

July 12, 2026 – Questions to Discuss and Consider at Home or in Small Group

"The Shepherd Who Meets You in the Desert"— Mark 6:30-44

1. Have you thought about how 24/7 exposure to tragedy, news, and needs can desensitize us and make us emotionally numb. Where do you find yourself most tempted to "numb out" or withdraw compassion in your daily life?
2. When the disciples sought a quiet retreat but were met by a massive crowd, they reacted with pragmatic calculation ("send them away"). How do you typically react when people's needs interrupt your planned rest or comfort?
3. Moses vs. Joshua (Numbers 27): How does seeing Jesus as the "True Joshua" (the Good Shepherd who leads and feeds His sheep, unlike the selfish Herod who feeds off them) change your understanding of His character toward you?
4. The disciples immediately began calculating the financial impossibility of feeding the crowd. In what areas of your career, parenting, or relationships are you currently "calculating your deficits" and concluding that God is demanding or absent?
5. Our frustration with draining people often reveals our root idols of comfort and control. How does protecting our own energy under the guise of "healthy boundaries" sometimes cross over into treating people as objects that serve our schedules, rather than image-bearers of God?
6. How does the connection between the breaking of the bread in the wilderness and the breaking (not bones) of Jesus' body on the cross rewrite your understanding of how your spiritual deficits and unbelief are paid for?
7. What is the practical difference between serving others out of "guilt-driven religious performance" (because "good Christians don't get tired") versus serving them from a place of "satisfaction on the green grass" of Christ's finished work?
8. What does it look like practically for you to bring your "severe limitations" (your tired, meager effort) to the Good Shepherd on a Tuesday afternoon at work, rather than trying to dig deeper to find strength in yourself?

FILLED IN ANSWERS TO THE SERMON OUTLINE

- I. Jesus reveals who He is as the Good Shepherd by meeting our deepest needs with an active compassion that costs Him everything.
- II. When faced with overwhelming demands, our pragmatic unbelief calculates our deficits and concludes that God is too demanding or absent, driving us to self-reliance, cynicism, and a lack of compassion for others.
- III. The true Good Shepherd, in His compassion absorbs our deficits and pays the price of our sinful unbelief by allowing Himself to be broken in order to abundantly feed and renew His harassed sheep.
- IV. Because we are tethered to the Good Shepherd, we are now free in His compassion to bring our severe limitations to Him and follow Him from a place of satisfaction on the green grass.