

FEEDING THE 5000

Mark 6:14-44

This is a series about what happens when you REALLY follow Jesus. We are seeking to accomplish this by examining the lives of the 12 young men that literally walked with Jesus. Their life goal was simple: wake up and follow Jesus wherever He went. So, this is our heritage: Go where He goes. Stay where He stays. Eat when He eats. Pray when He prays. And say what He says. So, our life has become amazingly simple – FOLLOW HIM.

Mark 6 contains the grisly account of John the Baptist being beheaded by Herod. The disciples hear about it, go, and retrieve the headless body, bury it, and return to tell Jesus that His cousin and great friend is dead. Other than the crucifixion events, this is quite likely the most emotionally painful time in Jesus' earthly life. (He cried at Lazarus' tomb, but He knew He would raise him momentarily.) I believe that all of us are aware that pain is part of the process of moving forward in life; so, how did Jesus handle pain? Well, interestingly, here, when Jesus heard of John's death, He took the disciples and withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place. However, by the time they arrived, the crowd had followed them, and Jesus is deluged again with needy sheep in search of a shepherd. Jesus, through great personal pain, grief, and loss has such empathy for their need that He reaches out and ministers to them.

THREE *More* OBSERVATIONS THAT REVEAL THE TRUTH ABOUT FOLLOWING JESUS

1st Observation

Following Jesus requires you to periodically get away, so you don't give up.

Jesus needed margin and so do you! One of the most useful words in our spiritual vocabulary is . . . no. You can do some things, but you can't do everything. Jesus was a man's man, a powerful man, a brilliant man. For heaven's sake, He's God, but He had to step back at times. The goal of our walk with Jesus is NOT to be a temporary flash in the pan but to live a life that can be sustained.

Observation #2

Following Jesus requires that we move past our own personal pain.

Every person reading these notes has pain in your life, don't you? There are people who hug your neck, shake your hand, smile, and talk to you; and you have no idea the personal tragedies they are experiencing or have been through. I know that no one likes to hear this, but God uses pain. I'm going to challenge you to ask God to do for you what He did for Jesus in this miracle – move you past your pain and fatigue. Your pain may be the very thing God uses to touch someone's life.

Observation #3

Following Jesus requires that you offer what you have right now.

Jesus requires – NOT what you WILL have, WISH you had, or WANT to have. If you look at Jesus throughout the scriptures, you will conclude that He is a RIGHT NOW God! The disciples were quick to exclaim, "We ONLY have five loaves here and two fish." (v.17) Jesus said, "Bring them here to Me." (v.18) Jesus specializes in taking our ONLY and changing us forever.