

In His Hands

“Called to be Shepherds/ An impossible Ministry/ Something Greater”

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Feeding of the 5000

Recorded in Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6

This story shows us

1. what it means to be a sheep under the Shepherd's care
2. What it means to be a Shepherd

God's speaks to us not only through what He says (His words), but also through His works - what He does and HOW he does it.

REVIEW last week's message: “Sheep Under the Shepherd's Care”

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, wants us to live as sheep under His care. He doesn't want us to live like sheep scattered, hungry and vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. How do we receive this care?

REST... be still and expect to receive. **REALIGN** your thoughts with God's thoughts. **REFUSE** to be offended.

Recap story (Feeding the 5000).

The disciples had just gotten back from a ministry trip. They were tired, they were hungry, they had no money and no food of their own (vs31)... but Jesus tells them:

“You give them something to eat.”

Jesus could've easily multiplied the food himself, put it in a big pile and told everyone to come and get some. But **this is not God's way**. God wants to work **WITH US** and **THROUGH US**. We are an extension of God's person on earth. We are His body - His arms and legs - on the earth.

This story also shows us how Jesus calls all His disciples to be **shepherds - just like Him**.

Ministry has nothing to do with having a title or having a name for your ministry. Ministry is doing the work of Jesus, directed by Jesus in the power of Jesus FOR HIS GLORY.

Jesus was the great Shepherd, he could have easily multiplied the food into a big pile and told the people to come and get it, but that's not God's way. God calls EVERY CHRISTIAN, EVERY follower of Christ to join Him in shepherding His people.

Pita's vision: flood of people coming into the church, but they were naked and needed to be clothed.

God's call to be part of "**SOMETHING GREATER.**"

Respond to the call. The call of God is **impossible** for you to do in your own strength. It is overwhelming.

God speaks to us not only through His Words, but also through His Works. What Jesus does and HOW He does it speaks so much to us.

This passage shows us what **true ministry** looks like.

A prophetic picture of the disciple's call to join in the ministry of Jesus. The bread was also prophetic of Jesus and all who joined themselves to Him

Jesus' **COMPASSION** for people. Moved by compassion (His motivation) - never to be seen. Ask God to continually fill you with His love for people.

FIRST, GIVE YOURSELF TO JESUS

The disciples gave the little they had to Jesus. I already spoke on this in a message called "What's in your pocket". But God was showing me something more.

The loaves of bread were a prophetic picture of the disciples **THEMSELVES**. **The loaves were a symbol of their whole lives.**

We won't give Jesus what we have (even it's a little), until we first give Him who we are.

God doesn't just want your money, your gifts... He wants YOU.

OBSTACLES TO SURRENDER

1. **We want to stay in control... to make sure that we're looked after.** We need to trust that in surrendering, **God will take care of you.** Remember, that while you Shepherd, you are still a sheep under the Shepherd's care.

The disciples ended up with A WHOLE BASKET EACH after they gave the bread and fishes to Jesus. *“My meat (what sustains me) is to do the will of the Father.”*

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life[f] will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. (Matthew 16:24-27)*

Then Jesus went to work on his disciples. “Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You’re not in the driver’s seat; I am. Don’t run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I’ll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for? (Matthew 16:24-26 MSG)

2. Led by people, not Jesus. You see the need, you hear the bleating of the sheep and so you give the little you have to the people first or try and work your hardest to meet that need. You will NEVER HAVE ENOUGH and will not satisfy yourself OR the people. You need to give yourself first to the Lord and then (as directed by the Lord) to the people. (eg Macedonians 2 Corinthians 8)

3. You feel like you don’t have enough to give. You don’t feel strong enough, worthy enough, spiritual enough. The fact is, you will never be enough, but God is. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

God can use you when you're tired. *John 4:6 “Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well.”* As a result of talking with the Samaritan woman, many people end up believing in Jesus.

God can use you when you’re not feeling well emotionally. Jesus felt the weight of the cross - especially closer to the time of His crucifixion - and He was overwhelmed by sorrow, BUT He continually committed Himself to the Father, receiving His strength and comfort. He was committed to glorifying the Father above all else through His obedience.

My own example. God has moved the most powerfully when I’ve felt the worst but still yielded myself to God.

2 Corinthians 12:9

4. You've fallen, **you've made too many mistakes**; you're disqualified and God can't use you.

John 21 "*do you love me more than these?*" Do you love me more than the things I can do for you? More than having all your needs met? Do you love me more than your comfort?

"Feed my Lambs"

"Take care (shepherd) of my sheep"

To be a shepherd after God's heart, we must totally surrender to Jesus. Take our lives out our hands, our control and put it in His hands. Now we are saying, "**Use me... HOWEVER and WHENEVER You want.**"

JESUS BLESSES

Jesus BLESSES the bread. Jesus **BLESSES the surrendered life**. He fills you with strength and gives you unlimited **grace**. Need to **remember** this when you go through brokenness. We see this with Jesus when he was baptised "This is my son, in whom I am well pleased." He was then led into the wilderness.

BROKENNESS

The Loaves and Fishes story is prophetic that Jesus - the bread of life - would be broken to feed and save the multitudes. It speaks that His disciples are to "feed Jesus" to the people, so that people can taste Jesus. It is also prophetic that the disciples themselves would be broken for the sake of the gospel, and multitudes would taste Jesus as a result.

When the five loaves were broken - what was inside was exposed, you could no longer tell which loaf was which. We **become one with Jesus and His people. Not about us anymore or our image - like Jesus, we live to bring glory to the Father. (Phil 2)**. The outward form is not recognised, but the inside is ("tastes like bread", "tastes like Christ") We are not drawing people to ourselves, or making disciples of ourselves, but disciples of Jesus.

To clarify: this unity, oneness is not outward; God doesn't want clones. Everyone has different gifting, and will look different on the outside, but the inside, the life, the essence of who they are and what they do will be JESUS. The same Spirit.

Peter and John- don't compare yourself to others, the call will look different, Jesus will be at the centre. We all go through brokenness- it will look different.

May be confused and ask, "What is happening?" Be encouraged: you are still in the hands of Jesus, you are blessed. The breaking hurts, but **God is preparing us to be part of something bigger than ourselves.**

You are entering into suffering with Jesus. If you want to follow Jesus, to be used by Him, **you must be willing to suffer.** This is what it is to take up your cross, to die to self (Gal 2:20).

*"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, **join with me in suffering** for the gospel, by the power of God."*

2 Timothy 1:6-8 NIV

Paul describes some of what they went through.

2 Corinthians 1:3-10

2 Corinthians 4:5-12, 16-18

Luke 24:30-32

Road to Emmaus- Jesus **breaks bread** and they **recognise Jesus** "were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Interestingly, **their eyes were open through Jesus doing a menial task like breaking bread.**

You minister Jesus not just through your words but also (and more importantly) through the way you live your everyday life.

Can people **recognise Jesus** in your EVERYDAY life? The way you serve a meal, the way to speak to one another...

When your life and your words don't match up, that's a problem - it can cause people to stumble or choke on what you feed them.

Must apply to your own heart and life first - eg mother bird eating food first the regurgitating to feed babies, otherwise would choke.

On another level, this is a prophetic picture showing that as we allow Jesus to break us, people will recognise Jesus.

Stay in the Shepherd's hands. John 10:27,28 Trust Him.

LISTEN & OBEY JESUS' INSTRUCTIONS

JESUS SENDS YOU OUT HUMBLE, DEPENDENT, but WITH AUTHORITY, because you are UNDER AUTHORITY.

Listen to Jesus' instructions - this is the one we mess up most. **How we do something is just as important as what we do.** Jesus gave specific instructions. If you feel called to do something, ask the Lord **how** to do it, when and where. The Scripture also gives us clear instructions.

Success is not having a name that people recognise, or a ministry name. Success is every day obedience to Jesus.

Disciples were God's way to disseminate His goodness.

THE RESULT: **PEOPLE WILL "TASTE JESUS"** THROUGH YOUR LIFE.

My story:

When we first started the church, I thought SO MUCH depended on me - it was up to me to bring people into the presence of God. If people didn't respond, it was my fault. If there was a need, I had to meet it. I ran after people who weren't even hungry - "black holes" - and ran myself ragged. I worried so much what people thought about me, but now I live to please the Father. I'm still sad if I upset people. But keeping people happy isn't what motivates me. I live to please the Father.

In John, right after Jesus tells His disciples to give the people something to eat, it says that He already had in mind what he was going to do. And he also knew the disciples didn't have enough. All we need to do is come to Jesus humbly, surrender, join in with what He already has planned.

I am so aware of how weak my flesh is. I have not become more self-confident over the years, I am more dependent on God than ever! And I have experienced, time and time again how faithful He is, how powerful He is, how kind He is. And He has met every need - physical, emotional, and spiritual. When I see you, I feel the Father's love for you.

Now this is my life verse:

"Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him." John 7:18

When I'm struggling, I pray Galatians 2:20 over myself. And I realise that the stuff I was struggling with was just self. It's so freeing being dead to self!

TEAM JESUS.

YOU END UP WITH MORE

Just like the death of a seed leads to many seeds, brokenness leads to multiplication.

We are not the Great Shepherd, just under shepherds.

The shepherds

Fight for the sheep, have God's heart for His people (Intercession) a shepherd will stand between the wolf and the sheep to fight off the wolf and protect the sheep

David

Don't let mistakes stop you from doing the work of God (not talking about living in sin), but condemnation of mistakes or sin stop you from fulfilling your call

What do you feed them? What Jesus gives you. JESUS making disciples of JESUS.

When you give sacrificially, in obedience (ie following Jesus' instructions), you will end up with WAY MORE.

We must have God's heart for the sheep- to be moved by compassion

Ministry will look different to others, but the essence, the heart, the life will be the same- JESUS at the centre.

God can use you when you're weak and tired (2 cor 12:9) Jesus at the well with the woman.

Don't wait for perfect circumstances- be led by the Spirit

All you need to know is that Jesus sent you

We are not to make people dependent on us, but on Jesus

Be flexible- things don't always happen like you think- let go of being in control- let God do whatever He wants to do

Jesus already has a plan- we get to be apart of it

Humility in ministering (you did not pay for what you are giving- freely receive, freely give)
False humility- realise that the gifts you have have been given to you by God in the first place (all things from him, through Him and to Him). Gifts purpose- to build up the body and glorify JESUS

Thousands of hungry people- people who need a shepherd. Sheep who need to be cared for. The task is overwhelming. This reminds me of Pita's vision of a flood of people coming into this church, but they would be naked.

Feed the hungry.

YOU feed them. Every disciple of Jesus is called to Humility to receive from a young bo

Calling him to be a shepherd... because

Call to do things you don't want to do in the natural. (V18)

This is not the call of a pastor or an ordained minister... this is the call of every disciple.

You can not work provide what they need.

DEFINITION

σπλαγχνίζομαι



splanchnizomai **have pity; have compassion**

BDAG have pity, feel sympathy,

WSNTDICT

Louw-Nida to feel compassion for, to have great affection for, love, compassion

Lexham Theological Wordbook to have compassion, pity, deep empathy.

DBL Greek feel compassion for

TDNT

Greek-English Dict. of N.T. be moved with pity; compassion, have pity; compassion

NASB Dictionaries to be moved in the inward parts; to feel compassion

An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon to feel compassion; mercy

ANLEX be moved with compassion for, feel sympathy with, take pity on

LXGRCANLEX have pity; have compassion; to have pity; to have compassion

TDNTA

Building Your New Testament Greek Vocabulary 3rd Edition I feel sympathy for

Enhanced Strong's Lexicon

A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament

A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible

The Lexham Analytical Lexicon to the Septuagint feel compassion; partake in a pagan sacrifice

TRANSLATION | NASB95

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σπλαγχνίζομαι

felt compassion

feel compassion

compassion

take pity

EXAMPLE USES

Predicator
Mt 9:36
Mt 15:32
Mt 20:34
Mk 9:22

Seeing the people,	He felt compassion	for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.
And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said,	“I feel compassion	for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way.”

<p>Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him.</p>	<p>Moved with compassion,</p>	<p>Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him.</p>
<p>“It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything,</p>	<p>take pity</p>	<p>on us and help us!”</p>