

The Provision Of The Shepherd-King

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[0 : 00] All right, and so with that, I'll turn it over to Jesse here. Last sermon before stepping out, so bring the fastball, right? Sweet, yeah. Basically, don't blow it, you know?

No pressure, all good. I just want to say, one, really appreciate that we have a church that really cares about our souls and sees us more than just like ministry that we do, but really treats us as people and is sending us.

And so we thank you for that. We really do. And I do want to commend to you because maybe this is your first time seeing something like this happen. You might be thinking like, well, who the heck is running the show while this guy is gone?

And I want to say from the get-go, I've never been a guy leading in isolation. We have an eldership team that has always led this church site. And so that's going to continue on.

And we have a great group of elders. I'm a fellow elder. I'm not a guy with the team. I'm a guy on a team. And there's an important difference between those two things.

[1 : 04] And so I want you to know that you guys are going to be well cared for. And so I'm going to have Alan, Elliot, and Freddie just stand up so you could see their faces and see like, these are the guys I've been doing leadership with, eldership with for a long time.

And you guys are in good hands. They're going to love you. They're going to care for you. They're going to watch over you. They're going to provide spiritual oversight. So yes, I want to commend that to you. I also just want to say that, and Elliot said this, we're not leaving burnt out or bitter or upset.

We're not like, oh man, so happy to get away from all those folks. You know? We dearly, dearly love you guys. And I just want to say this, and this is what I was reminded of today. As we go, we actually go very, very much filled up with joy.

And Jesus is our source of joy. Our heavenly father is our source of joy. The fellowship of the spirit is, but you are as well. And I'm going to read words, Paul's words to the Thessalonian church and just take them for myself because I think he says it better than I ever can.

And he says this, for now we live. If you, One Harbor Church, are standing fast in the Lord, for what thanksgiving can we return to God for you?

[2 : 17] For all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God. And I just want to let you know as we go that you are our joy before God, like literally.

Seeing you stand firm in the Lord, that fills our hearts with joy and encourages us. And so I just want to thank you for that as well. We don't go in weakness, we go in strength.

And so thank you so much. Hells, can I hand that to you and then I'll get going. If you have a Bible, go ahead and turn to Mark chapter six. We're going to start in verse 30.

It'll be up on the screen as well. Those of you who are listening to this online, greetings to you. If you're new with us, thank you for putting up with the long, elongated family moment we just had. And we are going to jump into a sermon. We are working through the gospel of Mark. And it's a story about the life and ministry of Jesus Christ while he was here on earth.

[3 : 15] And we're doing that because one, we want to grow in the knowledge of Jesus. And if you're a Christian, you do that because he's our Lord and our Savior. And the Bible commends us to grow in the knowledge of Christ.

And also it teaches us what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, what it looks like to follow him. And you know, the passage we're going to be reading today is a story of Jesus feeding the 5,000.

And what's fascinating about this is it is one of the few stories of Jesus's ministry that shows up in all four of the gospels. Which means that every single apostle that decided to write out their particular story of Jesus and what they wanted to pass on to the believers for all generations to

come, all of them agreed that this one was a hallmark moment of understanding who Jesus is and what it means to follow him.

And so I'm very excited. Some of us are very familiar with this. And so I would say, man, don't lean out, lean in. I think there's some new things that we can pick up from this. So let's start in verse 30 and we'll read on from there.

It says this, the apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught and said to him, come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while. For many were coming and going and they had no leisure even to eat.

[4 : 33] And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now, many saw them going and recognized them and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. And when he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, this is a desolate place and the hour is late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.

But he answered them, you give them something to eat. And they said to him, shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread? 200 denarii is about, a denarii was a day's wage.

So it's basically working for 200 days to buy this crowd bread. And give it to them to eat. And he said to them, how many loaves do you have? Go and see.

And when they had found out, they said five and two fish. Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups by hundreds and by fifties and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people.

[5 : 46] And he divided the two fish among them all and they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up 12 baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were 5,000 men.

This is God's word. So to better understand this particular moment, it's important to account for the greater context surrounding this time.

There's ample evidence from the other gospel accounts that the crowd that was chasing after Jesus, they were doing that with the hope and the intent to crown him king. And they were thinking this guy might be the Messiah.

And the reason they were doing that is like crowning him as king and thinking he's the Messiah would kickstart the restoration of Israel and the eradication of their Roman oppressors. And they're wanting to see that.

And this wouldn't be the first time something like this was attempted. The several hundred years leading up to Jesus' arrival on the scene here is, there were quite a few of these type of uprisings that began just like this.

[6 : 51] There was a gathering of men. They would go out to an isolated, desolate place. They would rally around a self-proclaimed messianic figure or military figure.

They'd get all hyped up. They would say like, we're gonna do this. We're gonna eradicate Israel's oppressors. They'd go out and they would try and they would fail. And that happened quite a few times. Most likely, that is the attempt of this crowd.

They are chasing Jesus down. And it's not a stretch. Consider what had just taken place. Jesus had sent his apostles out with his authority to cast out demons, heal the sick, and preach the good news of repentance.

And he sent them out to all the neighboring towns. Remember it said, all the people from all the towns are running after Jesus to this desolate place. Now, think about this.

His disciples went before Jesus to declare his kingdom message in all those places. And it was accompanied by authentic proofs of his power. Jesus sent out his apostles just like kings did.

[7 : 51] In those days. He would send out emissaries to new territories to say, the king is coming, his kingdom is coming, and we are here to establish it. And while all that's going on, Herod had just recently beheaded John the Baptist, who everybody recognized as a prophet of God, a godly man.

A man who had wondered like, man, you know, Jesus might be the Messiah. I need to decrease so that he can increase. Now, you have all this happening all at the same time.

So that crowd is probably filled with a mix of outrage and hope all at the same time. Most likely their intent would have been to get Jesus and find Jesus at that isolated place and make him their king. And that's actually, John's account of this in his gospel, it says that that's what they were trying to do. And the irony here is that they're going out to find a king, and they do, it's just not the king that they expect.

See, Jesus' intent was very different to their intent. He isn't going out there drawing crowds to himself to convince them that he's a king worth following, to begin a military coup.

[9 : 03] He is trying to escape the crowds and give his disciples rest. It says that in the beginning of verse 31, he says to his disciples, come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.

Why does he do that? Well, they had just come back from him sending out to do ministry. But they come back, what did they come back into?

Well, the second part of verse 31, for many were coming and going. There was a big crowd, there was a lot of hustle and bustle. They had no leisure even to eat. They go out, they do ministry work, they come back into crazy busyness.

And Jesus realizes that. But you know what, Jesus, he's wise. He has good boundaries. He knows when to say yes to people and when to say no. And we need to, we would do well to look at Jesus' life and learn from that.

Because he is the wisdom come down from heaven, God's wisdom, which knows how to live well in this world. And it's because he created it and he created us. And so we can learn from that.

[10 : 07] But how do you and I tap into that wisdom? Well, the Bible says the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord, which means wisdom comes from believing God is wisdom and knowing it and receiving his truth and living by it.

That is the beginning of the fear of the Lord. That's how Jesus lived. He said that he only did and said what his heavenly father told him. Now think about that.

You got a grown man in his 30s who is openly saying, I don't do anything except what my dad tells me to do. And I don't say anything except what my dad tells me to say.

We would hear that and we'd be like, whew, that sounds like some really unhealthy codependency, right? But not so for Jesus. He knows his heavenly father. He trusts him. He submitted to him. And he is following him.

So what the Bible calls wisdom, wise living means being dependent upon God for guidance and submitting to his will. And one way we see this exemplified in Jesus's life is how he moved between the tension of work and rest.

[11 : 08] And there is a time to work and there is a time to rest. And you know what? Jesus leads us into both. Again, he is a different kind of king altogether.

He is not what you and I expect. Most kings make their subjects work for them. They aren't concerned about things like rest. But Jesus is the king who worked for his subjects.

He is the king who worked for his subjects. He was the king who worked for his subjects. He always made room for people. He said about himself, I came to serve, not to be served. It says in the passage that many were coming and going is a busy time in his ministry.

And for many of us, we hear this and we see how hard Jesus worked doing ministry. And we didn't recognize that. And it's good for some of us to realize that.

Doing ministry, it's hard work. And that is okay. Jesus didn't pull, Jesus wasn't away from the people, beyond them. He was among them. He was with them. And you might say, well, you know, Jesus worked hard.

[12 : 06] He did all that stuff, but he's Jesus. I'm just a man. But we have to step back and realize, yeah, Jesus was fully God, but he was fully man too. And his disciples were creatures. They were men.

They were mortal men. And he was fully aware of that. He was fully aware of their limitations and weaknesses. And now remember, the disciples came back from their first missionary trip. They had worked hard.

Like, think about this. Traveling about to towns, you didn't have an Uber to take you from one place to another. You had to walk from town to town. They were probably camping out a lot. They were probably skipping meals.

They were probably doing a lot of that. And they were then having to preach. Sometimes the people who received the word, sometimes people who did not so much appreciate and believe in the good

news of the kingdom of Jesus and what was coming.

And then they healed the sick, and they faced down demons. And they did all this ministry stuff, and they come back, and it seems like they had a massive success doing that. But they come back, and they come back right into more hustle and bustle.

[13 : 06] And Jesus stops, and he models this wisdom of work and rest. In the middle of the clamor, he says, you know what, let's get away. Let's get away from all this in order to rest.

Jesus shows up, and Jesus is the kind and compassionate king. You know what he does? His compassion for you leads you to rest. And this time of rest, this wasn't, the disciples weren't waving their hands saying like, Jesus, this is too much, man.

We need a time away. We need a little respite. This is Jesus's idea. This whole moment of rest, this is him saying, let's get away. He had it all planned out. He had the place picked out. He even had the boat ready to go for them to jump in and get to where he wanted to go.

And what he is doing, what we are seeing, how Jesus is acting towards his disciples in this moment is the same thing he does for us. He is acting like the good shepherd of Psalm 23 that leads his sheep to quiet, solitary places, right?

The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. Jesus leads us to rest, to restore our souls.

[14 : 19] A good shepherd knows what his sheep needs. And Jesus is like that. And as important and good it is for us to work, it's also important to rest.

And some of us need to hear that. While we don't want, while we want to do our best to avoid the sin of idleness, we don't want to swing the pendulum to the other extreme and into the sin of overworking.

And it's hard to imagine where that line is. It's hard to see when we've overdone it with work. But let me just say this. If you continually break God's Sabbath command and can never find time to rest once a week, you've got a problem.

And even if you say, yeah, but Jesse, in this day and age, it's just impossible. Well, you know, this is a timeless truth. Sabbath is a timeless truth God has given to us because you know why?

He created us and he knows how our bodies work best. He's got the manual for it, right? And so he says from the very beginning, you can work six days, but one day a week, you gotta push pause and you gotta rest.

[15 : 28] And when you and I get overcommitted, when we can never stop and Sabbath, and if it feels like we can't, man, what we're doing is we're choosing to live beyond our limitations.

We're choosing to live beyond the way God has created us. Your body and your soul need rest, the kind of rest that restores it, which isn't like going and just binge watching Netflix all day on your day off.

But it takes humility to accept that, that we're not machines that can just keep going and going and going and never stop. But our pride will fight that.

It will fight to prove God wrong. And that proud motivation doesn't look like us shaking a fist up at heaven and saying, God, I know better than you about this. It's more subtle.

We often work too much off because our work has become our identity. It's become who we are. It's where we achieve what we would call man's standard of whatever success is and garner the praise of men.

[16 : 33] Work is what can give us the money to buy the things that we feel is absolutely necessary to make life meaningful and joyful.

Another proud motivator that keeps us from rest is that we think we're irreplaceable. If I'm not around, everything is gonna fall apart, right?

And so we begin to act and step into this God role of I am the sustainer and upholder of all things in my life. Well, that's just not true.

And that's not healthy for us. Work can be a thing that feeds our ego and our self-importance. It can feed independence from God. And that's not a good thing.

And what rest does, it comes and it pushes back against that tendency in our lives. It's a way of fighting against that sinful proclivity. And when you realize that Jesus is the good shepherd that leads you into rest, it can change your attitude and understanding for rest.

[17 : 36] It can give you a healthy appreciation of it. You follow him into it. You are trusting him to provide and watch over what you're resting from. You're releasing all those concerns to God and

saying, you know what, Lord, you are sovereign over all these things.

You can take care of them. You are a faithful provider and I can trust in you. And every time Jesus rested, that is what he is doing.

He is laying down ministry work and ministry results. Sometimes he sent crowds away. Sometimes he pulled away from crowds. Resting means you tell people no.

And that can come across as sounding harsh and unkind, but Jesus pulled away from people and their unmet needs in order to rest. That's what he was doing.

He's entrusting them to the Father. Resting from our labors is an act of faith that God is in control and he can handle it and he is good. And we often don't rest because we can't handle living in the unresolved.

[18 : 46] That's another thing that we struggle with. Yet Jesus did that all the time. And real rest is pushing pause and living in the unresolved. And that's a necessary component of rest.

Laying our work down. That's what rest is. It's laying your work down, but it's not forever. Jesus' compassion leads us to rest from our work, but it's in order that we can find restoration, we can find renewal, so that we can come back and pick that work up again.

So we should look at this and be thankful. We should be amazed at this good shepherd that we have, this Savior and this Lord that leads us with compassion into rest. But his compassion means something else.

He not only cares for you and your needs, he also cares for the needs of others. And sometimes that means he lets our rest get disrupted. And that's what happens to him and his disciples in this story in verse 33.

Now, many saw them going and recognized them and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of him. And when he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

[20 : 00] And he began to teach them many things. Now, I wanna, like, let's be a little creative and try to step into the disciples' shoes in this moment, right? They get out of the boat.

They're like, oh, we're gonna rest. And what did they see? A great crowd. Now, I am going on sabbatical. And if all of you were awaiting us at our vacation spot, I wanna say that I love you a lot, but the tears you would see running down my face would not be tears of joy.

The disciples weren't thinking, yay, working vacation. Now, I know what I would've been feeling in that moment. And it would've been resentment towards those 5,000.

There would've been some bitterness towards those 5,000. But Jesus isn't bitter at losing his spa day. It says he has compassion. The same compassion that leads us into rest also allows our rest to be interrupted because Jesus's compassion leads us into serving others.

As important as it is to know that Jesus has compassion on you, we have to reckon with the fact and hold the other tension true that Jesus has compassion on those around you.

[21 : 18] And oftentimes, we live like those two things are incompatible, but they aren't. The same compassion that leads you into rest is the same compassion that leads you into ministry to others.

And sometimes that means rest will get disrupted at inconvenient times. And when that happens, it's important to remember that rest is a gift from God that we get to enjoy.

It's not a right we get to rigidly demand. And one of the ways we're helped by this is looking at Jesus. He's the model that we get to follow. He gets out of the boat and sees the crowd waiting. And now he could've looked at that crowd and several things could've gone through his mind. He could've looked at them and said, you know what, what a bunch of pushy, demanding people. Didn't they know I needed rest? How thoughtless could they be? He could've looked at them and seen 5,000 problems standing between him and his rest.

[22 : 19] But what does Jesus see? He sees sheep without a shepherd, verse 34. And what does that do? It says he has compassion on them.

And what we need to reckon with is what happens with Jesus is when he sees people and how he sees people. Because how you see people shapes your heart.

How Jesus saw this crowd shaped his heart. He didn't see problems. He saw sheep that needed shepherding. And that moved him toward compassion.

The good shepherd guided his disciples to this remote, quiet place, which according to verse 39, also had some green grass.

Jesus is the good shepherd who guides us into those things, but he's also the good shepherd who cares for the lost sheep, the hurting, the vulnerable, wandering around broken and hurting.

[23 : 25] And you know what he does? He welcomes them. And that's the beginning of Jesus-like ministry and Jesus-like service to others. There's an openness. There's a generous hospitality that he says, you know what?

I welcome this interruption. The king of heaven loved to be among his people. Because that's what love does. Love is always moving us toward others.

Not to get something out of them. Love doesn't use people. Love blesses others. It desires to do that. It desires to give them what they need, which is what Jesus does.

And the next thing we see, the final part of verse 34, it says he began to teach them anything. So he sees them as sheep without a shepherd, has compassion on them, and he goes right into helping them.

Begin to teach them many things. Now what the crowd wanted, what the crowd was probably hoping for, was not that. They wanted Jesus to say, I am the one you've been waiting for.

[24 : 26] Crown me king. Let's go and fight these Roman oppressors. But that's not what happens. They were looking for a warrior king, but instead they got a shepherd king. And that is even better, because Jesus is the shepherd king that meets all our needs.

What he does is he begins by giving them truth. That's how he begins to meet their needs. He gives them the truth about who God is. He's proclaiming the hope and the truth of the gospel.

Talking about God's kingdom. He is the good shepherd who leads his sheep in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. And that is what Jesus taught.

He taught them to do that. He showed the people the way of righteousness. It's a pathway that is full of grace and truth, and that's what Jesus came to do. He came to teach about that, but he was the model for it.

John chapter one, it says that he came and he was full of grace and truth. And when Jesus sets his eyes on the crowd, he sees their real need. He sees what they really need to know.

[25 : 29] He sees lost sheep without any spiritual leader, vulnerable, in danger, being drawn away, hopeless. And he steps in to shepherd them like he does to us.

He steps in to shepherd us with the truth that renews our minds and nourishes our soul. Now he goes on teaching, and the day begins to draw to an end.

It's been a long one. The disciples are like, sweet. This thing's coming to a close. And they make the obvious suggestion, hey, let's dismiss them. And maybe let's be generous to them.

They might've been good-hearted. They're like, hey, these guys are probably hungry, as their own stomachs are rumbling really loudly. It's like, hey, Jesus, why don't we send them on their way?

They can get something to eat in all the towns and villages.

And Jesus doesn't do that. He says like, no, you feed them. Because he's the good shepherd who prepares a table for his sheep.

[26 : 27] Now, how does Jesus prepare this feast? Well, out there, there's no catering trucks to call to pull up. There's no like Uber Eats. There's no DoorDash that they can just ring and have some kebabs come.

He goes and he says, he tells his disciples, go find any food that you can. And they find five loaves and two fish. And they ask everyone to sit on the green grass.

And Jesus, he blesses the food, breaks the bread, divides the fish, and gives it to the disciples to set before the people. And then we see that the loaves and the fish never run out.

And the result, it says this in verse 42, they all ate and were satisfied. There was more than enough here. Jesus' provision for us never runs out.

He always has more than enough. The crowd ate all they wanted until they were sufficiently full and satisfied. But even though the crowd is sufficiently full and satisfied, we're kind of wondering, well, yeah, what about the disciples?

[27 : 31] They had to step in and they had to act like waiters during this miracle, right? They were handling all the food. They were passing out all the food. And we're thinking like, well, maybe they got forgotten, but we see that Jesus cares about them too.

His provision is enough for them as well. Verse 43, and they took up 12 baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. Now, we can look and we can say, oh, 12 disciples, 12 baskets.

I see what Jesus did there. He let them know that he has enough for them as well. But there's more than that going on here. When we read the 12 baskets of bread in a desolate place, what it is meant to do, it is meant to draw us back to Israel eating manna in the wilderness in a desolate place. Now, back then, God brings his people out of Egypt. He delivers them and he's bringing them through the wilderness to the promised land. And it's a good picture of us to see how God saves us. And in this life, he is with us every step of the way, bringing us through the wilderness of this life all the way until he brings us into the promised land of his eternal life, where we get to really grab hold of the inheritance that he has promised and set firmly for us.

[28 : 47] But every morning for 40 years, what God did in that wilderness is he poured out the baskets of heaven and manna fell to the ground and his people were able to go out and be fed.

It says this in Exodus 16, 17 to 18. And the people of Israel did this. They gathered some more, some less, but when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much, talking about the man on the ground, had nothing left over and whoever gathered little had no lack.

Each of them gathered as much as he could eat. That is how God sustained his people through the wilderness. And in this miracle story in Mark, Jesus is the one feeding the multitudes of God's people in a solitary place.

He is giving them the bread of heaven. But here's the thing, in both accounts, they point to this great miracle of God sustaining them with bread, but that actually points to something even greater. Because in Deuteronomy 8, verse three, God tells Moses, Moses is telling them, you know that whole thing about the manna in the wilderness? That was an object lesson for us to learn something.

[30 : 00] And it says, like he, God humbled you, Israel, and let you hunger and led you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, so that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

So Moses is explaining the double meaning of manna to Israel and to us. That manna itself, manna can feed our bellies, but it isn't the ultimate source of life.

God's word that he has given to us that has come from heaven, that is what it is. That's the ultimate thing. That is the ultimate fulfillment of that. And we know actually that this is Jesus.

In John 6, 51, Jesus is talking about the manna from heaven and he says this, I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.

And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. Jesus is saying this to them and to us. He is our provision that always satisfies.

[31 : 01] He is. Jesus is saying this to us. We live in a world where we search for satisfaction in many ways. We search for meaning in many ways. We search for life itself in many ways. And sometimes that's in our rest.

It can be in our leisure. It can be in the pleasurable pursuits we have. It could be in the possessions we desire and try to amass. We can search for meaning and satisfaction in the work that we have, in the careers that we're garnering.

But at the end of the day, without Jesus, those are all just empty baskets. If they aren't filled with the bread of heaven, if you aren't filled with the bread of heaven, you got nothing.

But here's the good news. Jesus is the bread of life that came down from heaven. And in this miracle, think about this. In this miracle, before everyone could eat and be satisfied, the bread had to be broken.

Before we could eat of Jesus and be satisfied with the fullness of life that is eternal, that can only come through him, his body had to be broken.

[32 : 10] And that's what it means to be saved and to live as a disciple. It is feasting on the bread of heaven, broken for you and for me. And eating this bread, eating of his sacrifice, enjoying it, receiving it, taking it in, that is what gives us life and life eternal.

And here's the good news. It's never, it never runs out. That supply, the bread of heaven, of feasting on Jesus, it's always there and it always satisfies to the fullest.

As the band comes up, as we respond, if I wanna speak to those of us in the room that are here and not yet a Christian, I wanna say to you, man, I'm so glad that you're here. I'm so glad that you got to listen to this story about Jesus and who he is and what he did and what this miracle actually really points to.

