



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Open Eyes and Hard Hearts

Mark 6:30-52

1. In a dramatic turn of events Jesus sent out the disciples two by two to do ministry in the surrounding towns and villages. Please read this scripture describing their return: Mark 6:30-52 **The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry and told him all they had done and taught.** ³¹ Then Jesus said, “Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.” He said this because there were so many people coming and going that **Jesus and his apostles didn’t even have time to eat.** ³² So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they **could be alone.** We know the ministry time had been very successful and that Jesus values getting some time to rest with his disciples, celebrating their success. The Bible has a lot to say about resting and celebrating. Do you rest enough? Do you feel continually exhausted? What happens when you keep pushing yourself instead of resting?

What might God be saying to you through this passage?

2. Rest can be hard to come by. Mark 6:33 says, **But many people recognized them and saw them leaving, and people from many towns ran ahead along the shore and got there ahead of them.** ³⁴ **Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So, he began teaching them many things.** The main focus of these verses is the compassion of Jesus. Nine times in the Gospels, we are reminded of Jesus’ compassion. The word used here for compassion is defined as: to be so moved on the inside that it compels you to take action on the outside. Jesus sees the crowd and is so moved with compassion he can’t abandon them or send them away. Tell a story of a time when you were moved with compassion and took action.

This scripture prompted me in the sermon to say: It is essential that all who follow Jesus grow to love like Jesus. Are you growing to love more like Jesus? What does that look like in your life?

3. The story continues Mark 6:35 ³⁵ **Late in the afternoon his disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. ³⁶ Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat.” But Jesus said, “You feed them.” “With what?” they asked. “We’d have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!” ³⁸ “How much bread do you have?” he asked. “Go and find out.” They came back and reported, “We have five loaves of bread and two fish.” ³⁹ Then Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred. ⁴¹ Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. He also divided the fish for everyone to share. ⁴² They all ate as much as they wanted, ⁴³ and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish. ⁴⁴ **A total of 5,000 men and their families were fed.** What words, phrases, or concepts stand out to you from these verses?**

Take a moment to think through the different perspectives of the people represented in this story. At this point, how do the people who were fed feel? What about the disciples? How about Jesus?

In the sermon, I mentioned that we are continually called to come to God with the very little we have and present it to him. When his power meets our willingness, miracles happen. Do you agree? Have you ever seen God work miraculously when your willingness met his power?

4. Mark 6:45 **Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.** Why do you think at this point Jesus sends his disciples away?

Do you get enough alone time with God? If not, how could you take concrete steps to have more time with him?