

“The Compassion of God in Christ”

Luke 9:10-17

Throughout the ministry of Jesus, the compassion, kindness, and all-sufficiency of God for humanity was made clear, as Jesus proclaimed the gospel of God from one end of Galilee to the other, an area that is twenty-five miles wide by fifty miles long, as He proclaimed the message of salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life.

But it is a small group really, who have repented and believed. Prior to today’s passage, in **Luke 9:1-9**, Jesus sent out the twelve to preach the message of the kingdom, and had given them power over demons and diseases. In this way, He multiplied Himself by twelve in order to bring God’s message throughout Galilee for the last time, before He goes to the cross.

See Luke 9:10-17...

Luke 9:10a says, “the apostles returned,” from their first mission of preaching and healing and casting out demons. They were no doubt very tired after weeks of ministry, so they returned to Capernaum, where there was a very large crowd. They give an account to Jesus of all they had done.

Luke 9:10b says, “Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida.” **Mark 6:31** “Jesus 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.)”

Luke tells us He took them to a city called Bethsaida, on the northeast shore of the lake. Most likely they got into a boat in order to remove themselves from the crowd of people, who it appears followed along the shoreline to see where Jesus and the twelve would go.

John’s Gospel tells us (**John 6:1-2**), “Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.”

Luke 9:11a says, the crowds followed them to Bethsaida, which was about eight miles by shoreline, maybe four miles or less by boat. No doubt, the boat ride gave Jesus and the twelve a reprieve from the crowd.

Mark’s Gospel tells us (**Mark 6:34**), “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.”

John 6:3 tells us, “Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples.

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Luke 9:11b says, Jesus welcomes the large crowd and begins speaking to them about the kingdom of God. The other writers tell us He saw them like sheep without a shepherd, lost and unprotected. He began giving them the wonderful message of forgiveness for sin and eternal life through belief in Him.

Luke 9:11c says, "He was curing those who had need of healing." Human suffering caused pain to the Lord, He knows we need spiritual rest, and He wants to provide that rest for each of us. In **Matthew 14:14** it says, "When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick."

God is not only be concerned about physical rest and physical healing, but He is more concerned about spiritual rest and spiritual healing. Jesus shows that He has the power to do all that. He can bring the kingdom of God, He can heal the people physically, and more importantly, spiritually.

The actual miracle of this passage begins to take place in **Luke 9:12**. The twelve recognize that the day is nearing its end, and they urge Jesus to send the people away to surrounding villages to find food and lodging, because the palace where they are is desolate. Jesus responds to the twelve (**Luke 9:13a**), "You give them something to eat."

The twelve had just come back from their mission of several weeks, casting out demons, healing sick people, preaching the gospel. Jesus basically says, "Why don't you feed them? You provide their food." So what happened? They said (**Luke 9:13b**), "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we go and buy food for all these people."

Clearly, someone had already anticipated the problem and had gone through the crowd to find out if people had brought their own food. John's Gospel gives us some more (**John 6:5-9**), It says that Jesus said to Philip, "'Where are we going to buy bread that these may eat?' This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. Philip answered Him, 'Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.' One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 'There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?'"

Jesus was testing Philip who basically said, "We went through the crowd and we checked, all we found was five loaves and two fish."

Wow, lets go back to **Luke 9:14a**, "(There were about five thousand men.) And He said to His disciples, 'Have them sit down *to eat* in groups of about fifty each.'" **John 6:10** tells us, "Jesus said, 'Have the people sit down.' Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand."

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Matthew 14:21 tells us, "There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children." So when you add the women and at least two children per family, you've got perhaps twenty thousand people. And by the way, the lunch they found was in the hands of a child, proving there were children, and no doubt, their mothers.

So there's a massive crowd of people needing to be fed and in **Luke 9:14b-15** we read, "Jesus said to His disciples, 'Have them sit down *to eat* in groups of about fifty each.' They did so, and had them all sit down." So there were groups of fifty men and their families, perhaps aisles in-between groups so they could be served, and everybody was ready to eat.

See **Luke 9:16**, "Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and broke *them*, and kept giving [*the fish and bread*] to the disciples to set before the people. And they all ate and were satisfied; and the broken pieces which they had left over were picked up, twelve baskets *full*."

Wow! Jesus kept multiplying the food from the boy's lunch. Jesus is the One by whom all things were made and without whom nothing was made that has been made. What Jesus did here is similar to what happens when He heals someone, i.e., when a person was blind, Jesus gave them new eyes, when they were paralyzed He gave them new legs, etc., etc.

But this time it was more visible than anything else because it just kept coming out of His hands; the fish and bread was never fully consumed, it never ran out; in fact (**Luke 9:17**), "And they all ate and were satisfied; and the broken pieces which they had left over were picked up, twelve baskets *full*."

Jesus gave to His disciples food that was continually multiplying, to be set before the multitude. They went down the aisles, serving dried fish and barley bread to the people. Let's say there were 100 groups of fifty men and their families; they all ate until they were full, all of 20,000 of them.

This was a staggering miracle, bread and fish created already prepared for eating without any of the process. And everybody had all they wanted till they couldn't eat anymore. When the twelve collected all that wasn't eaten, there were exactly twelve baskets full; for the Lord in His grace had provided for these guys just what they needed.

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The Lord creates exactly what it takes to feed every single person, then have twelve baskets left over to feed His apostles. Jesus demonstrated His deity in an unmistakable way, for nobody could do this but God. He is the Messiah, the Son of God. He is the Lord and Savior. The crowd that had experienced this, but they failed to worship the Lord; they left without even a thank you!

John gives us the postscript on this event (**John 6**), the next day the multitude realized that Jesus and His disciples had gone away in a boat. So they came to Capernaum seeking Jesus, and they finally found Him and basically were looking for more free food. In **John 6:26-29**, Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.’ Therefore they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”

John 16:8-9, Jesus said to them, “When He [the Holy Spirit] comes, [He] will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me.”

In our lesson from **Luke 9:10-17** today, you will want to remember that in the chronology of Jesus’ ministry, He is about 12-18 months from going to the cross. This is His last time He will be in the area of Galilee prior to His death and resurrection. He has been pouring out His love and compassion upon the residents of Galilee, urging them to believe in and receive Him Lord and Savior; and yet, as we read today, even after the supernatural feeding of the 5,000 men, and most likely, another 15,000 women and children; the people left unimpressed by the Son of God who had come to save them.

There is no record that any of those who were there that day actually got saved. What a deep grievous time that must have been for our Lord, who had such compassion for the people of Galilee: healing their diseases, casting out demons, raising the dead back to life, proclaiming the message of forgiveness for sins and eternal life with God, only to be rejected.

June 25th, 2023 – (full sermon notes)

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John 6:36-40, “But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”

What about you?

Do you believe Jesus Christ to be God’s Son, Lord and Savior: crucified, resurrected, and coming again?

If so, praise the Lord! But if you are not sure, please, earnestly consider in your heart what God’s Word clearly says.

Romans 10:9-10, “if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.” **13**, “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord [for the forgiveness of their sins] will be saved.”

1John 5:11-13, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

Pastor Mike

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