



November 28, 2012

## Reflection Questions Mark 6:33-56

1. A huge crowd of people have been following Jesus, but it's not clear why they are following Him. Did they believe He had good news? Did they really understand who He was? Were they just interested in the spectacle of His miracles? Mark doesn't tell us, but as the narrative progresses, fewer and fewer people continue following Jesus. He appears to fall out of favor with the crowd. How fashionable is it to follow Jesus today? What challenges you personally in your efforts to follow Him?
2. Jesus has compassion on the crowd following Him, seeing them as "sheep without a shepherd." His first response out of His compassion is to teach them. The Word of God has the ability to guide us, to shepherd us, so that our lives are given direction. What verse or passage has guided you—has "shepherded" you—most in your life? Consider sharing this with someone, and invite them to do the same for you.
3. Jesus' feeding of the five thousand is an act of monumental hospitality. The people might have been hungry, but they were not impoverished. There was no dire need to feed them, and apparently they were dismissed soon after they ate. How does great hospitality make you feel? Why would Jesus be concerned that the crowd feels a similar way? What does that teach you about the heart of God for people?
4. Instead of simply performing a miracle without their involvement, Jesus tells His disciples, "You give them something to eat" (v.37). The disciples are astonished at His request, knowing that they can barely scratch the surface with what they have. But faith asks us to operate not out of what we've already amassed, but out of what God will provide for us. What might God be asking of you that pushes you beyond your current capacity, whether relationally, materially, spiritually, or vocationally?
5. Mark tells us that the disciples were still hardhearted, and this prevented them from seeing Jesus clearly. Why do you think a teachable spirit is so important to God? Would those closest to you describe you as teachable? Why or why not?
6. While some were stubborn to recognize Jesus' true identity, others believed that simply touching His garment would make them well. Elsewhere Jesus explains, "If you had faith as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this tree, 'Be uprooted' and it will obey you" (Lk 17:6). Clearly, the important thing is not the quantity of faith we have, but the person in whom our faith is placed. In what ways have you seen God bless you magnificently for a tiny act of faith?