

# The Road to Calvary Lesson 4

## When Jesus Feeds Us!

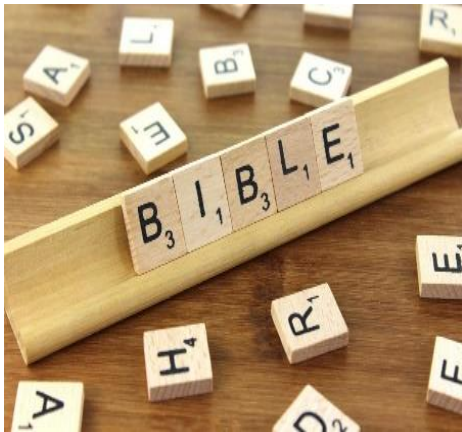
A Bible Study Lesson of the Mount Zion Church  
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We Have the Vision to be a LEARNING Church!



**Introduction:** The purpose of the following lesson is to support students understanding of the nature of Jesus' ministry. In previous lessons, students learned that Jesus came to serve and desires His followers to be outwardly focused. This lesson continues the theme of a need for care of others even as we promote Godly living. In short, there is a balance between teaching, learning, and studying to get the mind and behaviors of Christ and dealing with the cares of our daily lives. In fact, there is not supposed to be a separation between the areas of our lives. You and I are not separated into multiple lives. We have one life and that is to be given to Christ so that the various areas of our life function as one, and Jesus has concern for all of it!



**Key Verses:** Mark 8: 1-10

**Supporting Verses:**

Mark 6: 32-43, Mark 7, Matthew 15, Romans 15: 4, 2 Timothy 3: 15, Matthew 6: 25-34

## Use the following to passages from Mark 8 to compare today's verses to Mark 6

### Mark 6

32 So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

<sup>33</sup> But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him.

<sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> 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. <sup>36</sup> Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat."

<sup>37</sup> 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?"

<sup>38</sup> 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."

<sup>39</sup> Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. <sup>41</sup> 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. <sup>42</sup> So they all ate and were filled. <sup>43</sup> And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish.

**8** In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples *to Him* and said to them, <sup>2</sup> "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. <sup>3</sup> And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."

<sup>4</sup> Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

<sup>5</sup> He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"

And they said, "Seven."

<sup>6</sup> So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples to set before *them*; and they set *them* before the multitude. <sup>7</sup> They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before *them*. <sup>8</sup> So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments. <sup>9</sup> Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away, <sup>10</sup> immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.<sup>1</sup>

## I. The Hunger of the Crowd

Mark records that a large crowd followed Jesus but the defining characteristic of this crowd is that they spent three days with Jesus listening to His teaching. Matthew 15 links the Pharisee and Jewish leaders coming from Jerusalem, the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, and the healing of Jairus' daughter together with the feeding of the 4,000 by indicating that the crowd travelled with Jesus throughout each event. While Mark seems to separate the events by focusing in and out on the crowd and smaller groups of people talking (Jesus and the Pharisees, Jesus and His disciples) what is interesting to note is that each conversation revolves around teaching and understanding. In Mark 7: 14, we see that the crowd is called near to Jesus as Jesus teaches them. Then in Mark 8, Jesus highlights the length of time the people had been with Him learning. This would seem to indicate that understanding the message of Jesus requires longer than a quick moment of hearing.

Before there is a focus on their physical hunger, we as readers should note they have a spiritual hunger. The people wanted to know more about Jesus and His message. They longed for understanding. Modern churches would be wise to note that people come to be fed. This places an increasing responsibility of those of us who are teachers and preachers because we must ensure that people leave from each session with a greater understanding than they had before they came.

A number of verses point to the purpose of continued learning. Romans 15: 4 suggests: "...that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." While 2 Timothy 3: 15 indicates that the scriptures "are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

These suggest that our Christian pursuits are off base if we are not seeking to spiritually feed those who come into our presence, whether in a large crowd or one on one.

1. Why do you think people today listen to the message of Jesus? What are they missing/ wanting in their lives which makes them come to the "crowd"?
2. How does the church help or hurt the "feeding" of people? What can we do better?

3. List the topics that Jesus teaches about from Mark 7. Are these topics relevant today?
- A.
  - B.
  - C.

## II. The Compassion of Jesus

The repetition of the feeding of a large group of followers presents the reader with the potential idea that this is a repeated incident by Mark. While similar, many differences can be seen within the two accounts. In the chart below, write down a few differences that you observe between the two passages.

Mark 6	Mark 8

While differences exist between the two text, one commonality is important to see within the two scenes. Jesus is described to have a feeling of \_\_\_\_\_ towards the people.

- Why do you think Mark explains Jesus' emotion towards the people?

Could it be that our writer is intent on helping his readers to understand that Jesus is a feeling Messiah who understands our struggles? While Mark's gospel was the first of the four gospels to be written, it is also the shortest with many details of Matthew and Luke excluded. Due to the lack of detail, readers should pay close attention to the details that are available. Thus, it is important when Mark highlights Jesus' compassion for mankind. First, it identifies that Jesus is close to our needs and issues.

Next, and specific to this text, it identifies that Jesus wants us to do the things we need to do on a daily basis. Jesus wants you and I to eat. Jesus wants you and I to rest. Jesus wants us to have families and friends. While the setting of the miracle is a teaching moment, Jesus did not ignore the physical needs of the people.



### FOLLOW JESUS' PATTERN!

When we engage in ministry do we forget people's physical needs as we seek to only help them understand the spiritual aspects of Jesus?

What impact would this have on a person's ability to listen to your message?

### III. The Disciples Confusion

One of the recurring themes of Mark is the confusion of the disciples in understanding Jesus. As readers, each of us should wonder why the disciples saw Jesus feed 5,000 men (Mark 6: 32-43) and their families (as many as 20, 000 if wives and children are accounted for) and in the current passage wondered if Jesus could feed around 4,000 people in total.

Their focus:

1. We do not have enough resources
2. We are too far away from the resources

Jesus' focus:

1. If I send them away they will faint from hunger
2. They are without
3. They need food now

Where do you find yourself thinking most of the time as it relates to doing Jesus' work?

They did not understand the way Jesus honors His word and people's commitment. And this is also where many of us struggle with our relationship with Christ. We have faith for our salvation, but we have not understood that Jesus also said our daily needs matter to Him. We are taught in Matthew 6: 25-34 that our Heavenly Father cares about us. He cares about us more than He cares about the other parts of creation. He cares so much that we do not need to worry about our daily needs. He will provide those needs as well. In other words, He will not leave us hungering and without. In the same way, He does not leave us spiritually empty. All that we need, He will provide.

**Conclusion:** As we seek to do the work of Christ, we must remember the pattern that Jesus set for us. People are hungry → Feed them. This hunger is in many areas of their lives and we have to make sure we do not send them away longing. As Jesus again showed, resources are not a concern. The concern is our sensitivity to people.