 20,000 people, but this is only enough for one little boy to eat. It's a reminder of our inadequacies, and yet we give everything we have. We trust that God can do something with that. We trust God when it seems impossible. Jesus gives the command for everyone to sit down on the green grass. He says to put them in groups of five of 50 to 100. We can count them like that. And then we trust Jesus to do what only Jesus can do. That's the whole point. You have two fish and five loaves. You can't do anything with it, but in the hands of Jesus, nothing becomes something. Danny Aiken would say that a little becomes a lot with Jesus. What a beautiful

thing that He feeds 5,000 people, and verse 43 says we can trust Him because He has tomorrow covered, too. There's enough for you to have lunch tomorrow. Now when we look at that from a human perspective, we are reminded that we are people in need. You are a woman in need. You're a man in need. That's the first thing to see. Let me give you the second thing, #2:

Jesus Christ Meets Our Needs

Jesus Christ meets our needs. The Lord Jesus will meet every need that you have, every need that you've walked in with, every private struggle, everything that you're going through, everything that nobody understands. Jesus meets that need. Let's go through the text again. We find them there in verse 30. We are reminded that the disciples come back and they report to Jesus because...

He Is Our Aim and Joy

Jesus is our aim and our joy. He is where we find our aim and our joy. He is who we tell our requests to. He is who we give our praise to. He is who we ask and who we point to. He is our aim and He is our joy. He meets our needs. Not only that,

He Is Our Rest

Jesus is our rest. What did He say? "Come to me, I'll give you rest." You'll notice that in the story, as it unfolds in verse 31, Jesus says that they should go away for their rest. But in verses 32-33, everybody is still there. There is no rest there because the time in the boat with the disciples is their rest. He is the true and better Moses who leads His people into the wilderness to give them rest. The law says rest is taken on a Sabbath Day, this is why we don't go to church on Saturday, we're not Sabbatians. The Sabbath Day, under the law, was a day when there were so many restrictions. You didn't move, you didn't walk very much, you didn't say much. You didn't cook much food. Jesus Christ came as the God-Man and, as a man, He kept all the law, including the Sabbath laws. So much so that on Friday He is nailed to a cross and takes the wrath of God for all the sins of every sinner that will ever be saved, and on

Saturday He lies silent in a grave, keeping the Sabbath, keeping the law for the very last time. God has received that sacrifice as a payment for the sins of all the world. On Sunday, He raises His Son from the dead, He breaks through deadness and takes away the constraints of the law to give us freedom. The veil is torn, and the doors are open. You may come in and find rest. You see, He is our rest. Jesus Christ meets every need. He's our aim, our joy and our rest. There is something else about Jesus. Verse 34 tells us...

He Is Our Shepherd

What a beautiful thing. In verse 34, when He went ashore, He saw a great crowd. There were people of all kinds, all walks of life—men and women, young and old, all kinds of issues, all kinds of motivations, all kinds of things going on. And the text says that when He looked at them He felt compassion. Put your name in there. When He looked at you, what did He think of you? He looked at them and He had compassion. Do you see how He views you? That, as the Shepherd, He would be the true and better David. The Good Shepherd. We are told in John that the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. There's the gospel, that Jesus Christ is not just an example for us to follow. He is not just a teacher for us to learn from. He is not just a prophet for us to think about. Jesus Christ, fully God, and the Perfect Man who died taking the wrath of God away so that you might have grace and forgiveness and love and peace and rest. The gospel is that you stand under condemnation. That's what the law does, it condemns. God sees you and condemns you. But don't stop there. He not only sees and condemns, He sees with compassion, and that's why He sends Jesus, in love, to take the condemnation that we deserve. That's what Jesus does at the cross. He takes condemnation away so that God doesn't condemn us when He looks at us. He doesn't see us as sinners that deserve condemnation. He sees the beautiful righteousness of Jesus that is yours by faith in what Christ has done for you. He's our Shepherd. I want you to also know that...

He Is Our Provider

Verse 34 tells us that He taught them. He taught them all kinds of things, Mark

says. We find out when you read the other Gospels when Jesus is tempted in the wilderness, in Matthew and Luke, we hear Jesus say that man doesn't live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. I mean, even when He feeds the 5,000, don't get caught there and think, *What a great story*. He feeds 5,000, and then the apostle John gives us the rest of the story. Go read it in John chapter six. After Jesus feeds the 5,000, He makes it a story for teaching. This is what he says in John 6:35—*Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*

He Is Our Redeemer

And then in verse 41, when He does the miracle, He lifts the fish and bread up to Heaven like the Eucharist, like the Lord's Supper. His eyes are up toward God. We find out in John 6 that when the miracle is done and the disciples are asking questions, He teaches them what it meant. And this is what He said in John 6:48-51—*I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*'Here is the substitution area. Here is Jesus in my place. Here is Jesus dying that I might live. Here is Jesus, our Redeemer.

He Is Our Fulfiller

He is our fulfiller in versus 42-43. The people ate. We don't know how it was done. Mark is so, so precise in other Scripture, but He doesn't give as many details in this story. He just tells us that the miracle happened. The picture is that you have the two fish and the five loaves. Please don't see them as some sort of starter set and Jesus was peeling them off. There's something that's happened here creatively. Jesus is giving fish that have never swam and bread that was never baked in an oven. Something has happened here that's very close to the creative acts in Genesis chapters one and two. We don't have any description except to say that everybody was satisfied. I think that

people probably didn't even know there was a miracle that happened. They are in groups of 50 to 100, totaling maybe 20,000 people. Some of them couldn't even see Jesus. They don't know where this food came from. It's just really good. And the text says in verse 42 that the people ate and ate and ate until they were completely satisfied. It was like Thanksgiving Day.

And not only that, those disciples went around and picked up 12 baskets. Twelve Tribes of Israel, twelve apostles, and on this day there are 12 baskets. 12 baskets are enough left over for the apostles to have lunch the next day. And then Mark backs away and says that this Jesus is God, and there is not a need that Jesus cannot meet.

Just think with me. Do you see yourself in need? What is the need? Is it sin that is separating you from God, breaking your fellowship? Or maybe something between you and someone else? Do you see that? Do you see yourself in need? Come and confess that need and receive Christ, receive forgiveness, and be made whole. What is the need? Is it pain? Look, when I say that there is not a need that Jesus won't meet, there is nothing that the grace and the healing power of Jesus Christ can't make whole. Is there something you fear? What is it? What is the need? Do you see yourself in need? Jesus meets those needs. Come and give your life to Christ this morning.

(Pastor prays)