

LIFE OF A SERVANT**Jesus the Perfect Shepherd****Mark 6:30–56**

"When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd." Mark 6:34a

Day 1: Read Mark 6:30–44.

1. After their “missions trip” (6:7–13), the disciples are probably tired, and there are so many people about, “they [do] not even have a chance to eat”. (vs. 31)
 - a. How does Jesus care for them?
 - b. What happens to their attempt to get some rest?
2. How does Jesus’ heart respond to the crowds that await him on the shore?
3. How does your heart respond when it seems like everybody wants something from you? How can your response become more like Jesus’? (Gal. 5:16, 22–23)
4. Mark writes that the people were “like sheep without a shepherd”. (vs. 34)
 - a. Look at Ezek. 34:1–6, 10. How are the “shepherds” of Israel we have seen so far in Mark like the bad shepherds described in Ezekiel? (Consider Mk. 2:15–17; 3:4–6.)
 - b. Now look at Ezek. 34:11–16, 23–24. How does today’s passage show Jesus to be the promised good shepherd? (See also Luke 9:11.)

Day 2: Read Mark 6:35–44.

5. Jesus knows what he is going to do to feed the crowd. Why then does he tell his disciples, “You give them something to eat”? (vs. 37a; Jn. 6:5–6)
6. How do the disciples respond? What would a response of faith have looked like?
7. When faced with a difficult situation, what things do you tend to rely on to solve the problem? Are these things truly reliable?

Day 3: Read Mark 6:35–44.

8. There are several parallels between Jesus' feeding of the five thousand (plus women and children) and the Old Testament account of God's deliverance of the Israelites. Note some of the parallels:
 - a. vs. 37 and Num. 11:13–14, 21–23:
 - b. vss. 41–42 and Ex. 16:3–4, 11–15:
 - c. vs. 40 and Ex. 18:24–25:
9. What do such parallels suggest about Jesus? (Heb. 3:3, 5–6a)
10. Compare vs. 41 with 14:22 in Mark's account of the Last Supper. What similarities do you see?
11. This feeding is the only miracle (besides the resurrection) that appears in all four Gospels. It looks back to God's provision for the Israelites in the desert, and ahead to the Last Supper. Clearly, this miracle is about more than the amazing multiplication of loaves and fish. What does it ultimately point to? (Jn. 6:26–27, 47–51)

Day 4: Read Mark 6:45–56.

12. Look again at vs. 45, and note the tone of urgency. How does Jn. 6:14–15 explain this urgency?
13. Mark mentions Jesus' praying only three times: 1:35 (after a busy Sabbath, and before his departure to minister in other villages in Galilee); 6:46; and 14:32–42 (in Gethsemane, before his betrayal and arrest). Why do you think specific mention is made of Jesus' praying at these times?

Day 5: Read Mark 6:45–56.

14. How does Job 9:8 shed light on Jesus' extraordinary feat of walking on the water?
15. Jesus' statement, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid," carries more weight than a mere, "Don't worry—it's just me!" What does Jesus' reassurance echo? (Ex. 3:14; Is. 41:4, 10, 13–14; Jn. 8:58)
16. What had the disciples "not understood about the loaves" (vs. 52) that would have helped them on the lake? (Jn. 6:35)

17. Hebrews 1:3 states explicitly that “[t]he Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being”. Look back over this week’s passage. What do we learn about God through the actions of his Son? How does this picture of God reassure and encourage you?