

GAME CHANGER
Weekly Devotional
A ministry of Chapel Hill
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WEEK 2

This guide pairs with Mark 6:30-44 and the sermon preached at Chapel Hill June 1 and 2, 2019.



Written by Megan Kemp

Megan grew up in the Pacific Northwest, and has called Chapel Hill home for more than seven years. Passionate about truth, apologetics, evangelism, and cultures, she expresses her love for people and teaching through training & development, serving on mission and writing. She appreciates the Northwest's wide range of high-quality coffee, the crashing waves of the ocean, practicing modern brush lettering and the blessing of beautiful family and friends in her life.

LifeGroup Guide

Head

Read through the passage and note down what we can discover about Jesus' response to the crowd.

Read through Numbers 11 and Mark 14. How does this passage point back to Numbers 11 and point forward to the Last Supper in Mark 14? What do these parallels tell us about who Jesus is?

Heart

Jesus and his followers "had no leisure even to eat". Jesus invites them to "come away by themselves to a desolate place and rest for a while". How do you relate to the disciples at this point in the story?

How do you respond when someone interrupts your rest? How is it similar or different to Jesus or the disciples?

When have you experienced Jesus' abundant, miraculous provision in moments of exhaustion, desperation and need?

Hands

How can you live this week expecting Jesus to provide for your every need, your "daily bread"? What are your basic needs this week?

Pray together the Lord's Prayer. Slow down when you reach the line "Give us this day our daily bread", and speak out the needs you just mentioned above.

DAY 1 – Monday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:30-44; Psalm 23:1-2; John 14:27; Re-read Mark 6:30-32 (our focus for today)

Ask

Jesus and his followers “had no leisure even to eat”. Jesus invites them to “come away by themselves to a desolate place and rest for a while”. How do you relate to the disciples at this point in the story?

Reflect

It’s the start of a new week – Monday! I can have pretty busy days. Most of the time I have to intentionally plan to rest. I can fill my days busily meeting with people, doing things, accomplishing tasks, planning the next activity...that I can end up getting burned out. I don’t stop to rest enough. But – when I do, I experience the peace that Jesus promises! In John 14:27, he tells us that he gives us his peace. Jesus contrasts this to what the world can offer. Amazing!

I relate to what the disciples must have been feeling after their hard work that Jesus sent them to do. They come back, report to Jesus all that had happened, and he says “Rest...”. More than just resting, his *invitation to rest* is what strikes me. *Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place* (v.31), he says.

Recently, at the women’s retreat, I was praying and I had a picture of myself alone in the middle of a green pasture, with grass swaying in a light breeze. Then I saw Jesus. He reached out his hand, and I grabbed it. This beautiful picture reminded me of a Psalm that is so very well known to many people. In Psalm 23:2, it says that the Lord *makes me lie down in green pastures* (v.2). Again, an invitation to rest. The verse goes on: *he leads me beside quiet waters*. The invitation to rest, and to experience the peace of Christ, is there. He is with us, and this offer does not expire! We just need to accept it, and willingly go and be with him – to rest.

Will you be with him today? Will you stop, rest and receive Jesus’ peace?

Jesus, today I want your peace. Let my heart not be troubled, and may I rest in you, trusting that your peace is better than anything I can experience in life. Amen.

DAY 2 – Tuesday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:30-44; Exodus 15:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Numbers 27:17; Isaiah 40:11; Re-read Mark 6:34

Ask

Read through the passage and note down what we can discover about Jesus' response to the crowd.

Reflect

There is a card line called Really Woolly. They have these little sheep and a Shepherd on them, and the art is adorable. Each time I see them, I think of my mom. We would give them to each other, and get a kick out of them and chuckle. But they encouraged us too. They have scripture verses on them and the sentiments are precious. One time, when I was in a tough season, my mom sent me a booklet version of the cards, and it had page after page of images of the sheep with their Shepherd. It reminded me of Jesus! "I'll lead you every day as we walk together" one page said. Another: "When you're at your weakest...that's when you'll feel My strength the most." With each page, the truth of our God clearly and plainly was there for me to remember and hold on to. I still look at that booklet from time to time.

Jesus has compassion for us. He is our Shepherd. He saw the crowd and how they were *like a sheep without a shepherd* (Mark 6:34). He not only invites us to rest with him, God has come in the person of Jesus Christ to care for and protect us. He gave his life for his sheep. And he defeated the power of death by rising from the dead. That's why we can trust him to be our Shepherd. He will not leave us. In times of weakness, he is the Shepherd who picks us up and carries us.

Tell Jesus your greatest needs. Ask him to help you surrender the areas of your life where you know you need him to guide you, to be your Shepherd.

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your son, Jesus Christ, to gather me in his arms. I trust you with my life and ask you to help me give you the areas I tightly hold on to. You are trustworthy with all of it. I surrender, Lord. Amen.

DAY 3 – Wednesday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:30-44; Numbers 11; Mark 14; Hebrews 13:8; Ephesians 2:14

Ask

Read through Numbers 11 and Mark 14. How does the Feeding of the Five Thousand passage point back to Numbers 11 and point forward to the Last Supper in Mark 14? What do these parallels tell us about who Jesus is?

Reflect

“There is no other name but the name that is Jesus. He who was and still is and will be through it all.” I heard these song lyrics recently in “Another in the Fire”. What truth – right out of Hebrews 13:8!

If I’m honest, sometimes I think I expect God to change on me. I am waiting for the changeup; for the curve ball to come flying at me. I think it’s because I live in a world that has disappointment and unexpected change. Some change is good, yes. Like when there is healing, or a new job comes along that’s just the right fit, or a baby comes into the world. But when things change, and we don’t want them to, that’s when it’s difficult to accept the change. If a person changes and ends up hurting us deeply, or betrays us, how do we trust again? How do we move on in life? If someone dies unexpectedly, or even if we see it coming, it hurts. Loss is a change none of us welcomes with open arms.

I can look to Jesus because he never changes. I can depend on him. He is the *same yesterday and today and for ever* (Hebrews 13:8). He is the God of the Old Testament and the New Testament. As you read the stories from Numbers 11, Mark 6 and Mark 14, spend a moment marveling in the one who never changes.

“Nothing stands between us” the song goes on. Ephesians 2:14 tells us that Jesus Christ is *our peace...and he has destroyed the barrier*. The confidence of Jesus– the one who never changes, to whom we can turn when things change on us, who will be by us and never leave us – is what we can stand on in this life.

Look to Christ today. There is nothing between you and Jesus. He’s waiting for you to give him the hurts, pain, suffering, unfulfilled dreams.

Thank you, Lord, that you are the same yesterday, today and forever! I give you praise for making a way to be with you. You are the victory. Amen.

DAY 4 – Thursday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:38-42; Genesis 22:8, 13-14; Isaiah 61:3; Psalm 31:9-11; John 11:12-14; Matthew 6:25-31

Ask

When have you experienced Jesus' abundant, miraculous provision in moments of exhaustion, desperation and need?

Reflect

I have been thinking more about miracles recently after watching the movie "Breakthrough" – the true story of a teenage boy who fell through the ice, and had no heart rate for 45 minutes, and lived. There is a scene in the movie where his mother is completely desperate. She has not slept for many hours, her blood sugar is sky high (she is diabetic), and according to the doctor, her son will likely not make it through the night. The next day, the doctor is astounded at the boy's recovery and tells the mother that there is no other explanation other than that a miracle has taken place. The outcome has defied his understanding.

One of God's names is Jehovah Jireh: The Lord Will Provide. I don't know about you, but each time I read about Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22, my jaw drops to the ground. Think of it! Abraham's faith is so strong that He believes God is going to actually provide for him to the point of placing his son on the altar. Jesus feeding the thousands of people is also just as amazing to me. The text clearly says there are only five loaves of bread and two fish. And yet, all of the people *ate and were satisfied* (Mark 6:41).

What of the truths about who Jesus is, that you came up with yesterday, can you remind yourself of in these moments of exhaustion, desperation and need? Do you believe he is your Provider?

Jehovah Jirah, thank you for providing for me, whether it is in a moment of need, or when I am in distress. Help me believe in your power when I am in those moments in the future. Thank you for showing us miracles in your Word so that we may believe. Amen.

DAY 5 – Friday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:30-44; Matthew 6:9-13; John 6:32-59; Ephesians 6:18

Ask

Pray together the Lord's Prayer. Slow down when you reach the line "Give us this day our daily bread", and speak out the basic needs you have this week.

Reflect

When I moved out on my own for the first time, my budget was tight! I had never managed a budget, or incoming and outgoing funds quite like that before. There were a few times when I needed some basic household items. In those times, my mom stopped by my apartment and left them for me. I was so grateful. I don't know if I would have considered asking the Lord to provide for such a simple need then.

In this simple prayer, Jesus shows us to ask for our daily bread. From week to week, our needs differ. I may not need a household item. It may be that I need trust God heading into a meeting, or to surrender control to him in a situation. I may need strength to face a fear.

Jesus actually taught us to pray! That's why I love the Lord's Prayer. It has become more profound to me as my understanding of, and trust in, Jesus has grown. I have seen ways that he is my daily bread. In all things I can turn to him, not just the big things, but even those things that seem insignificant. He cares about it all, and can meet my daily needs, if I let him. Ephesians 6:18 says to *...pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...*

Take some time to quietly reflect before the Lord, and invite his Holy Spirit to reveal to you every need. Make a list of all of it – tangible and intangible. And offer it all to him. Invite God into the smallest details of your life this week.

Lord, help me overcome my unbelief that you can meet every daily need. Make me aware of my needs, and remind me to turn to you, to surrender. Help me trust you with all things, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DAY 6 – Saturday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:30-44; Mark 11:24; Isaiah 40:31; Numbers 11:13, 22; Hebrews 4:15-16. Re-read Mark 6:35-36

Ask

How can you live this week expecting Jesus to provide for your every need, your “daily bread”? Reflect on the basic needs you mentioned yesterday. What other needs might you have?

Reflect

I know I have needs. But at times, I freeze in fear, holding on tight to that fear instead of holding on tight to Jesus! In those times, I forget that God has revealed himself to me in his Word and has invited me to pray expectantly! Jesus said himself: ...*whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it...* (Mark 11:24).

Yesterday we looked at the basic needs we have. We prayed the Lord’s Prayer, and offered up to him those needs. Today, we are looking at the aspect of *expecting* Jesus to provide.

The disciples did not seem to expect Jesus to provide for the thousands of people before them. There were only five loaves of bread and two fish. They called this to Jesus’ attention – that there was a scarcity of provision. And then, Jesus tells them to provide for the crowd’s needs. And he makes it clear that the situation was beyond human resourcefulness. Then, he performed a miracle that the disciples witnessed.

Jesus is the Living God, and he is actively pursuing relationship with us. He is unlike any other god because of presence with us. That presence means that he is involved in our lives. We just need to remember to let go and cling to him; to trust him with our basic, and greatest, needs.

Lord, we approach your throne with confidence today because you are our great high priest who is able to sympathize with us in our weakness and need. We ask you to give us grace to help us now in our time of need. Amen.

DAY 7 – Sunday
Daily devotional

Read

Mark 6:30-44; Jeremiah 31: 2; Isaiah 63:14; Re-read Mark 6:32, 35-36

Ask

How do you respond when someone interrupts your rest? How is it similar or different to Jesus or the disciples?

Reflect

That moment when you're just drifting off to sleep for a Sunday afternoon nap, and the phone rings. "There goes the opportunity I thought I had to rest today!", you might think. The person on the other end of the phone needs you, and you know you have a long talk ahead. What's the reaction? Anger? Guilt for feeling irritated? Or delight that this person trusted you enough to reach out to you in a moment of need?

The disciples had a reaction. They had just finished a mission that Jesus had sent them on. I bet they were tired! And here came the crowds following Jesus and them. They want to send them away to find food on their own. Jesus provides a place of rest for his disciples in this scene, only to have that disrupted by the crowds who followed them.

It's Sunday! Maybe you're going to rest today. At the beginning of the week, we looked at how Jesus invites to rest. Have you rested this week? If not, know that God is there waiting to be with you. He is faithful. He is your Provider. He is your Shepherd.

Lord, thank you for being our Provider, Shepherd, and resting place. Give us a heart like yours, Lord, with expectant hearts for how you will work in our lives with the people we know. Amen.
