

SCRIPTURE: Mark 6:34-44

HYMN: God Will Take Care of You

All you may need He will provide

God will take care of you;

Nothing you ask will be denied,

God will take care of you.

HE PROVIDES

Getting beyond the familiar


There are stories in the Bible that we may have heard all of our lives, and our temptation when we hear them again is to think, “Oh yeah, I know this one.” If we let ourselves think that way, we can miss out on the rich experience of imagining what it was like to be there- through prayerfully meditating on the words- and to actually feel like we are in the presence of our Living Lord. This story, which is indeed true, of when Jesus fed 5,000 men may be one of those stories, but let’s talk about it and see what we can learn about our wonderful God.

He Cares- more than we ever could

First of all, right before this story begins, Jesus takes His disciples to a secluded place for rest after they spent time ministering to others. When they got to their destination, instead of finding quiet, they found a crowd waiting for them. I don’t know about you, but if that were me, I would feel pretty irritated or frustrated. But that’s not how our Lord responded. It says in verse 34, “He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd”. Our Lord’s caring heart could not help but feel moved by these folks who ran on foot for miles to see Him. The same is true today- for all of us who come to Jesus, to seek Him- He will never deny us.

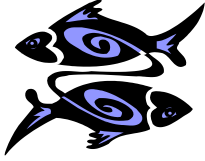
Bringing needs to Him, and how He answers His way

Later on, the disciples saw the crowd’s need- that they needed to eat- and brought it to Jesus. Actually in John 6:5, it says that Jesus first mentioned the need of the crowd to Philip. This makes me think of the Holy Spirit’s prompters in our life, to care and to pray for others needs- we need His inspiration to see others’ needs, because often we cannot see them ourselves.

Jesus is the best One to go to with our needs- including the burden we feel of the needs of others. However, the disciples did what we find ourselves doing in prayer, too- they had a solution figured out, too. They said to Jesus, “Send them away so that they may go...buy themselves something to eat” (verse 36). Yet we see that God’s ways are not our ways- He had a different plan: “*You give them something to eat!*” (I love how the Lord uses us to do his work- we are thrilled for the experience of Him moving through us, and our faith in Him grows! Isn’t His way far better?!) 

Behold- our amazing God!

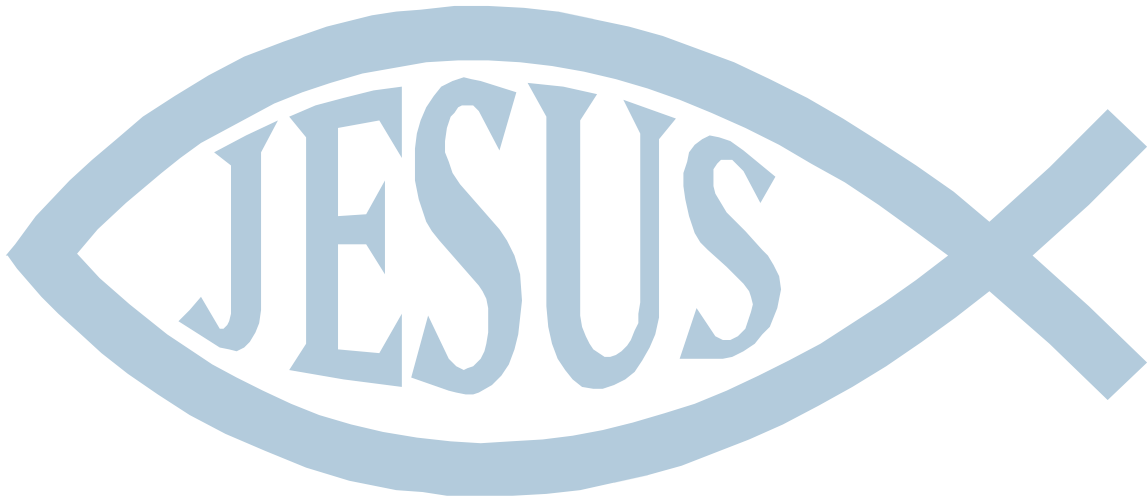
What happens next is so completely amazing- have you ever stopped to think about how this possibly could have happened, or what it looked like as food was actually



multiplying before their very eyes?! Jesus took 5 loaves of bread, and 2 fish, and fed 5,000 men, and, after they all ate and were satisfied, there were *12* baskets of food left over- more than what they even began with!

He so satisfies

The Lord always gives like that- He satisfies us to overflowing. Like it says in Psalm 23, because the Lord is our Shepherd (too), He makes our “cup overflow” (verse 5). We need not ever suffer want, as long as we are bringing our needs to Him. And, as we saw an impossible situation- so many hungry people and no place to get food for miles-the Lord saw as a perfect opportunity to work, and to show us that He’s more than willing to help. In fact, He “is able to do far abundantly beyond all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20)!



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