

DISCUSSION NOTES

JANUARY 22, 2017

Pray and ask God to teach you, help you trust Him more deeply, & strengthen you to live what you learn.

GETTING STARTED

1. What is the biggest group of people that you have ever shared a meal with? What was the occasion?

DIGGING IN

2. Read Mark 6:30-44, where Jesus feeds 5000+ people. Make 7-10 quick observations about what happens. Where were they? Who was there? What was the problem? What solutions did the disciples offer? How was Jesus' plan executed? Who distributed the food? What was the result?
3. In verse 34, Jesus sees people as sheep, and he sees himself as a shepherd. Read Genesis 48:15, Numbers 27:16-17, Psalm 23:1-4, Isaiah 40:11, Jeremiah 23:4, Ezekiel 34:11-16, John 10:11. What do we learn about ourselves from the fact that Jesus sees us as sheep—what are sheep like? What does it tell us about Jesus that he sees himself as our shepherd?
4. Why was Jesus' instruction unexpected and unwanted? Did his request seem unreasonable? Why do you think Jesus chose to approach the situation in this way? What was Jesus trying to teach?
5. What is significant about the image of the bread in the feeding of the 5000? Read Exodus 16:4 — what was happening in this passage, and why was it important? How does God meeting the physical needs of his people in these two passages point us to something greater? Read John 6:32-35, 47-51 for guidance.
6. Read Mark 6:42-44. Given these results, what do we learn about the character and the nature of Jesus from this event?

LIVING IT OUT

7. Have you ever needed to trust God in a situation that seemed unreasonable or confusing? In what misguided ways do we sometimes approach things like the disciples? What happens when we fail to apply what we know to be true of God to our lives?
8. What was Jesus teaching the twelve disciples through this event? What can we discern about how God chooses to work through fallible people and meager resources? Why is Jesus' seeking help through prayer an important model for us?
9. If we really believe that Jesus is our Good Shepherd who is compassionate, powerful, and abundantly giving toward us, what are some practical ways our day-to-day lives will be different? What specific way is God calling you to trust him as your Good Shepherd this week?
10. In this passage, Jesus provided so abundantly that "they all ate and were satisfied." This physical reality points us to truth about Jesus meeting our spiritual needs. In John 10:10-11, Jesus says that he is the Good Shepherd who "came that they may have life and have it abundantly." Do you believe that Jesus came to give you life to the fullest? What would it look like for you to be fully satisfied in Jesus?