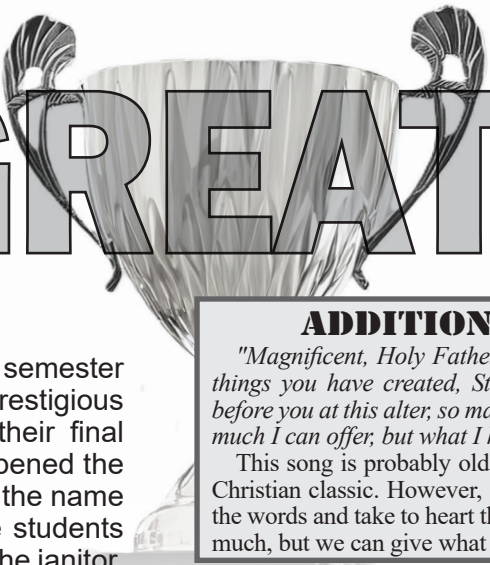


# THE GREATEST



## THE CARPENTER

A story floated around that after a difficult semester in a Master’s-level business class at a prestigious school, the students walked in to take their final exam. After hours of study, the students opened the exam to find one simple question, “What’s the name of the janitor who cleans this room?” The students had seen the janitor. Some even talked to the janitor. But no one passed the exam.

I doubt the story is true, but it makes a great point. Are we really paying attention and showing love to the people around us? In the early weeks of our study, we took great pains to show Mark’s attempt to answer the question, “Who is this Jesus?”

When Jesus returned to his hometown in Mark 6, the people questioned him asking, “*Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?*” Understand, the word “carpenter” was used in a derogatory way. Likewise, being called his mother’s son was an insult as well—think “momma’s boy.”

Jesus then said something we must consider if we want to live sold out for him, “*A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.*” Often, the biggest barrier and emotional hurt come from family that don’t understand why you’re now so “religious.”

### MARK 6:34-44

<sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. <sup>36</sup> Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” <sup>37</sup> But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.” And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” <sup>38</sup> 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.” <sup>39</sup> Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. <sup>41</sup> 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. And he divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied. <sup>43</sup> And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup> And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

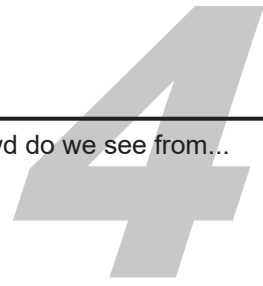
*"Magnificent, Holy Father, I stand in awe of all I see. Of all the things you have created, Still you choose to think of me. I stand before you at this altar, so many have given you more. I may not have much I can offer, but what I have is truly yours."*

This song is probably old enough that it's considered a Christian classic. However, scan the QR-code to listen to the words and take to heart the message. We may not have much, but we can give what we have for his glory!



## DISCUSSION

What is your favorite meal/food?



ICEBREAKER

1. What responses to the crowd do we see from...

-Jesus? (34)

-The disciples? (35-36)

OBSERVATION

2. What plan was offered to feed the crowd by...

-The disciples? (37)

-Jesus? (38-41)

INTERPRETATION

3. Why might Jesus have asked the disciples to solve the problem before performing the miracle? (37-38)

APPLICATION

4. What is something that God has done in your life or that he has taught you recently that you can share?

5. What possible benefits exist sharing what the Lord has fed you not only for your listener, but also for you?

A wise man once said, "The world has yet to see what the Lord can do through a person fully devoted to him." If you want to understand what this might look like, talk to your Coach today!

# THE GREATEST

## STUDY NOTES

### ALL FOUR

Only two miracles from Jesus' ministry appear in all four Gospels. Obviously, the resurrection of Jesus is a biggie. The other miracle may not seem quite as spectacular as many other things Jesus did, however, the feeding of the 5,000 appears in all four gospels.

Ever since Jesus was introduced, baptized, and tempted, his public ministry has become increasingly popular with the people and increasingly opposed by the Jewish religious leaders. He both healed the sick and challenged the proud. As we progress, we'll see his popularity begin to wane and, eventually, whither.

Mark 6 opened with Jesus' hometown rejecting him as we saw in the introduction. However, the feeding of the 5,000 stands in stark contrast to the story directly before it—King Herod's execution of John the Baptist. Mark makes sure the reader understands this wicked king's wealth and excess. In the next scene, we read that Jesus attempted to go to a desolate place just to eat and rest with his disciples. King Herod lived in luxury while the King of the Universe lived as an exhausted, hungry pauper.

### JESUS IS GREATER THAN PEOPLE'S UNBELIEF

Attempting to get some privacy by boat, the crowds followed them like a band of over-zealous paparazzi. Reaching the other side as they **went ashore he saw a great crowd, and Jesus had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.**

Hungry, exhausted, and in desperate need of rest, Jesus' compassion for the crowd compelled him to continue to **teach them many things.** Like sheep, the crowd was ignorant and vulnerable. They (like we) need the Good Shepherd to teach them—to share his perspective.

To illustrate the need to pursue the Lord's perspective, **when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."** Let's believe the best and assume that this comment wasn't selfishly motivated, but was indeed in the best interest of the crowd. We couldn't blame the disciples if they just wanted a break for a while, but either way, Jesus responded, **"You give them something to eat."**

In the entirety of the human experience, to get food you either grow it, find it, or buy it. Growing takes weeks to months, finding requires plants or animals, so the disciples were left with

only one thought for that place with that many people, **"Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?"** This wasn't a sincere question because, nobody had two hundred denarii—basically 200 days wages.

Question, why did Jesus tell them to feed the crowd? Why did he then ask, **"How many loaves do you have,"** telling them to **"go and see"**? Jesus knew the miracle that would soon happen. He could have just done it. Instead, he invited the disciples into the process to capitalize on a teachable moment. The Master Teacher's effort clearly worked as we said previously that all the gospel writers include it.

You know the story. The disciples found **five loaves and two fish.** Jesus commanded the crowd to **sit down in groups.** After **blessing** the food he **broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all.** <sup>42</sup> **And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.**

You've probably heard it taught that only the men were likely counted so "5,000 men" could be as many as 15,000–20,000 people that Jesus fed. Let's get real, though, if more than two people were fed by five loaves and two fish, then it would have been a miracle. With such a meager offering, each time a person reached in, more came out. This would be like you're blindfolded at Red Lobster and you keep reaching out for those cheddar bay biscuits and the server kept refilling them without you realizing it. Soon you'd be stuffed, but even more buttery goodness would be in the basket waiting.

### IMMATURE BELIEVERS MAY NOT BELIEVE

As much as the crowd wanted to hear him and see more miracles, soon they started following Jesus because he was like a one-man Baptist potluck. The Gospel of John records Jesus rebuking the crowd at one point saying, **"Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal"** (John 6:26–27)

This miracle wasn't truly for the benefit of the crowd. It was for the disciples. In the same way, Jesus might "feed" you, but it's so that you can feed others.

Stop the spiritual obesity. Instead, realize that what they Lord teaches you should get passed on to others. Your offerings may be meager, but with true surrender, God can do miracles.