

## PENTECOST 9 (2018)

### Mark 6

**Mark 6:30–44** The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 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. *And 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.” 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?” 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.” Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. 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. 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.

In the Name of Jesus.

The Shepherd mixes and matches what anyone ELSE would say CANNOT go together: the holy God; and us! The Gospel declares to the world that God and each man of us are NOW more compatible than any other pair! NOW, that the Son of God has come!

Yes, Jesus gave all the directions that day, prayed and made it all work. But His mandate to the disciples was, ‘Y’ALL give them something to eat!’ As if THEY were somehow GOD, and could DO it! Well, my dear ones: nothing strange there! That’s sin number one despising commandment one: there is a God and you ain’t him! Oh, how Good is our Shepherd, our Christ, our King?! He knew that those little gods called the apostles would turn their attention NOT to heaven, nor to HIM, but to themselves: ‘It would take a year of paid WORK from us—200 denarii!—to tackle THIS!’

Jesus, as always, shows the way. ‘Follow Me!’

God is Spirit! Meaning, simply, that He needs no ears to hear, no bones, muscles and whatnot to move, nor a mouth to speak. But the Maker of heaven LOOKED UP to heaven, the apostle remembered! Godhaseyesnow!

And HE said a blessing, they heard! Godhasatongue!  
And lips! And vocal chords, NOW!

And HE broke the bread, Saint Peter told Saint Mark, who wrote it down. Godhashands; working hands...NOW.

And...HE...GAVE!

There's no word more Gospel-ready than the word  
'Gave!'

Gave...what? That day, the bread He had sent from heaven and the fish with which HE filled the Sea of Galilee. And when HE gave, there was no year's work, nor an hour's. GOD does not toil for such things! And each apostle's basket was not yet beginning to empty when GOD's eyes and mouth and hands completed His work.

Doctor Luther teaches the Church that there is more to learn, each day, from the ‘GAVE’ of our Baptism into Christ—more than we have time for in our brief time before the Shepherd comes.

Today, we learn to praise Heaven each day for the gift of our Baptism at the authority of the Good Shepherd: ‘that I may be His own!’ Meaning, that I, you, y’all, my dear ones, may boast in our CREATURE-LI-NESS; and ACT LIKE IT again! As it was in the Beginning!

All it TOOK, the Gospel announces, was for the CREATOR to BECOME One of His C/creatures—and everything that goes with THAT!

The work, the toil, the PAY men DREAM they are EARNING from The GIVE-ER! He left nothing out! He dove down to the bottom of THAT mess!

BE His Creation, my friends! That NEW Creation! No longer—not EVER AGAIN!—toiling to EARN what Heaven GIVES, freely gives! His morsels and trinkets and leftovers, yes! But uncontainable, inexhaustible, giving as giving was always meant to be!:

<sup>22</sup> And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and *gave* it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” <sup>23</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had *given* thanks he *gave* it to them, and they all drank of it. <sup>24</sup> And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many...”

THAT is ‘giving!’ Himself, yes! But Himself sacrificed, Body and Blood spoken of as separate things. For whom? Be glad! ‘For many!’ Remember the FULL baskets each apostle was left holding?! ‘For MANY?!’ All right, Lord Jesus; I hear you. ‘Many!’ ‘I’ll take that to mean ALL!’ Even...even me.

You don’t need to PLAY... ‘gawwd,’ anymore, dear sheep! Not unseen God anymore, not God hidden behind fear and panic and what comes from that: suffering! Instead, PLAY ‘GOD’!!! Sons of God, all! For Heaven is now RIVETED by OUR upturned EYES! And Heaven ignores ALL...OTHER...SOUNDS when the mouths of His little ones begin their prayers!

And is Heaven now—NOW?!!!—going to leave the outcome of YOUR exertions to a scale YOU come up with,

hope for, fear you cannot reach? God, in Christ, is now MORE ...ONE...OF...US than any of US have ever been!

<sup>65</sup> And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophesy!” And the guards received him with blows.

That spit, those blows, are NOTHING to our unbelief—which says, ‘GOD is still waiting—God in Heaven—for something FROM...ME to set things right! When I can make a HEAVEN here on EARTH—then the two will meet, finally.’

They’ve met! And it’s done!

“He saved others; he cannot save himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

<sup>33</sup> And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>35</sup> And some of the bystanders hearing it

said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.”<sup>36</sup> And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.”<sup>37</sup> And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last.<sup>1</sup>

What no one could hope for: God as man, all the way; for ‘many!’ Do not despair! That ‘many’ includes you.

The bright, aggressive cichlids taught their FEEDER this week! I open MY HAND and satisfy the desire of every carnivorous fish in the lovely tank my children gave me! Actually, cichlids will eat ‘til they pop! They are NEVER satisfied!

Another way of saying that is that my FISH have more FAITH than I will EVER have! For they just need to see me coming across the room, and their eyes are turned up, praying, certain that I will not fail them!

Teach your household, dear sheep of the Good Shepherd, to turn their eyes—that are just like Jesus’ eyes!—turn them toward heaven! And to bless with human hearts, and to pray with creature lips, and to GIVE ALSO,

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 15:31–37). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

with the HANDS they now share, SHEEP with their SHEPHERD!

‘The eyes of all look to you, O Lord, to GIVE them their food at the proper time! You open you HAND and satisfy the desires of every living thing!’

That ‘HAND,’ in the Psalm, is no longer a poetic device to talk about the power of God. Godsgothandsnow. So MY hands, your hands, are now God-hands. What are they UNABLE to do?

Take away hunger? Take away sin? Guilt? Despair? Panic? What’s the great calamity? A hungry stomach for our hands to feed? Often! A broken heart for our hands and eyes and mouths to heal? Always: in the Name of Jesus! Amen.