

**GOOD NEWS FROM THE KING**  
***A Study of the Gospel According to Mark***  
**Mark 6:30–56**

*Holy Bible, New International Version ©2011*

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

**Pray for the Holy Spirit to open your heart to his word.**

Read through this week's passage and jot down any thoughts and questions you may have.

**Read Mark 6:30–44.**

1. The apostles return from their mission (6:7–13) and tell Jesus "all they had done and taught" (v. 30).
  - a. How does Jesus care for these weary men? (vv. 31–32)
  - b. What interferes with their attempt to get some rest? (v. 33)
2. What do you think it means to be "like sheep without a shepherd" (v. 34a)?
3. In what two ways does Jesus show the "sheep" compassion?  
 v. 34b
- vv. 41–42
4. Read Ezekiel 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 Mark 2:15–16; 3:4–6.)

5. Now read Ezekiel 34:11–16, 23–24. How does this week’s passage show Jesus to be the promised good shepherd? (See also John 10:11, 14–15.)

6. How has Jesus, the good shepherd, shown his compassion toward you?

7. Reread verses 35–38. “Once the disciples have seen the need of the crowd (35–36), then Jesus lays upon them the task of meeting that need (37). Half angered, and half humiliated, they confess their own utter inadequacy to do so.”<sup>1</sup>

a. Of the meager resources the disciples possess, how much do they give to Jesus? (vv. 38b, 41a)

“God does not usually lead us to see a need, unless it is in his mind to meet that need, often through us, unwilling though we may be.”<sup>2</sup>

b. What else does Jesus require of them? (vv. 39, 41b–c, 43)

c. What do you think Jesus wants the disciples to learn?

8. Other than Jesus’ resurrection, the miraculous feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. Clearly, it is about more than the amazing multiplication of loaves and fish. What does it ultimately point to? (John 6:32–35, 47–51)

**Read Mark 6:45–56.**

9. What does Jesus do immediately after the hunger of the crowd is satisfied? (vv. 45–46)

10. Mark specifically mentions Jesus praying three times: 1:35 (after a busy Sabbath, and before his departure to minister in other villages in Galilee); here in 6:46; and 14:32–42 (in Gethsemane, before his betrayal and arrest). Why do you think Jesus prays at these times?

11. What does Jesus notice while he is praying? (vv. 47–48)
12. In what unexpected ways does Jesus respond? (vv. 48b–51)
13. Jesus' statement, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid" (v. 50b) carries more weight than a mere, "Don't worry – it's just me!"
- a. What does Jesus' reassurance echo? (Isaiah 41:4, 10, 13–14)
  - b. What does Jesus reveal about himself? (Exodus 3:14; Job 9:8; Psalm 89:8–9)
14. The disciples did not "understand about the loaves and and their hearts were hardened" (v. 52). Consider where your heart may be hardened in disbelief. How do Jesus' power and compassion as seen in this week's passage reassure and encourage you?
15. This week's passage ends with "a crowd of people bringing the sick to [Jesus] for healing. Their faith was like that of the woman suffering from bleeding; they only asked to touch *the edge of his cloak*, for they knew and believed that he could heal them."<sup>3</sup>

What is one area of your life in which you need Jesus' healing touch? Ask your group to pray with you about this.

---

This lesson on Mark's Gospel is adapted from "Life of a Servant" by New Life Glenside Women's Bible Study, 2002–2003.

<sup>1</sup> R. Alan Cole, *Mark*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 180.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> R. Alan Cole, "Mark" in *New Bible Commentary: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition*, consulting editors D. A. Carson et al., (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1994), 962.