

Mk 6:30-44
Compassion Outweighs Pettiness
4/24/22

ILL: **Dr. Samuel Palmer Brooks** was president of **Baylor University** in **TX** from **1902** until his death in **1931**. On his deathbed, he wrote the following to the senior class of **1931**: "I stand on the border of mortal life, but I face eternal life. I look backward to the years of the past to see all Pettiness, all triviality, **shrink** into nothing and disappear. Adverse criticism has **no meaning** now, only the worthwhile things, the constructive things that have built for the good of mankind and the glory of God **count now**. There is beauty, there is joy, and there is laughter in life—as there ought to be, but remember, my students, not to regard lightly nor to ridicule the **sacred** things, those worthwhile things. Hold them dear, cherish them, for **they alone** will sustain you in the end, and remember, too, that only through work and oft-times through hardships may they be attained. But, the compensation of blessing and sweetness **at the last** will **glorify** every hour of work and every heartache from hardship!"

RN: Does **Pettiness** benefit us more than **Virtue**? Does Pettiness cause us to scale the heights of achievement, or does Virtue? Does Pettiness Grace our souls w/ peace and contentment, or does Virtue?

AN: Virtuous **Compassion** marks the truly civilized society and the truly godly life, b/c every Pettiness drains moral strength and rugged character from nations and men.

BI: Jesus has Compassion on us despite the Pettiness of Doubters, so His Compassion outweighs all human Pettiness. **Please turn in your Bibles to Mk 6:30-44.**

- I. Today, we'll see why Jesus calls His **12** to a time of **refreshing**.
- II. And, we'll see what Jesus feels for the **Crowd** that follow Him.
- III. Finally, we'll see what the **Good Shepherd** provides for His **flock**.

Compassion outweighs Pettiness. **[PRAY]**

*In (Mk 6:30-44), Mark moves from the filth of Antipas' party to the purity of Jesus' miracle feast. And in doing so, from 6:32 to 8:26, Mark shows us how Jesus goes outside of Galilee to preach, serve, and identify Himself as **The Christ**. What's more, during this time, Jesus shows us how He cares for those who love Him and serve Him.*

(TRN) In (30-31), Jesus calls His **12** to a time of **refreshing**.

Mark 6:30–31 (NASB95) ³⁰ *The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught.* ³¹ *And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many [people] coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.)*

(30-31) Jesus' **12 Apostles** return from their missionary journey, and they debrief Jesus on all the wonders that God has done through them.

A. They tell Jesus about all the healings, and all the exorcisms, and all the Crowds' amazement. And, they tell Him about how they've faithfully taught the Gospel, too.

B. But, despite their excitement, His **12** are a little frayed around their physical edges. What's more, b/c of the needy and curious human traffic that keeps coming to see Jesus, His **12** don't even have time to eat.

C. So, Jesus tells His **12** to chill out all by themselves away from the madding crowd. IOW, His **12** need some **down-time** otherwise they're going to **burn out**.

1. Jesus is teaching them that there are **seasons** to His service. IOW, there's a time to serve the Lord w/ all your might. And then, there's a time to let go and recharge.

2. Jesus knows our limitations, and He won't push us past them. And, if He does require more than we're capable of giving, **He** supplies the Faith and strength to obey.

D. And, here's another **decisive** Truth: Jesus is indispensable, not us. Sometimes, we get mixed up, worn-out, or grow old. And, sometimes, we fail and even die.

1. But, none of this is ever true of Him. IOW, Jesus is **key**, not us. And sometimes, He must give us a vacation to make this point very clear.

E. ILL: **Tradition** says that when the **Apostle John** was the elder of **Ephesus**, raising pigeons was his **hobby**. Now, once another elder passed his house as he returned from hunting and saw John playing w/ his pigeons. And, the elder **gently chided** John for spending his time so **frivolously**. John looked at the hunter's bow and said that the bow string was loose. The elder said, **"Yes, I always loosen the bow string when it's not in use. If it stayed tight, it would lose its resilience and fail me in the hunt."** And, John said, **"And, I am now relaxing the bow of my mind so that I may be better able to shoot the arrows of Divine Truth!"**

F. APPL: Jesus doesn't call us to burn out; He calls us to reasonable service, so there's a time to serve **mightily**. And, then, there's a time to recharge **quietly**.

Jesus calls us to **work** and to **rest**, b/c Compassion outweighs Pettiness.

(TRN) In (32-34), Jesus feels **Compassion** for the **Crowd** that follows Him.

Mark 6:32-34 (NASB95) ³² *They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.* ³³ *[The people] saw them going, and many recognized [them] and ran there together on foot from all the cities and got there ahead of*

them. ³⁴ *When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt Compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.*

(32) Now, it's crucial to see that Jesus doesn't tell His **12** to just hang out. It's just the opposite. The phrase "**by themselves**" always has one meaning in Marks' Gospel.

A. It means a time for **private instruction** from Jesus. IOW, the way you recharge for life and ministry is to take some time even from your rest and give it to Jesus.

1. And, this time is when you **respectfully and humbly** pour your heart out to Him. You tell Jesus about your hopes, your fears, your needs, your wants.

2. You tell Him about your victories and your failures. You tell Him whom you resent. And, you tell Him how you need forgiveness. And then, **you listen** to His Word.

3. IOW, you let the God's Word shape your view on what's happening on the heart **inside** of you and in the world **outside** of you. And, that's what's happening here.

B. Jesus' **12** are getting **1-on-1 time** and group time w/ Him, s/t **He** can recharge and inspire them **individually** and **corporately** once again.

1. IOW, His **12** pour out their hearts, and Jesus fills the void w/ Truth, Courage, Faith, Love, Hope, Wisdom, and Insight into the bigger picture of His saving work.

C. And, here's another indispensable Truth: All of this is happening in a "**lonely place.**" IOW, sometimes, Jesus must separate us from regular life, s/t He can give us a **1-on-1**. **READ THAT**, sometimes, **Loneliness** is a blessing in disguise.

1. Sometimes, Loneliness can be one of the most significant times in our lives, b/c Jesus has us all to Himself. And then, He can teach us this life-changing Truth: Life doesn't mean **2¢** unless we invite Him to enjoy it w/ us.

2. IOW, you can lose everything, even your life, but at the end of the day, it doesn't matter if you have Jesus, and He has you.

D. Now, another fundamental Truth goes hand in hand w/ this Truth about Loneliness: Victory in Jesus doesn't necessarily mean being **comfortable**.

1. IOW, sometimes, we can have victory in Jesus and still live in very tough, hard, demanding times. But then, we learn that Jesus can keep us going no matter what.

(33) From the direction that Jesus and His **12** sail, the Crowd guesses their port o' call. **Lk 9:10** says it's the city **Bethsaida Julius** on the **NE** side of the **Sea of Galilee**.

A. And so, the Crowd rushes to Bethsaida Julius. Mark is showing us how successful the **12** Apostle's missionary trip is—A Crowd now gathers no matter where they go. And from now on, the Apostles' comfort will often go to the **back burner**.

(34) The Crowd cuts short the **12's** time w/ Jesus. But, Mark tells us an amazing Truth: The Crowd's presence doesn't anger Jesus; it moves Him to Compassion. IOW, Jesus sets a standard for us to follow: **People are our work; our comfort isn't.**

A. IOW, saying, "I love the Church; I just can't stand the people," is a no-no. The Church **is** the people, and we love them, b/c it glorifies God and builds His Church.

B. Now, Mark describes Jesus' Compassion in a profoundly potent way. He says, ***[Jesus sees them] as sheep w/out a shepherd.***

1. As such, Jesus fulfills prophecy: **Ezekiel 34:11–12 (NASB95)** ¹¹ ***For thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd cares for his herd, in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day—"***

2. IOW, the Crowd is spiritually leaderless, lost, defenseless, hungry, and helpless. And, by God's decree, Jesus provides for their real needs the way a **Good Shepherd** cares for his sheep: Truthfully, wisely, generously, and constantly.

C. What's more, Jesus shows His people the way into the green pastures of God's Kingdom through the teaching of God's Regenerating, Justifying, and Sanctifying Word.

1. IOW, Jesus meets the Crowd where they are, and He gives them God's Word to set them free from sin and ignorance and fill them w/ Hope in God by Grace through Faith.

2. And as such, this leaderless, hungry Crowd stands for the nation of Israel and ultimately the World, whom Jesus has come to rescue, liberate, and encourage.

D. ILL: **Amy Carmichael** (19th C. Irish missionary; esta. orphanages for trafficked children) often told this story: A boy took a long walk into a dark forest all by himself. And there, hidden from the eyes of those who traveled the highway, he found some lovely orchids. Only in the damp, shaded soil of the lonely woods could that exotic flower develop all the beauty God intended for it. So too, the Lord allows the **darkness of loneliness** in our lives to bring out the **exquisite loveliness** of His Graceⁱⁱⁱ.

E. APPL: The best way to respond Loneliness is to Trust that Jesus calls us all to Himself, s/t we can see Life doesn't mean 2¢ w/o Him.

Loneliness can be a blessing in **disguise**, b/c Compassion outweighs Pettiness.

(TRN) In (35-44), The **Good Shepherd** provides for His flock.

Mark 6:35–44 (NASB95) ³⁵ *When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and it is already quite late; ³⁶ send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."* ³⁷ *But He answered them, "You give them [something] to eat!"* And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them [something] to eat?" ³⁸ *And He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go look!"* And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." ³⁹ *And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass.* ⁴⁰ *They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties.* ⁴¹ *And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed [the food] and broke the loaves and He kept giving [them] to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all.* ⁴² *They all ate and were satisfied,* ⁴³ *and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish.* ⁴⁴ *There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.*

(35-38) Jesus teaches into the late afternoon. So, His **12** start getting antsy about how the Crowd's going to eat dinner. Hungry people can get really **hangry!**

A. Here's how the **12** see it, since, they're in the boonies, Jesus must send the Crowd into the neighboring villages to buy food **pronto!**

B. But then, Jesus knocks His **12** for a loop. He says, "**No, I don't need to send them away—you feed them.**" But, His **12** just smirk and shake their heads.

1. And they answer, "**Yeah, like we've got a year's worth of paychecks saved up to feed them. And, even if we did, why should we spend our cash on strangers?**"

C. Jesus' **12** don't see **2 key** facts: **1)** The same Person Who fed Israel in the wilderness for **40 years** is standing right next to them. So, if He wants His **12** to feed the Crowd, the Crowd will eat.

2) We don't serve others b/c there's some benefit in it for us; we serve others b/c it **glorifies** God. In fact, Jesus' real Followers—**out of gratitude for their Salvation**—choose to glorify God b/f anyone, especially themselves.

D. Now, Jesus doesn't let the **Pettiness** of His **12** distract Him. So, Jesus deflects their mean, small-minded, self-centered bent to make a mountain out of a mole hill.

1. The mountain in this case is not so much the **12s** inability to meet Jesus' requirements; it's the personal inconvenience that His orders cause them. To sacrifice greatly for strangers is just asking too much.

2. Usually, Pettiness is the result of many such little resentments, many little choices to be bitter and unforgiving, and many little instances of choking the life out of Compassion for the fear being even a little vulnerable again.

E. IOW, Pettiness is the exchange of God's soul-expanding Grace for the d-vl's soul shriveling spite. Now, Jesus sees the Pettiness in His 12, but He presses on and asks them to check out how much bread they have to prepare them for their soul-expansion.

1. So, His **12** do as He asks, and they find **5** French rolls and **2** teeny-weenie little fish sticks. And, you can hear them all griping, "**See! We told you so!**"

2. His 12 Apostles still don't really get this: Jesus, **the Divine Christ**, can turn these rolls and these fish sticks into a **Holy Luau** that's able to feed **1000s**.

(39-42) It's a beautiful Spring afternoon, so Jesus tells His **12** to have everybody sit down in groups of **50** or **100** on the green grass.

A. Then, Jesus takes the **5** French rolls and the **2** teeny-weenie little fish sticks, and looks up to God, b/c He's thanking God for all that He's about to provide.

1. Then, Jesus prays the regular Jewish dinner blessing: "**Praise be to You, Oh Lord our God, King of the world, Who makes bread to come forth from the earth, and Who provides for all that You have created (Str-B 1.685).**"

2. And, Jesus **breaks** the French rolls and His **12** plus some volunteers start to pass them out, and pass them out, and pass them out.

3. Then, Jesus **divides** the teeny-weenie little fish sticks, and His **12** plus some volunteers start to pass them out, and pass them out, and pass them out.

4. And, pretty soon, everybody's so full that they'll pop if they have another fish sandwich, hold the tartar sauce. IOW, Jesus' Holy Fish Luau feeds them to the gills.

B. And as such, Jesus' miracle Luau shows that He is **the Christ**: **Isaiah 25:6 (NASB95) ⁶ The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain—**

1. IOW, this miracle pictures the **Millennial** feast that **the Christ** will host for His blood-bought people in His coming Kingdom.

(43-44) Now, this Holy Luau is so lavish that His **12** can collect **12** big wicker baskets full of French rolls and fish sticks. And, Christ has **2** reasons for making His **12** do this:

1) Jesus makes His **12** collect the leftovers to show them in no uncertain terms what He can do despite their small-minded Faith.

2) He makes them collect leftovers to show them that, someday, **they** will feed this hungry World w/ the **Bread of Life's** abundance.

B. Now, Mark says that Jesus feeds **5,000 men** this day. But, when you factor in **1** wife/man and **1.5** kids/couple, these rounds out to about **20,000** satisfied customers.

1. IOW, Jesus is the **Hero** of this story, not His doubting, sarcastic, Petty **12** Apostles. And as such, this miracle zeroes in on the fact that Jesus is God in the flesh—

C. Consequently, Jesus is **the Good Shepherd** come to care for us Truthfully, wisely, and generously (Jn 10:11).

D. What's more, Jesus is **the Divine Christ** come to save us from the wrath of God, the enslavement of our sins, and the devil's hatred.

E. And finally, Jesus is **the Divine Host** come to invite us to the **Great Wedding Supper of the Lamb**, when every Believer from every age will celebrate God's victory over the World, the flesh, and the devil (Rv 19:5-9).

1. And then, b/f Jesus Christ, our Divine Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of the World, His Compassion will satisfy, refresh, and inspire for eternity.

F. ILL: After an accident amputated her arm, a **10**-year-old girl named **Jamie refused** to go to school or church. Finally, after some months, she thought she could face her peers. So, in preparation her mother called her **Sunday School Teacher** and asked that he **not** call attention to Jamie. The teacher promised, but he got sick on Sunday and had to call a **Substitute**.

At the end of a lesson about inviting friends to church, the Substitute Teacher led the class in doing the **hand motions** to the familiar children's poem: ***Here is the church/ Here is the steeple/ Open the door/ And see all the people.***

Jamie's eyes filled w/ tears. But, a **Compassionate** boy in her class sensed Jamie's pain and knelt beside her. W/ one hand apiece, they **supported** each other, making the church, the steeple, and the people^{iv}.

G. APPL: We don't serve others b/c it's convenient; we serve others b/c it **glorifies** Christ Who **inconveniently** suffered and died for us.

We serve others to **glorify** Christ, b/c Compassion outweighs Pettiness.

ⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱ "Let's Take a Break," Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Lessons in Loneliness," Ibid.

^{iv} Craig Brian Larson and Phyllis Ten Elshof, *1001 Illustrations That Connect* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2008), 46.

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