

Today's Message

An Extraordinary Day And Night For Weary Followers

Mark 6:30-66

Disciples of Jesus are engaged in lifelong learning. In these two stories we see the disciples excited but exhausted by their experience of mission, encouraged to stretch their faith, and enthralled by their renewed encounter with their Master. From their responses to Jesus and their circumstances we learn about our own discipleship in the 21st Century.

There are parallel passages in other gospels: Matthew 14:13-36; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:5-21.

1. Excited but exhausted, vv.30-31

- a. Earlier in the chapter, Mark records how the 12 had been sent out by Jesus. Now they return with wonderful stories, but need time apart. Their resources are depleted.
- b. The Sabbath was made for us. We need time apart with the Lord.

2. Encouraged to stretch their faith, vv.32-44

- a. Jesus and the disciples enjoy little rest because the crowds are waiting on the shore. Jesus' compassion means he is always ready to respond to their need, and ours. He never turns us away.
- b. The disciples though are challenged to provide for the crowds, which they singularly fail to do. They simply don't have the resources, and neither do the crowd.
- c. In the 'nature' miracle of the feeding of 5000 men from 5 loaves and 2 fish, Jesus demonstrates that all resources are with and in Him. This is not just a proof of Divinity, but of Messianic purpose. Paul reminds us of His sufficiency in Eph 3:20-21.
- d. John extends this incident to include all Jesus' explanation in His teaching on the 'Bread of life', John 6:32 ff.

3. Enthralled by their renewed encounter with Jesus, vv.45-56

- a. This is the second account Mark gives of stormy nights on the lake of Galilee (see 4:35-41). On the first occasion, the disciples were left asking questions about Jesus' identity, given His command over the winds and waves.
- b. Mark omits the part of the story in which Peter is encouraged to step out of the boat. See Matthew 14:28-31 for this incident.
- c. On this occasion the disciples are both terrified and amazed. Mark gives as the reason for their failure to understand the significance of the miracle of the loaves, v.52.

4. These stories seem to point to more than the divine nature of Jesus.

He is the one in whom we are to have faith in because He has all the resources necessary for our life of discipleship. Two contrasting verses from elsewhere are relevant. Jesus says "apart from me you can do nothing", (John 15:5). Paul reminds us, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength". (Phil 4:13)