

Intro

The historical scenario

*The Gospel of John elaborates on the political situation. Matthew, Mark, and Luke elaborate on the disciples' growth in ministry.*

A miracle and its meaning

This passage has a natural explanation, and a supernatural explanation. Which is it?

2 Kgs. 4:42-44 (Enough barley loaves for 20 men, multiplied by God's word to feed 100.)

John 6:13-14 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. <sup>14</sup>When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”

**The Compassion of Jesus**

Sheep without a shepherd

Mark 6:34 He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

What it means to be a sheep

Num. 27:16-17 Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation <sup>17</sup>who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.”

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

The world's spiritual condition

Untaught – they need Jesus' teaching

Unhealthy – they need Jesus' healing

Undefended – they need Jesus' deliverance from demons and the power of darkness

Unled – they need Jesus' kingship

Unfed – they need Jesus' food

## The Mission of Jesus

### Five elements of Jesus’ mission

*Welcome – “When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them.”*

*Teaching – “and spoke to them”*

*Kingship – “of the kingdom of God”*

*Healing – “and cured those who needed healing.”*

*Bread – “I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me will never go hungry.”*

### It’s not about the bread!

*What’s deeply ironic about this story is that the multiplication of bread isn’t really the main thing. We know God can make bread. He made the whole universe. This story is about something else!*

*The book of John elaborates on this deep misunderstanding. John 6:34-35 “They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life...” John 6:41 “So the Jews grumbled about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”*

## The Power of Jesus

### Overcoming wrong instincts

*Note the contrast – Jesus welcomes them, the disciples want to send them away.*

*The disciples focus on their own ability to feed the crowd. Instead, they need to look to Jesus.*

### Looking to Jesus

*He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.*

## Questions for Study and Reflection

1. What is the spiritual condition of our world, and why does it need Christ?
2. How does this passage show us a.) that we need Jesus’ power and b.) that he will provide it?
3. Which part(s) of Jesus’ mission resonate with you most? Is there a ministry to which he is calling you?
4. How have you seen Jesus’ power at work in your life or the lives of those around you lately?