Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Mark 6:7-44

On one of my first trips to China, my friend Gely told me of an Old Chinese greeting that instead of asking, “How are you?” when you approached someone you would ask that person, “Have you eaten until you are full?”

He told me that he believed that the origin of the greeting went back to times when food was scarce.

If one were fortunate to come across food, it was considered important that one would fill themselves up – there was no saving room for dessert because one didn’t know if there was going to be any dessert in the near future.

One would eat until they were fully satisfied.

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The problem with this is that time tells us that we will become hungry again and the cycle continues over and over again.

After all, we all know what they say about Chinese food right? We are simply going to be hungry again in an hour.

Turn with me to the gospel of John 6.

[Jhn 6:27, 35 NKJV] 27 "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." ... 35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

You see, Jesus Christ, the bread of life, invites us to come to Him for His feast for the soul, urging us to eat until we are full.

He is the only one that can satisfy us completely. But in order for that to happen, we have to come to Him.

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Amen.

Let's pray…

[Mar 6:7- 13 NKJV]

7 And He called the twelve to [Himself], and began to send them out two [by] two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. 8 He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff--no bag, no bread, no copper in [their] money belts-- 9 but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics. 10 Also He said to them, "In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. 11 "And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" 12 So they went out and preached that [people] should repent. 13 And they cast out many

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demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed [them].

In the gospel of Mark, it is the only gospel that makes reference that Jesus Christ was a carpenter by trade – actually the better translation would be a ‘master craftsman’.

And He is the ultimate ‘Master Craftsman’

He is the potter and we are the clay – and He is the one that molds us into His own image.

We might not like the molding process as it can be painful as we have to undergo trial after trial.

Our problem is that many times, we will not submit to His handiwork and instead we try to become the potter. We want to be in charge of what we will become.

Church, we need to consecrate ourselves to His work, we need to come in submission to the altar, come in submission to His love, to follow Him wherever He might lead us.

Jesus' disciples had been spending some time now on the potter's wheel.

We had seen this two weeks ago when their faith was tested by the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

We even saw this last week as Jesus grabbed Peter, James and John and took them into the room where He healed Jairus' daughter.

Now, Jesus is sending them out.

You see, Jesus knew His time was short.

He had elected these disciples to continue His work after His death.

And He sends them out two by two.

Now, why didn't Jesus simply send all twelve in separate directions – they would have covered more ground that way.

You see, by sending them two by two, they would provide a better testimony.

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This principle was established by God as a way of getting to the truth.

Where does it say this???

[Deu 19:15 NKJV] 15 "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

The truth comes through clearer from two people than just coming from one.

Not only is truth revealed with two, it would be beneficial for the disciples.

[Ecc 4:9-12 NKJV] 9 Two [are] better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him [who is] alone when he falls, For [he has] no one to help him up. 11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm [alone]? 12 Though

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one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

That is why you see Jehovah's witnesses standing in pairs outside the grocery store or on street corners and why Mormons show up at your door in pairs.

We will see in the book of Acts, that the early church also followed this model as we see the ministry teams of Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas and Paul and Silas.

So, Jesus sends them out.

He gives them power over unclean spirits but He also sends them out in simplicity.

In verse 8, it tells us that Jesus sends them out only allowing them to wear the shirt on their back, the sandals on their feet and their walking stick.

One of the reason for this simplicity was that it would allow the disciples to move around freely.

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The other purpose for the simplicity was that Jesus was going to make them trust God for all their provisions, their food, their housing and their finances.

I can remember when the Lord called me to come down here and begin doing expository bible studies. My pastor, sat me down and told me – you can count on our prayers, you can always call me if you have a question – as long as it is not in the middle of the night, however, we will not support you financially. If it is God's will, He will provide.

And He has because He is faithful.

Another stipulation that Jesus makes is that when they go into a house, they were to stay there until they were to leave town. The disciples were not allowed to look for better accommodations.

Let's look at verse 11 again…

[Mar 6:11 NKJV] 11 "And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them.

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Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!"

The ministry of the disciples was not to force the message upon the people. It was not to change their minds.

The ministry of the disciples was to proclaim the same message that Jesus was proclaiming – that the kingdom of God was near and for them to repent.

Church, this is very important because I believe that many times we refrain from sharing the gospel because we fear or we believe that there is no way that we can change what that person believes.

That is not our responsibility –

Our responsibility is to simply share the gospel -

God does the rest – and ultimately it will be up to the individual to respond. Judgment will be upon them.

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In verse 11, to shake the dust off your feet, was a practice the Jews had when they would go through a gentile city. As they would exit the gentile city, they would shake the dust off their feet symbolizing that they didn't want to bring in the contamination of the gentiles upon the Jewish land.

When we are rejected for preaching the gospel, we are also to shake off the dust from our feet – by not allowing the rejection to hinder the ministry we are called to do. We are not to take it personally as they are rejecting Jesus Christ – not us.

We must allow God to handle it from this point.

In this next section, Mark goes off on a rabbit trail here as he focuses on Herod.

(14-16)

14 Now King Herod heard [of Him], for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "It is Elijah." And others

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said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets." 16 But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!"

This Herod is not the same Herod that killed all the young male children when Jesus Christ was born.

That was Herod the great – this is one of his sons. Herod Antipas –

17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. 18 Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he [was] a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, <u>and heard him gladly.</u>

Herod was a confused man.

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He knew that John the Baptist was a good guy. He feared and respected John. He protected John from his wife that wanted to kill him.

But Herod was disturbed by John and the things John said.

You see, John made him uncomfortable because John challenged Herod's lifestyle.

Herod is caught in this trap of hearing what is good and right, yet living a life that contradicts all that is good and right.

And he feels that he can't give up the things he knows are wrong.

Herod is caught on the fence. He is indecisive -

He has too much of the world to be comfortable with the things of God. He has heard too much about God to be comfortable with the things of this world.

Church, for the believer, this is not where we want to find ourselves.

[Rev 3:14-16 NKJV] 14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Just like in the life of Herod, we find that deep down; there is no one more miserable than the lukewarm Christian is. They have too much of the world to be happy in Jesus, but too much of Jesus to be happy in the world.

21 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief [men] of Galilee. 22 And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give [it] to you." 23 He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom." 24 So she went

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out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!" 25 Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." 26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; [yet], because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. 27 Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, 28 brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard [of it], they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

As we read, Herod has a birthday party and invited all of his friends –

And then Herodias' daughter comes in and does a seductive dance in front of Herod. Now, the scriptures do not ever mention her by name but, the historian Josephus identifies her as Salome.

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Herod being moved by the dance, makes an oath to Salome as he promises her anything up to half his kingdom.

Salome consults her mother, who we already read that she wanted to kill John the Baptist – and she tells her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

Herod hears the request and orders his men to behead John.

In verse 26, it says that King Herod was exceedingly sorry – the Greek word that is used here is to be greatly distressed or in agony. It is the same word that Jesus is used to describe the way Jesus felt as He is praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

However, despite his distress – he didn't go back on his oath.

You see, Herod's pride prevented him from declining Salome's requests.

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Herod's pride prevented him from doing the right thing – which is a snapshot into the life of Herod.

Our next event is one of the few miracles that is listed in all four gospels. It is Jesus feeding the five thousand.

[Mar 6:30-44 NKJV] 30 Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. 31 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. 32 So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves. 33 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. 34 And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and <u>was moved with compassion for them</u>, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. <u>So He began to teach them many things.</u> 35 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. 36 "Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat." 37 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?" 38 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." 39 Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. 41 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. 42 So they all ate and were filled. 43 And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. 44 Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.

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The disciples are now back from their ministry – they can't wait to tell Jesus everything that occurred while they were away and Jesus wants them to take a break – to recharge.

So they get into a boat to go somewhere secluded and the multitudes see the boat and they decide to follow the boat by walking along the shoreline. They actually beat Jesus and the disciples to the place where they were headed.

So much for alone time.

Jesus sees the multitudes and has compassion on them. Why???

Because he sees them as sheep, a sheep without a shepherd cannot fend for itself. Sheep have no defensive mechanism.

Without a shepherd, sheep have a hard time finding food and water.

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Jesus had compassion on them because He knew that the reasons that they followed was because of the need that was inside each one of them.

Jesus Christ is the great shepherd.

[Eze 34:11-16 NKJV] 11 'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 "As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 "And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 "I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 "I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord GOD. 16 "I will seek what was lost

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and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who loves His flock.

He is constantly looking for the lost sheep.

He wants to heal those that have been broken.

He promises to “feed” His flock and He starts by teaching them. That is what Jesus is doing here in verse 34 of Mark 6.

He begins to fill them spiritually before He fills their physical needs.

The only problem is that they are in the middle of nowhere.

The disciples wanted to send the multitudes away –

Jesus wanted them to feed them.

Remember, earlier in our study. Jesus sends them out and wants them to understand the God is going to provide for them.

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He wants them to apply the lesson that they learned why they were out preaching the gospel.

That is the way God works – first come instruction and then comes application.

The disciples are too busy trying to figure out how they are going to do it themselves – when they should have brought it before the Lord first.

Jesus has them take inventory – What do we have to work with??? Five loaves and two fish –

The gospel of John tells us that this was the lunch of a boy that was in the group.

Five loaves and two fish in the hands of man is enough to feed the appetite of a small boy but, in the hands of God – that is a totally different story.

Jesus makes the people sit down in the grass – after all that is what shepherds do – tell their sheep where to lie - Psalm 23 tells us that.

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He took the five loaves and the fish, looked up to the heaves and did what??? He blessed –

When Jesus blessed before the meal, He didn't bless the food; He blessed God for supplying it.

You see, the idea of praying before a meal isn't to bless the food; it is to bless God in the sense of thanking and honoring Him for blessing us with the food.

Jesus then had the disciples pass out the fish and the loaves and the scriptures tell us that they ate until they were full – picture thanksgiving meal.

And there were 12 baskets of food remaining.

The 5000 number is only men; some people have estimated the crowd to be between 10,000 and 15,000 when you include women and children.

Yet God provided for every one of them.

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Many times, we make the mistake thinking that what we have to offer God is insignificant: out time, our talents, our lives.

The young boy that gave up his lunch – guess what, he got it back and more. Those five loaves and two fish became a blessing to thousands and most importantly, it brought glory to God.

That is our calling – to bring glory to God.

Amen.

Let's pray…

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

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I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

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