

# MARK

## Chapter 6

*A Prophet Without Honor*

**He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. 2 And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. 4 And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.” 5 And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.**

**6:1-6** The start of Mark 6 begins a major new section of Mark’s gospel. In chapter 4 we read of the powerful teachings of Jesus; in chapter 5 the accent is on his powerful deeds (both his wisdom and his miracles are referred to in 6:2). But now a change seems to come; the power of God at work in Jesus is not accepted by everyone. Already we have read about a lack of support from his family (3:20–21, 3135). Here that skepticism becomes community-wide. No doubt this is more than painful for Jesus. This rejection in his hometown leads to the narrative in which Jesus calls and instructs his disciples (6:7–13). The work of God will go on even if God’s agents are rejected or even killed. That theme of rejection continues through chapter 6, where the death of John the Baptizer, the forerunner, foreshadows Jesus’ own death. The incident in Jesus’ hometown is not the final rejection for him; Mark will focus on that in the passion narrative at the end of his gospel. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

The text offers us a stark contrast between the hostility of the people directed against Jesus and the faithfulness of Jesus to God’s saving mission in the world. Even though Jesus is rejected in his hometown, he calls his disciples and sends them out in mission. When the people reject Jesus because of his literal family, Jesus reaches out to the people through the family of God, and he does so in order to make all people part of God’s family. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:1** *his hometown.* Though Mark does not specifically mention Nazareth, it is obviously meant. (CSB)

Nazareth, the town where Jesus was raised (Mt. 2:19-23), not Capernaum, from which He conducted His ministry. (TLSB)

Mark here does not explicitly identify Jesus’ *patris*, “hometown.” We may assume it is Nazareth (cf. Mk 1:9, the only reference to Nazareth in Mark). Note also the parallel incident in Lk 4:23-24. Special mention is made of the disciples being along, a device Mark uses to indicate where the church of his own day is to find authority. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

Mark highlights that Jesus is returning to his hometown. Rather than name the city, Mark identifies it as Jesus’ home. In an earlier reading, Mark has shown the familial tension that occurs

when Jesus goes home. In Mk 3:20–35, Jesus is surrounded by a crowd, and his family tries to take him by force, claiming that he has lost his mind (vv 20–21). In the context of such tension, Jesus redefines what it means to be part of his family and reveals the true family of God (vv 31–35). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:2** *teach in the synagogue.* Wherever Jesus went He always went to the synagogue on the Sabbath because it presented a forum for Him to preach the Gospel. (Buls)

It appears that Jesus had not yet preached in the Nazareth synagogue, as He had in Capernaum. (TLSB)

*were astonished.* The hearers were amazed at his teaching. The comments at first were short and quiet, and gradually became longer and louder. Here we have direct discourse. (Buls)

There is no record of Jesus doing miracles in Nazareth. (Buls)

The people are “amazed.” This does not necessarily mean that they were led to faith, although elsewhere the verb, *ekplēssō*, often does apply to some who came to faith (cf. Mk 1:22; 7:37; 10:26; 11:18). Only here in Mark (6:2) is Jesus said to have *sophia*, “wisdom.” Mark stresses the authority of Jesus’ teaching, not its cleverness. Even the *dunameis*, “works of power, miracles” are interpreted by that teaching. In Mark, Jesus’ words and works go together. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

To be astonished. This doesn’t mean that it led to faith unlike those people listening in on the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew.

The synagogue audience was amazed at Jesus’ teaching and at His miracles of they had heard. In their eyes He was no more than a carpenter, a son of Mary, one who had four brothers and whose sisters were married and living in Nazareth. He was one of them, just an ordinary fellow who once made His living with His hands. How could he claim to be a prophet and the fulfillment of Scripture? It was more than they could stomach. They rejected His claim and then in their wrath attempted to cast Him off the cliff at the edge of town (Luke 4:28-30). (PBC)

Mark 1:22 “The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.”

Mark 7:37 “People were overwhelmed with amazement. “He has done everything well,” they said. “He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Mark 10:26 “The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

Mark 11:18 “The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.”

*this man* – “This fellow” is likely derogatory.

Jesus was true God and in that sense no one gave Him His teaching, wisdom or power to perform miracles. Of course, the divine nature in Christ gave the human nature in Christ the attributes of

the divine, but that is surely not what these citizens of Nazareth mean. It is clear from what follows that unbelief prompted their questions. And this unbelief turns into hostility. (Buls)

It was not a family visit. This synagogue Jesus had attended as a boy, a teenager and a young man. The worshipers that day were all people who knew Him well. He had come to share the gospel with them, but they were not ready to receive Him as the one who embodied the gospel. In a certain sense this incident was important training for the disciples, who shortly would be proclaiming the gospel themselves and also facing rebuffs. They could say, "They did the same to our Master." (PBC)

The three utterances "look to what counts in this society: family of origin, blood relations, inherited honor, social status and achievement of family members, group honor, and the like. (CC)

**6:3 carpenter.**† Matthew reports that Jesus was called "the carpenter's son" (Mt 13:55); only in Mark is Jesus himself referred to as a carpenter. The Greek word can apply also to a mason or smith, but it seems to have its usual meaning ("carpenter") here. The question is derogatory, meaning, "Is he not a common worker with his hands like the rest of us?" (CSB)

Greek *tekton* applied not only to carpenters and woodworkers but also to those who fashioned goods from a combination of wood and stone (e.g., homes, which Jesus often mentioned in His teaching). The context suggests that Jesus' old neighbors mentioned His days as a tradesman in order to draw an unflattering contrast with His new role as teacher. (TLSB)

"This" here is plainly derogatory. Here Jesus is called the carpenter. In Matthew 13:55, the parallel passage, He is called "the carpenter's son." Likely He was called both on this occasion. Notice that Jesus is called "the son of Mary." Joseph is not mentioned. In the Matthean parallel He is called "the carpenter's son" which is the closest we come to Joseph. Joseph had likely died before this time and therefore is not mentioned. (Buls)

*brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon.* Though none of these four brothers of Jesus believed in Him as Savior during His earthly ministry (Jn. 7:5), James and Jude did so after His resurrection. James saw the resurrected Jesus (1 Cor. 15:7) and became a leader in the Jerusalem Church (cf. Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12; James 1:1). He wrote the short Epistle that bears his name. Judas wrote the short Epistle called Jude. Sisters, unfortunately, go unnamed and unnumbered. Consequently, nothing else is known of them. (TLSB)

Four of His brothers are mentioned. They were either cousins or half-brothers. "And aren't His sisters here with us?" "With us" denotes close association. Here it indicates that they know Jesus' sisters quite well. (Buls)

Most of the best Greek manuscripts say Jesus is "the carpenter, the son of Mary." Some manuscripts read, "the son of the carpenter," as does the parallel verse Mt 13:55, although in neither reference is Joseph named. We may safely construe *adelphos*, "brother," and *adelphai*, "sisters," to indicate Jesus' immediate family. The important emphasis here is on their familiarity with Jesus. The verb *skandalizomai* at with the dative occurs also in Mt 11:6; 13:57; 26:31, 33 and Lk 7:23. Passive offendedness can easily turn into active persecuting. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

What happened to Christ in Nazareth can also happen to us. Just because we are followers of the Lord does not guarantee that all our relatives, neighbors and acquaintances will welcome the gospel message – or even our children. At times some of us stand alone, ridiculed and mocked by those who know us best. But it is easier to bear when we realize Jesus also had to bear that same burden. (PBC)

*they took offense at him.* They saw no reason to believe that he was different from them, much less that he was specially anointed by God. (CSB)

Jesus did not give offense; rather, the people took offense at His words and actions. (TLSB)

"Took offense" comes from a verb that means "I set a trap for." They were ensnared in their unbelief. (Buls)

Fahling: For the last time Jesus of Nazareth was to visit the city of Nazareth, again to be rejected as at the beginning of His great Galilean ministry, about eight or nine months before, Luke 4:16-30. . . . It is perfectly natural that Jesus should give the Nazarenes another opportunity to hear His teaching. But what surprises us is that Jesus marveled at: the unbelief of His townsmen, which lay at the bottom of their estimate and treatment of a 'native son'. (Buls)

Those who consider this the same event as that mentioned in Luke 4 do not speak of Jesus giving the Nazarenes a second chance. (Buls)

The fact that these Nazarenes could see no more than a human being in Jesus says much about how Jesus conducted Himself while He was growing up in Nazareth. The people do not say in so many words that they know Jesus personally, but that is what they mean. During the thirty years which He spent in Nazareth "He made Himself of no reputation." (Buls)

Mary and Joseph were told individually before Jesus was born that He was true God. But they had forgotten it and had to learn the lesson again when Jesus was twelve years old. (Buls)

Before we leave this verse we ask a tantalizing question, to which there is no answer: "Where was Mary on this occasion or occasions?" Nothing is said nor need we know. (Buls)

skandalon - A "scandal" a *trap stick (bent sapling)*, that is, *snare*. This draws to the mind of the original hearers/readers the stick an animal stumbles over, causing the trap to shut. In 1 Corinthians 1:23 the Jews would see the crucifixion of the Messiah as a stumbling block because anyone killed on a cross was cursed. It was scandalous to think that their God was executed as a criminal.

**6:4** *without honor...hometown...relatives...own household* – Jesus responded with an aphorism to which there are numerous parallels in Jewish and Greek literature. The comparison of His experience to that of the prophets who were dishonored among their own people is ironical. It anticipates His ultimate rejection by Israel and at the same time recalls chapters 3:20-21, 31-35 when Jesus' family and kinsmen expressed the opinion that He was insane and attempted to halt His activities forcibly. (Lane)

"Said to them" means "went on to say." "Them" are the listeners in the synagogue. This can be either direct or indirect discourse. Our versions take it as direct discourse. (Buls)

"A prophet is not without honor" means the same as "a prophet is honored" but the former is more emphatic. Several of our versions remove the double negative. NEB: "A prophet will always be held in honor etc." LB: "A prophet is honored everywhere except etc." (Buls)

There are three places or areas in which a prophet, a teacher, does not receive honor: (Buls)

1. His home-town,
2. His relatives,
3. His own household.

Commentators are not certain as to whether or not verse 4 is a proverbial saying. At any rate, it is an axiom, a truth readily understood in any culture. Everyone understands it on the basis of experience. The Scriptures contain many axioms, a good teaching device. (Buls)

This is the only place in the gospel where Jesus refers to himself as a prophet. The "prophet without honor" aphorism may have been created by Jesus himself. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

Here it is not the immediate members of his family but the larger social network of his hometown that takes offense at Jesus because they know of his familial relations (vv 2–3). As Jesus makes this pronouncement, however, notice how he highlights a pervasive rejection of him that moves from his hometown to his relatives and even into his own household. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:5-6** The statement that "[Jesus] could do no mighty work there" is a troubling passage. It is easy for some to argue on the basis of this passage that Jesus needs your faith in order to produce a miracle. The fact that Jesus did do some miracles here is important in light of this confusion. It is not as if God needs our faith in order to perform miracles. God is God and can perform miracles where and when he pleases. After all, on the Last Day God will raise the dead, both those who believe in him and those who do not. But here, in the face of unbelief, Jesus does not do miracles. Why not? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

One can read this passage in light of the rest of Scripture. Taking Mt 11:20–24 into account, Jesus does not do miracles in the face of unbelief because he knows that miracles do not convert (see, for example, Lk 16:31) and that performing miracles in the face of unbelief will only increase God's judgment upon those who see them (Mt 11:20–24). As his mission is to save and not to damn (Jn 3:17), Jesus is unable to do miracles in the face of unbelief lest he increase God's judgment upon people. Jesus, therefore, only does a few miracles but more importantly continues to teach, proclaiming the Word that works faith (Rom 10:17), in order that he might accomplish his Father's mission. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:5** *He could no mighty work there.* It was not that Jesus did not have power to perform miracles at Nazareth, but that he chose not to in such a climate of unbelief (v. 6). (CSB)

Jesus was fully capable of performing miracles in Nazareth, had He wanted to. Yet, He chose not to give any signs of His divinity to those who scoffingly dismissed Him. Jesus' miracles were gifts He freely gave, not proofs demanded of Him (cf 8:11-12). (TLSB)

Mark here observes that Jesus is restricted in his doing of miracles by the situation. Faith may or may not be present among those who see Jesus perform miracles (cf. Mk 4:40), but Jesus generally performed his miracles for the benefit of the faithful, and resistant unbelief hinders God's saving work. God never forces his grace on anyone. He allows people the freedom to reject him. Major miracles would not happen in Jesus' hometown that day because of the self-imposed unbelief of the nonplussed hometown crowd. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

Note the double negative which makes the negative more emphatic. The exception was in the case of a few sick people whom He healed by laying His hands on them. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: Instead of rejoicing over the fact that God has given one of their own family, out of their own midst, gifts and abilities to accomplish something for His honor, the kinsmen and former fellow-citizens will do everything in their power to discredit him. . . Jesus had come with an open hand to distribute from His own bounty and that of His Father. The reception accorded Him shut off the people from the gifts of His mercy. . . . Unbelief always stops the hand of God when He extends it to shower His benefits upon mankind. Unbelief is, therefore, the sin of sins, since it rejects what God is so willing to give in and through Christ. (Buls)

**6:6-7** In contrast to this amazing unbelief, Jesus remains faithful to his Father's mission. He calls his disciples and sends them out to proclaim the coming of the kingdom in word and in deed. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:6** *he marveled*. "Amazed" is used thirty times in the Gospels, but only three of these are used with reference to Jesus' amazement. In two instances it speaks of the amazement of Jesus at the faith of the centurion (Matthew 8:10; Luke 7:9) but here, in Mark 6:6 it is used with reference to unbelief. (Buls)

This is a different kind of amazement, with a different Greek verb, than that in v 1. Jesus is amazed at the degree of resistant unbelief. One expects at least a sympathetic hearing from neighborhood people. The fact that their unbelief is underscored emphasizes the entrenched hostility and hints at persecutions yet to come. Despite this disappointing rejection, Jesus continues on with his teaching ministry. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 3)

*their unbelief* - Apathy and unbelief filled the whole town. Since these were people who had studied their OT in the same synagogue, even as Jesus had when living among them, it is not surprising that our Lord "was amazed at their lack of faith." Knowing the Scriptures, they were without excuse in refusing to acknowledge Him as God's prophet and their Savior. (PBC)

It vividly suggests the degree of resistance He encountered in Nazareth. In verse 5-6a Mark draws attention not to limits of Jesus' power but rather to the privations which result from unbelief. (Lane)

The callous unbelief of Jesus' hometown contrasts starkly with the humble but dogged examples of faith in 2:2-5 and 5:34. (TLSB)

behind you, like preferring the darkness to light. (Buls)

And if the Son of man was amazed at unbelief, is it any wonder that we do the same thing? (Buls)

But the "impossibility" noted in verse 5 was not the fault of Jesus but the sin of the people. Unbelief makes it impossible for God to give. (Buls)

God forces no one into His kingdom. If I am lost it will be my own fault. If I am saved it is totally God's grace and mercy. Hosea 13:9 reads: (Buls)

You are destroying yourself, Israel: but in Me is your help. (Buls)

Jesus had many heartbreaking experiences. But He did not let them stop Him. Look at verse 6<sup>b</sup>. For a similar thought see Hebrews 12:1-11 where the Lord encourages us not to let discipline and suffering keep us from serving the Lord heartily. (Buls)

Unbelief is the sin of sins. Look at Hebrews 3, especially verse 19. It is not the sinner who will be damned, but rather the rejecter. (Buls)

#### *Jesus Sends Out the Twelve*

**7 And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts— 9 but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. 10 And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. 11 And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” 12 So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. 13 And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.**

**6:7–13** Jesus had just finished a healing and a teaching tour among the Galilean villages. He had shown his power over devils as he drove them out of a demoniac, over fever as he healed by the touch of his hand, over leprosy as the leper is cleansed, and over palsy as he forgave the paralytic and by a word healed him. Each time he healed, however, Christ also taught the truths concerning the kingdom of God. The miracles were not an end in themselves; they bolstered the proclamation of the Gospel. Just prior to our text Jesus again healed a demoniac, raised the daughter of Jairus, and cleansed the woman with the flow of blood to show that he truly is the Christ. But the people still didn't believe in him. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit for 1979*, pages 185–86, by Rev. Ralph Fischer, Westland, Michigan. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

Now Jesus calls the Twelve to himself and gives them these same powers so that through their preaching of the Word and miracles, people would believe in him as the one who could both heal and forgive sins. Notice how Christ prepares them—he teaches them, shows them his example, and sends them out two by two for mutual support. Regarding their physical needs, Jesus instructs them to depend entirely on him and on those who hear and believe. They are to preach the message of repentance, but the results are always in God's hands. They, like modern preachers, are not to claim credit for success, nor blame themselves for failure; they are simply to proclaim their Lord's message faithfully. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit for 1979*, pages 185–86, by Rev. Ralph Fischer, Westland, Michigan. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

**6:7 calling the twelve** – "Called to Himself." Only Matthew mentions "His twelve disciples." Read the parallel accounts in Matthew 10:1-14 and Luke 9:1-6. Matthew gives a fuller account. In fact, Matthew speaks not only of this first trial mission but of their later mission to all the world. (Buls)

*send them – apostellein*, "began to send." Christ "began" to send out the disciples as ambassadors or apostles to preach the Gospel to the Jews. Cf. Matt 10:5–6 which was a preparation for sending them into the world (Matt 18:19–20, Mark 16:16, Luke 24:47). Although their main purpose was to preach, he gave the disciples "authority" to perform various miracles to confirm their preaching, especially over devils who worked against their preaching. With this power they could expel devils from the hearts and lives of men (Mark 6:13 a, Matt 10:1). Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit for 1979*, pages 185–86, by Rev. Ralph Fischer, Westland, Michigan. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

"To send out" is the Greek word for "to apostle," to send out with a very specific commission. (Buls)

Hendriksen gives the reason for sending by twos. (Buls)

- a. To help and courage each other, and
- b. to be valid witnesses.

He notes that later Peter and Paul went out together, Acts. 3:1, Barnabas and Saul, Acts 13:1-3, and Paul and Silas. (Buls)

Since their election the disciples had been with Jesus and had shared His experiences. Private instruction (Ch. 4:11, 34) and exposure to His power over demonic possession, sickness and death (Ch 5) had prepared them for a more direct involvement in His ministry. (Lane)

*two by two*. The purpose of going in pairs may have been to bolster credibility by having the testimony of more than one witness (cf. Dt 17:6), as well as to provide mutual support during their training period. (CSB)

δύο δύο, "two by two" (6:7): It was common at the time to travel in pairs, since travel was dangerous. It may also be, however, for the purpose of witnessing. See Deut 19:15 (also Deut 17:6), which requires at least two credible witnesses to establish any charge. (CC)

*authority over unclean spirits – exousian tōn pneumatōn tōn akathartōn*, "authority over the unclean spirits" (ESV). This is the only objective of the commissioning specified in Mark. Matthew (10:1, 7) and Luke (9:1–2) add healing and preaching the kingdom. Jesus' power over evil spirits is a significant emphasis in Mark. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

ἐδίδου αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν ἀκαθάρτων, "he proceeded to give to them authority over the unclean spirits" (6:7): Authority over unclean spirits is exactly what Jesus has in Mark's Gospel; indeed, it is apparent in his first mighty work (1:22–27; see also 3:11; 5:1–20; 7:25–30; 9:25–27). Note again the emphasis upon the spiritual dimension in the ministry of the Twelve. (CC)



Jesus had appointed the Twelve (3:13-19); then they were with Him for some time, learning from His teaching and observing how He exercised authority. Now He gives them a more active role in His ministry. Chief among the powers He give them is authority to cast out demons. (TLSB)

The text indicates that the disciples would have authority only when He granted it. This was a given, not a possessed, power. (Buls)

Read Luke 10:1-20 for a clear picture. He Who conquered Satan drove out unclean (evil) spirits. He gave this authority to His disciples, thereby indicated that they were His messengers. This special authority is not promised in the great commission, Matthew 28:18, or at Luke 24:47-49 and Acts 1:8, though at times the apostles exercised special charismatic gifts. This is true, Mark 16:17 notwithstanding. In this passage no specific command is given. (Buls)

In Mark 6:7 nothing is said about preaching (as does Matthew). But it must be implicit in verse 7 because verse 11 speaks about hearing and verse 12 makes plain what they did. (Buls)

**6:8-11** Even in the face of growing hostility toward Jesus, Jesus sends the disciples out, asking them to rely upon the hospitality of others to receive them into their homes. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:8-9** The apostles were to depend wholly upon the kindness of others and the provisions of God. Given the shabby treatment Jesus just received in Nazareth (vv. 1-5), this command must have sounded quite perilous. (TLSB)

**6:8** παρήγγειλεν, “he ordered”: The use of the aorist indicative for a verb of speaking is striking in the first portion of Mark’s Gospel. Perhaps here it conveys as a backgrounding tense that these commands of Jesus are not to be seen as universally valid, i.e., they are in force only for the mission of the Twelve here described. (CC)

*no bread, no bag, no money in your belts.* They were to depend entirely on the hospitality of those to whom they testified (see v. 10). (CSB)

μὴ πήραν, “not a leather pouch” (6:8): This prohibition means that the apostles could not be self-sufficient (CC)

Now a series of commands. Verses 7 and 8 clearly show that first Christ gives and then He commands. (Buls)

Hendriksen: Only that which is absolutely necessary must be taken along on the trip. Why? Because God will provide. To this may be added Matthew 10:10<sup>b</sup>: ‘The worker is entitled to his support.’ (Buls)

Lenski: The orders which Jesus issues are to teach the apostles absolute dependence upon their Lord who sends them out. (Buls)

Luther: They should speak or do nothing for the sake of money, honor, goods. The ministry of the Word seeks something different, has a different object, namely, eternal salvation and the honor of God. (Buls)

**6:9** σανδάλια, “sandals”: This command perhaps forbids more elaborate footwear that covered the entire foot. (CC)

*not an extra tunic.* At night an extra tunic was helpful as a covering to protect from the cold night air, and the implication here is that the disciples were to trust in God to provide lodging each night. (CSB)

μὴ [ἐνδύσασθαι] δύο χιτῶνας, “not to wear two undergarments/tunics”: To wear two garments was “a style of dress adopted by persons of distinction.” See also Lk 3:11, concerning John the Baptist’s injunction that a man who has two tunics share one with a man who has none. (CC)

Note that the sentence begins (as was the case in verse 8) with indirect discourse, but changes to direct discourse. (Buls)

Lenski: What Jesus is saying also here in Mark is: 'an extra tunic, extra pair of sandals, and an extra staff must not be taken along.' (Buls)

Bible critics maintain that Mark 6:8-9 and Matthew 19:9-10 contradict each other. (Buls)

Arndt: The difficulty presented by the above texts, when compared with each other, lies in this, that Jesus, according to Matthew, forbids the disciples to equip themselves with a staff, while according to Mark they may take a staff; and that, according to Matthew, they were told not to take shoes, while in Mark Jesus says that they might be shod with sandals. The main factor in harmonizing these statements is the difference between the verbs used. In Matthew the verb is 'provide'; in Mark 'take'. We see that in Matthew Jesus forbids the purchase or acquisition of any equipment; in Mark he speaks not of what they should not provide for themselves, but of what they might take along or not take along on their journey. What the Lord says to the disciples in Mark is practically this: 'God as you are.' They had a staff, this they might take with them; but they should not provide themselves with an additional one. They were shod with sandals, and this they should consider sufficient and not procure more footwear. Hence a careful reading of the two texts reveals that we are not dealing with two conflicting statements, but with two statements which supplement each other and were both spoken when Jesus gave His disciples instructions for their first missionary tour. (Buls)

Lenski: The contradiction is only apparent: no new staff is to be provided. The same is true with regard to the sandals: no new ones are to be bought. The disciples are to go as they are, with such garments, sandals, and walking sticks as they have. . . They are to carry no extra sandals (Matthew) or to buy new ones. (Buls)

The apostles are to take only the bare essentials for their journey. They are not to take money or food with them. Mark indicates that a staff was permitted; Luke and Matthew state that even it was discouraged. Jesus wanted His disciples to rely on the hospitality of believers for food, shelter and protection. In this way, God would provide for their needs as He provide opportunity for those who heard the Gospel to respond concretely with compassion. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 3)

**6:10** *whenever you enter a house, stay there* – ἐκεῖ μένετε, “remain there”: The apostles were not to be itinerant beggars. Note, however, the contrast also to *Didache* 11–13, in which itinerant prophets are to move on within three days, or they are to be branded as false prophets. (CC)

A new subject is introduced. (Buls)

Hendriksen: How the disciples must decide in which home to stay is answered in Matthew 10:11. It was the duty of the hearers to extend hospitality . . . The spread of the gospel has the priority over personal likes and dislikes. (Buls)

Lenski: The apostles are not to shift from one house to another, as if the first were not good enough for them, and they should a house which offered better food and lodging. (Buls)

Well said. It would be highly offensive if a missionary or pastor gave the impression that he is seeking the best of material goods. This is axiomatic. Note the beautiful construction of the whole sentence. (Buls)

If someone in the village offered lodging, the apostles were to stay with that person as long as they remained in town. They were neither to spread themselves around nor to trade up to better quarter. Their presence was a blessing, not a burden to their hosts. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 3)

They were not to dishonor the home by accepting more comfortable provisions offered by another host. (Lane)

**6:11** *will not receive you* – Verse 10 spoke of the house which "would" receive them. Verse 11 speaks of the house which "would not" receive them. The second verb explains the first: "not hear" explains "does not receive." (Buls)

Hendriksen: What Jesus is here saying, therefore, is that any place whatever, be it a house, village, city, hamlet, that refuses to accept the Gospel must be considered unclean, as if it were pagan soil. Therefore such a center of unbelief must be treated similarly. Paul and Barnabas did exactly that when a persecution was organized against them in the Jewish district of Antioch of Pisidia, Acts 13:50-51. (Buls)

*mēdezētai*, "receives not," aorist subjunctive of *dexomai*, "to receive as a guest, welcome." Here the verb *akousōsin* (subjunctive), "to hear," like *shema* often in the OT, has the added nuance "to hear *and obey*." It is equivalent to "believe," for the rejection of the disciples and their message implies unbelief. The parallel verse Matt 10:15 adds that those who thus reject the disciples will receive greater judgment than Sodom and Gomorrah. Those who clearly hear the Gospel message and yet refuse to believe are guilty of a greater sin than those who never hear or those who hear only a partial revelation, though on judgment day all unbelievers alike will be condemned. Those who hear the disciples are encountering the kingdom of God firsthand, since now it has come in the person of Jesus Christ. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit for 1979*, pages 185–86, by Rev. Ralph Fischer, Westland, Michigan. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

*not listen to you* – *akouo* - To hear in such a way that also brings obedience. In other words the people were to believe the message not just listen to it. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 1, Part 3)

*shake off the dust that is on your feet* – Note from Matthew 10:14 – A symbolic act practiced by the Pharisees when they left an "unclean" Gentile area. Here it represented an act of solemn warning to those who rejected God's message. (CSB)

ἐκτινάξατε τὸν χοῦν, “shake off the dust”: To shake dust off is a great insult; it indicates that the person is unwilling to be touched by what others touch. Indeed, Jews returning to Israel after travel abroad regularly shook the dust off their feet.<sup>38</sup> Note the parallel to Acts 13:51, where Paul shakes the dust of Pisidian Antioch from his feet and moves to Iconium. Such dust-shaking seems not to be related to cursing another party (contra Yarbrough Collins) but serves as a warning: “You have rejected our preaching. Therefore, you and all that’s yours are without the reign and rule of God, and we will not be associated with that.” Note that this is another example of the Lord going the extra mile, as it were. *All expressions of judgment are never simply condemnations carried out immediately but linguistic statements that have the illocutionary force of warning to elicit repentance.* (CC)

ektinasso - To shake very violently. This was to be a warning that they have rejected the Gospel and were answerable to God. This was a custom that was common at that time. To shake off the dust from a alien country they were dissociating themselves from the uncleanness of those people.

"As a warning to them." They've been warned because they rejected the Gospel. Christians needs make no apologies for sternly warning people who will not listen to the Gospel. (Buls)

If no one received them and the villagers did not listen, the apostles were to remove the dust of the town’s streets from their feet. Mark adds the explanatory comment that this would be a testimony against the town. Since pious Jews carefully removed all the dust of the Gentile lands from themselves and their clothing when they reentered Israel, this action would be a sign to the villagers that they are outside God’s kingdom. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 3)

Acts 13:50-51 “But the Jews incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. (CSB)

**6:12–13** *proclaimed... cast out many demons.* This mission marks the beginning of the disciples’ own ministry in Jesus’ name (see 3:14–15), and their message was precisely the same as his (1:15). (CSB)

*ekēruszan*, “they preached” (aorist). The verb *kērusō* means “to proclaim a message as a herald; to make a herald proclamation.” The one who so preaches is a representative; he is not free to proclaim his own message, but only the message entrusted to him by the one who authorized his preaching. The same applies to modern preachers. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit for 1979*, pages 185–86, by Rev. Ralph Fischer, Westland, Michigan. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

In Mark, the Twelve were originally called to be with Jesus and to be sent out to preach and to cast out demons (3:14–15). Here, then, they are fulfilling the will of God, demonstrating that they are part of the family of God (3:35), having been made so by Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

karisso - To proclaim or publish for all to hear or see. To be like a town crier.

The one who so preaches is a representative; he is not free to proclaim his own message, but only the message entrusted to him by the one who authorized his preaching. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 1, Part 3)

**6:12** *repent*. Repentance lay at the heart of both John's and Jesus' proclamations of the Kingdom (1:4, 14-15). The Twelve, therefore, continued and extended the ministries of John and Jesus. (TLSB)

ἵνα μετανοῶσιν, "that they/people repent—now!": As observed in the textual note, this is to be related, also grammatically, to Jesus' first preaching (1:15). Note that once again the relation to God and the spiritual dimension is key. (CC)

First they went out. Then they proclaimed. Note that the first item is the preaching of repentance. According to Liddel et al in the *Greek-English Lexicon*, in the classical Greek this word has two meanings: (Buls)

1. To regret;
2. To change one's mind.

As an example of the first, a proverb is quoted: "A wise man thinks ahead so that he need not regret." The second meaning is used in such expressions as: "He planned to go but change his mind." (Buls)

According to Bauer et al in their *Greek-English Lexicon*, the meanings in early Christian literature are: (Buls)

1. To change one's mind, but none of the examples cited are from the New Testament;
2. To have remorse, many examples from the New Testament and the early Christian literature.

Moulton Milligan: Its meaning deepens with Christianity, and in the New Testament it is more than 'repent', and indicates a complete change of attitude, spiritual and moral, towards God. (Buls)

A good example from the Old Testament would be Nathan bringing David to a knowledge of his sin and then absolving him. Then look at Psalm 51. David's entire attitude changed. (Buls)

A good New Testament example is Acts 2:38-42, Pentecost. (Buls)

The Lutheran Confessions always understand the Greek word in the New Testament in the sense of "repent", not "change one's mind." In our day there is much synergistic preaching. People are told to change their minds, to make a decision for Christ. But repentance is a marvelous work of God in man, causing man to realize and confess his sins (law) and then to place his confidence in the merits and worthiness of Jesus Christ (Gospel). (Buls)

Look at verse 12. It means: "They preached that people should repent" not "that people should change their minds." Here in verse 12 the word is used in the wider sense: "To repent and to believe." In Mark 1:15 it is used in the narrower sense. (Buls)

Luther in the first of the 95 Theses, said:

When our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ said 'Repent ye' He meant that the whole life of the Christian should be one of repentance. (Buls)

The meaning here is that the message was the message of a herald, not his own message, but the message of the one who sent him. (Buls)

*metanoōsin*, "repent." Not mentioned in Matthew or Luke's parallels. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

**6:13** *anoint with oil many who were sick*. In the ancient world olive oil was widely used as a medicine (see Isa 1:6; Lk 10:34; Jas 5:14). (CSB)

Christian fellowships today still practice anointing rituals for healing (Lk. 10:34). (TLSB)

The verb denotes a repeated action. "The sick" are literally "those who have no strength." (Buls)

"Anoint" from which the word Christ is derived, occurs five times and is always used in a metaphysical sense. The thought in 13<sup>b</sup> is found only in Mark. Is this sentence speaking about the medicinal use of olive oil or is it something greater? (Buls)

Ylvisaker: That they anointed the sick with oil has been added by Mark alone. This procedure was not enjoined by the Lord. They did this of their own accord. They employ the rite not to symbolize the redemption power of Jesus or the communication of the Spirit and the awakening of faith, but as a therapeutic agency to alleviate pain . . . It is in harmony with this account of the application of oil by the apostles that the well-known passage, James 5:14, must be interpreted. (Buls)

Lenski and Hendriksen do not accept this interpretation and it is difficult to understand what they mean. They understand the healing as miraculous. (Buls)

Ylvisaker does not. Ylvisaker's interpretation makes good sense and is preferable. In other words, according to Mark, the disciples not only healed miraculously, but also medicinally. They did three things: preached, cast out demons, healed. (Buls)

Critics claim that either Matthew and Luke copied Mark or redacted his Gospel. But the variations between Christ's instructions in Matthew and those in Mark, plus the fact that the last clause in Mark 6:13 is found alone in Mark, indicate that the Gospel writers, in all probability were individual authors, not dependent on one another. (Buls)

Hendriksen: In the wording of Christ's instruction there are a few variations. These suffice to show that even though the Gospel-writers in all probability used written as well as oral sources, they remained authors or composers, were never merely copyists. Thus in the original Matthew 10:14 and Luke 9:5 use one word for dust, Mark 6:11 another, but in either case "dust" is the proper English translation. So also Matthew mentions 'that house or that city' Mark 'any place' Luke 'that city' but there is no basic difference. Matthew in this connection says nothing about a testimony. Mark has 'shake the dust from the soles of your feet as a testimony to them'; Luke: 'as a testimony against them.' But properly interpreted, the meaning is the same. (Buls)

Oil was commonly used in medical practice, but this anointing seems to have been ceremonial or liturgical rather than strictly medical (see James 5:14). Apparently it served as a visible sign of the Spirit's activity. The OT has ample precedent for the use of oil for anointing, and the Spirit sometimes would come dramatically upon the one anointed with oil (e.g., 1 Sam 10:1, 9-13; 1 Kg 19:15-21; 2 Kg 9). The post-NT church made use of oil in conjunction with Baptism to signify the gift of the Spirit. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 3)

*ēleiphon elaiōi*, “anointed with oil” (ESV). Also only in Mark's account. The oil was not thought to carry miraculous power, but, as a common medicinal application (see Lk 10:34; James 5:14), it would signal the miracle the disciples were about to work. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

**6:7–13** The disciples multiply Jesus' healing and revealing ministry, building on the foundation laid by John the Baptist and anticipating their own ministries, which will bear full fruit after Jesus' ascension. Even as Jesus sends the Twelve, He anticipates that not everyone will welcome the Gospel, as is still true today. Nevertheless, God unfailingly opens hearts and doors to their ministry, and He promises to do the same until the end of time. • Lord, give us courage to share Your Word to a dying world in these uncertain times. Open hearts to repentance and faith in the Gospel. Amen. (TLSB)

*John the Baptist Beheaded*

**14** King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.” **15** But others said, “He is Elijah.” And others said, “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.” **16** But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.” **17** For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. **18** For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.” **19** And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, **20** for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly. **21** But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. **22** For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you.” **23** And he vowed to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom.” **24** And she went out and said to her mother, “For what should I ask?” And she said, “The head of John the Baptist.” **25** And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” **26** And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. **27** And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison **28** and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. **29** When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

**6:14-8:30** The new section introduced by Ch 6:14 and extending to Ch 8:30 focuses upon a period during which Jesus was frequently in retirement beyond the borders of Galilee. During the mission of the Twelve, Mark calls attention to the reaction of Herod Antipas, who has heard of the mighty works of Jesus. Herod's suspicion that Jesus is John returned from the dead (Ch 6:14-16) introduces the parenthetical account of the imprisonment and execution of the Baptist (Ch

6:17-29). At the return of the Twelve Jesus withdraws to a solitary place, pursued by multitude. In compassion He provides bread in the wilderness, and five thousand are fed (Ch 6:35-44). A second feeding of four thousand is reported in the region of the Decapolis (Ch 8:1-10), and the striking recurrence of the word “bread” throughout this section provides the pervading motif (Chs. 6:52; 7:2, 28; 8:14 ff). The importance of the two feeding miracles is emphasized when the disciples’ own misunderstanding of Jesus are traced to their failure to understand the significance of the abundant provision of bread. While a single instance of the public teaching occurs in Ch 7:1-23, the accent falls on the instruction of the disciples, whose hardness of heart, unbelief and failure to understand is a prominent element in the record. A point of transition is provided by Ch 8:22-26 where the restoring of sight to a man who was blind signals the opening of the eyes of the disciples as well. A climax in Mark’s narrative is achieved in Ch 8:27-29 when Jesus and His company approach Caesarea Philippi where Jesus’ dignity as Messiah is acknowledged for the first time. (Lane)

**6:14 King Herod.** Mark may here have used the title “king” sarcastically (since Herod was actually a tetrarch), or perhaps he simply used Herod’s popular title. (CSB)

Matthew and Luke use the more specific term “tetrarch” (Mt. 14:1; Lk. 9:7) because the Roman emperor did not recognize Herod Antipas’ claim to royalty. (TLSB)

Herod’s total disregard for Jewish sensitivity was displayed not only in his marriage to Herodias, but in the selection of an ancient cemetery as the site for his capital, Tiberias. By this choice Herod virtually excluded Jewish settlers, for residence in the city would render them perpetually unclean in terms of ritual law. (Lane)

*John the Baptist...raised from the dead* – Herod’s fear and guilt over John’s death likely caused his suspicion that the Baptizer had returned from the dead. Others also suspected that Jesus might be John raised from the dead. (8:28). (TLSB)

Mark practices the art of narrative framing in this account: the story of Herod beheading John the Baptist falls in the middle of Jesus’ apostolic sending. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

By referencing what Herod heard, Mark asks the reader to keep in mind the story of Jesus sending his disciples out in mission. Reading the larger narrative unit, notice how Mark starts by telling the readers how Jesus sends his disciples out (vv 7–12) and ends by telling his readers how the disciples return (v 30), but, in the middle, only relates this deadly royal opposition to God’s Holy Word. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

The world into which Jesus sends his disciples is a place filled with troubling spirits. Jesus called his disciples “that they might . . . have authority to cast out demons” (3:14–15); he sends them out to do that divine work within the fallen world (6:7, 13); and yet such work is dangerous as John is one of a long line of prophets who will be killed for speaking God’s Word and foreshadows the death of Jesus (12:6–8), as well as that of his followers (13:9–13). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

The story of Herod and John the Baptist offers us a picture in miniature of what it means for God’s saving Word of Law and Gospel to enter into the world. God will work through his Word. Though it may bring death, God will use it to bring life. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)



**6:16** *John ... has been raised from the dead!* Herod, disturbed by an uneasy conscience and disposed to superstition, feared that John had come back to haunt him. (CSB)

Herod repeats what others were saying (“John the Baptist has been raised from the dead,” v 14) with the addition of one small detail (“whom I beheaded,” v 16). This detail initiates a movement backward in time as one enters into the memory of Herod and hears of his struggle with power and pleasure and promises, ultimately silencing God’s voice as it entered the halls of the palace. Interestingly, Mark hereby sets this past sin of Herod in the context of the present ministry of Jesus, calling people to repentance and casting out demons. Now is indeed the day of salvation for Herod. Now the kingdom of heaven is being proclaimed. The question is “Will Herod listen, or will he continue to resist God’s call to repentance and lose a place in God’s kingdom of grace?” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

Herod may have heard the opinions of the others through his courtiers, and he clung to his statement: Him whom I beheaded, John, it is; he is risen. The torment of a bad conscience, of a guilty heart, is worse than any torture that might be devised by man. It causes people to suspect where there is no ground for suspicion, and puts ghosts before the eyes of men where there is no reason for fear. Herod had reasons for trembling. (Kretzmann)

**6:17** *seized John... and bound him put in prison.* See 1:14; Lk 3:19–20. Josephus says that John was imprisoned at Machaerus, the fortress in Perea on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. (CSB)

*Herodias.* See note on Mt 14:3. – (A granddaughter of Herod the Great. First she married her uncle, Herod Philip (Herod the Great also had another son named Philip), who lived in Rome. While a guest in their home, Herod Antipas persuaded Herodias to leave her husband for him. Marriage to one’s brother’s wife, while the brother was still living, was forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev 18:16). (CSB)

*Philip.* The son of Herod the Great and Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the high priest, and thus a half-brother of Herod Antipas, born to Malthace. (CSB)

**6:18** *had been saying* – He has repeatedly denounced (elegen, “kept on saying,”)

*not lawful* – Herod divorced his first wife, the daughter of a Nabataen king, in order to marry Herodias. (Nabataea was the region east of the Dead Sea)) However, it was not lawful for him to marry his brother’s wife (cf. Lev. 18:16; 20:21). Furthermore, Herodias had divorced her husband, also forbidden by Jewish law. (TLSB)

**6:19** *nursed a grudge* – Given her shameful behavior, Herodias was understandably sensitive and therefore irked that John called attention to her divorce and remarriage. (TLSB)

**6:20** *Herod feared* – John was a prophet who sought neither riches nor political power. Prophets often rebuked kings for their sins (e.g., 2 Sam. 12:1-14). (TLSB)

*protected him* – Jewish historian Josephus wrote that Herod imprisoned John at Machaerus, a fortress overlooking the Dead Sea. There, the prophet was relatively safe from the hatred of Herodias. (TLSB)

*heard John* – John preached the Law but also that the Gospel of the kingdom of God was at hand. (TLSB)

**6:21** *on his birthday* – τοῖς γενεσίοις αὐτοῦ δεῖπνον, “a dinner on his birthday” (6:21): A Hellenistic characteristic, Jews did not traditionally celebrate birthdays. (CC)

**6:22** *the daughter of Herodias*. This narrative seems to imply that Herodias was biding her time, but that she deliberately sent her daughter into the feast to dance, in order to induce Herod to grant her desire. (Lane)

**6:23** *up to half my kingdom*. A proverbial reference to generosity, not to be taken literally (see Est 5:3, 6). Generosity suited the occasion and would win the approval of the guests. (CSB)

Herod did not have authority to dispense with half of his kingdom, but used the phrase as an extravagant expression. (TLSB)

**6:24-28** Herod **ironically** attempts to save his honor by taking John’s life. (TLSB)

**6:24** ἐξελθοῦσα, “upon going out” (CC)

*said to her mother* – It may be that her mother had instructed her even beforehand what she should ask for, as the account of Matthew implies, though not expressly says, and now she needed a further urging. At any rate, she hurries to her mother, who promptly impresses upon her the need to ask for, and insist upon, only one thing. Whether there was another determining factor or not, Salome, the dancer, was now ready to do her mother’s bidding. (Kretzmann)

**6:26** *greatly distressed* – Ambrose: (This) is not repentance on the part of the king, but a confession of guilt. (NPNF2 10:385). (TLSB)

This verse shows Herod Antipas at his worst, namely, weak, corrupt, and shallow. He is worried about his honor more than anything else. Indeed, if he broke his oath, never again would he be trusted. (CC)

Mark’s account is filled with irony. Herod was never a king. In fact, when he sought to be named a king (as had been the case with Herodias’s brother), he was banished (along with Herodias) for an act of treason. Here, at the climax of the narrative, Mark recounts how Herod brings about John’s death because he remains faithful to his own word rather than respond faithfully to the saving Word of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

The request of Salome, expressed with arrogance and malice, immediately sobered Antipas. Only moments before he had reveled in boisterous conviviality; now he expressed the deepest grief. (Lane)

**6:27** And so the ghastly spectacle was enacted to the bitter end. There was an officer at the king’s court who combined in his person the work of a courier, police officer, and executioner. To him the king’s command went to furnish the head of John the Baptist. (Kretzmann)

Note how the “king’s” actions are now controlled by the urgency of the girl. (CC)

**6:28** *head on a platter* – This was a grisly display of John’s severed head – at a meal no less – illustrates the extreme corruption of Herod and his high society friends. (TLSB)

It is worth observing the deliberateness of the actions of this verse (see the deliberate repetition of verbs, nouns, and pronouns), which seems to confirm the evil intent of the girl and her mother. It must be observed, however, that whatever the girl's intent, Antipas does not treat the head on a platter as the last course of the birthday dinner; he does not even touch it. The executioner brings it right to the girl, who passes it right to her mother. For this reason, this pericope does *not* constitute a mockery of the meals provided by Jesus, despite the use of the verb ἐπέταξεν, "he directed," both in 6:27 (with Herod as the implied subject) and in the feeding of the five thousand (6:39, with Jesus as the implied subject). (CC)

**6:29** It is difficult to know how long after John had been slain that word of his death reached his disciples. It is probable that they were not far from the fortress in order to serve him in any way they could. Their final act of ministry was to take up his corpse and place it in a tomb, presumably in the vicinity of Machaerus. The death of John, however, did not bring the Baptist movement to an end, nor was this the final time Herod would be forced to remember John. (Lane)

Herod tries to salvage his reputation by allowing John's disciples to bury John's body. John's burial prefigures the interment of Jesus (15:42-47). (TLSB)

The parallel between the burial of John the Baptizer and Jesus is striking in terms of vocabulary. A strong connection between John and Jesus is drawn thereby. As there is an ironic parallel between "King" Herod Antipas and "King" Jesus in this pericope, so this pericope supports a strong parallel between Jesus and John. (CC)

**6:14–29** Coming just after the story about Jesus' rejection in Nazareth, the tragic story of John gives an unmistakable foreshadowing of what awaits Jesus: rejection and even violent hostility. But rejection and violence cannot overcome the risen Lord. His victory over death and the grave shows how wonderfully He can turn such antagonism into life and salvation. • Lord, give us a faith like John's, especially his integrity and trust. Help us to believe unquestioningly that faithfulness unto death will receive the crown of eternal life. Amen. (TLSB)

#### *Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand*

**30** The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. **31** 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. **32** And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. **33** Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. **34** 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. **35** And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. **36** Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." **37** But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii[f] worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" **38** 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." **39** Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. **40** So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. **41** 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. **42** And they all ate and were satisfied. **43** And they

**took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44 And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.**

**6:14-8:30** The new section introduced by Ch 6:14 and extending to Ch 8:30 focuses upon a period during which Jesus was frequently in retirement beyond the borders of Galilee. During the mission of the Twelve, Mark calls attention to the reaction of Herod Antipas, who has heard of the mighty works of Jesus. Herod's suspicion that Jesus is John returned from the dead (Ch 6:14-16) introduces the parenthetical account of the imprisonment and execution of the Baptist (Ch 6:17-29). At the return of the Twelve Jesus withdraws to a solitary place, pursued by multitude. In compassion He provides bread in the wilderness, and five thousand are fed (Ch 6:35-44). A second feeding of four thousand is reported in the region of the Decapolis (Ch 8:1-10), and the striking recurrence of the word "bread" throughout this section provides the pervading motif (Chs. 6:52; 7:2, 28; 8:14 ff). The importance of the two feeding miracles is emphasized when the disciples' own misunderstanding of Jesus are traced to their failure to understand the significance of the abundant provision of bread. While a single instance of the public teaching occurs in Ch 7:1-23, the accent falls on the instruction of the disciples, whose hardness of heart, unbelief and failure to understand is a prominent element in the record. A point of transition is provided by Ch 8:22-26 where the restoring of sight to a man who was blind signals the opening of the eyes of the disciples as well. A climax in Mark's narrative is achieved in Ch 8:27-29 when Jesus and His company approach Caesarea Philippi where Jesus' dignity as Messiah is acknowledged for the first time. (Lane)

**6:30-34** The disciples had just returned from a teaching mission (Mark 6:7-13, last Sunday's Gospel). They preached for repentance, cast out evil spirits, healed the sick, and taught that the kingdom of God had come in the person of Jesus. As every pastor knows, ministry is strenuous work which requires periods of renewal, both physical and spiritual. The death of John the Baptizer immediately preceding our text (Mark 6:14-29) also impacted the disciples, and they needed comfort and instruction. In our text, Jesus seeks a secluded retreat with his disciples for renewal as well as instruction. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit* for 1979, pages 189-91. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

The feeding of the five thousand which follows our text is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four gospels (Matt 14:13-21; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15). Exodus 16 tells of the feeding of Israel in the wilderness which manifested God's grace. Elijah too was fed miraculously in the wilderness (1 Kings 19:4-8). Jesus' contemporaries may have anticipated that the Christ, the fulfillment of the Old Testament hope, would do something similar but greater. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit* for 1979, pages 189-91. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

The events recorded in our text take place at the close of Christ's Galilean ministry. It is Passover time, a year before Jesus' crucifixion, death, and resurrection. In last Sunday's Gospel (Mk 6:7-13) Jesus sent the Twelve to exorcise, heal, and preach throughout the villages of Galilee. Our assigned Gospel records the conclusion of that activity as the disciples return to Jesus to report "all they had done and taught" (see Mk 6:30). The second part of the text (vv 32-34) begins the account of the feeding of the five thousand (vv 32-44), which is narrated by all four evangelists and, interestingly, is the last event reported by all four until Christ's final visit to Jerusalem. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)

At this point in the Gospel accounts it is Passover time, a year before Jesus' crucifixion and death. While the Apostles were on their missionary tour Jesus received news of the Baptist's death. The

Galilean ministry was coming to a close. He and His disciples had been working very hard. There was much excitement about Jesus. But much of it was just plain curiosity, not faith. (Buls)

Next week's Gospel is the feeding of the 5,000. Look at John 6:14-15. How did the people react to the miracle of the feeding? They wanted to make Him king. How did they treat Him on the day following that miracle? All but the Apostles left Him. (Buls)

Fahling: The quiet rest which Jesus had planned was spoiled. The sad feature of it was that it was not a Savior-seeking, but a miracle-seeking crowd. (Buls)

Kretzmann: Curiosity, for the most part; what an immense factor in the destiny of individuals and of nations! (Buls)

Stoeckhardt: Through the preaching of Christ and the preaching about Christ everywhere in the land many disciples were won. But the majority of the people had hardened themselves against the Word and Work of Christ. (Buls)

What is truly remarkable, in view of these facts, is the tender compassion of Jesus toward the masses. His heart went out to them. "They were as sheep which have no shepherd." Sheep are very dependent animals. They need constant guidance. If they do not receive guidance, they wander aimlessly. (Buls)

These masses of people were spiritually starved. Read Ezekiel 34:1-6 and John 10:7-15. The rabbis had not fed the people's souls. And, though these people would reject Jesus the next day, John 6, He compassionately taught them many things. (Buls)

Compare the parallel accounts in Matthew 14:13-14 and Luke 9:10-11. Much of the material in Mark 6:30-31 and 34 is peculiar to Mark. If Matthew or Luke "copied" or "redacted" Mark, why did they omit these materials? By the way, the parallel accounts in the Synoptics beautifully supplement each other. (Buls)

**6:30** *apostles*. In Mark's Gospel the word occurs only here and in 3:14 (in some manuscripts). The apostles were Jesus' authorized agents or representatives. In the NT the word is sometimes used quite generally (see Jn 13:16, where the Greek *apostolos* is translated "messenger"). In the technical sense it is used (1) of the Twelve, (3:14)—in which sense it is also applied to Paul (Rom 1:1)—and (2) of a larger group including Barnabas (Ac 14:14), James the Lord's brother (Gal 1:19), and possibly Andronicus and Junias (Ro 16:7). ). (CSB)

Only here in Mark are the twelve called Apostles. It is fitting for their first missionary tour. They freely and willingly tell Him everything. They must have worked very hard. They did and taught. (Buls)

Only Mark uses *apostoloi*, "apostles," for the disciples in this miracle account. It refers to those who had been sent out on the missionary tour and had returned to report "all they had done and taught." Pastors too are responsible to Christ for what they do and teach. They are called to teach and tell only of Christ, and one day will have to give an account of their ministry to him. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit* for 1979, pages 189–91. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume  
The undershepherds return to Jesus to report the results of their mission. They had done what he said, and the results were as he promised. Their faithfulness stands in stark contrast to the dereliction of the evil shepherds in the OT Reading. All undershepherds will be held accountable

to the Good Shepherd, who sent them forth in his name and authority. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)

Only here in Mark's gospel (and in some manuscripts at Mk 3:14) do we find the term *apostolos* "apostle"—a fitting title on the occasion of the first missionary journey of the Twelve. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)  
1, Part 3)

The day begins with the news of the death of John the Baptist. It continues with the return of the disciples from a short-term missionary journey. Following the disciples are five thousand men and their families. Jesus tried to get away from the crowd by crossing the sea, only to find the crowd waiting for him on the other side. He wanted to mourn in solitude, but instead he was surrounded by people. He wanted to spend time with just the disciples, but instead he got a crowd. He wanted time to think, but instead he and people to face. (A Gentle Thunder – Hearing God Through the Storm – Max Lucado p. 90)

*told him all they had done and taught.* Because he had commissioned them as his representatives. They were returning from a third preaching tour in Galilee. (CSB)

Story begun in vv. 7-13 resumes. Intervening account of John's death (vv. 14-29) is a somber reminder that Jesus and His disciples will face the wrath of rulers like Herod. (TLSB)

**6:31-32** The news of John the Baptist's death (reported in Mt 14:1–13; Mk 6:14–29) and the demanding work of the apostles' "vicarage" lead to these comforting words of Christ. This is one of several occasions in Scripture where Jesus speaks of *physical* rest from labor as well as spiritual rejuvenation. (Cf. also Mt 11:28. In Rev 6:11; 14:13, Jesus speaks of the physical and spiritual rest of the saints in heaven.) His words here reveal a concern for the disciples' complete well-being. The invitation to "rest" provides a vivid picture of the Sabbath day and the Divine Service as a foretaste of eternal rest for believers. The liturgy of Word and Sacrament is the means by which Christ draws near, invites the baptized to withdraw from the world's pressures, feeds them, and grants them refreshing rest. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)

Despite an unending list of ministry tasks to get done, Jesus made time for Himself and His disciples to rest and recover. Presumably, this time of rest included instruction and prayer (cf. 1:35; 7:17). (TLSB)

**6:31** *not have chance to eat* – οὐδὲ φαγεῖν εὐκαίρουν, "they habitually did not have opportunity even to eat" (6:31): The contrast in terms of "opportune-ness" (external entailment!) between this verse and "a propitious day" for "a dinner" in 6:21 is striking. There the opportunity was for self-indulgence and death. Here it is for service and restoration and life. Note that Jesus' popularity is still strong and growing. The situation confirms his need for a boat (see 3:9)! (CC)

*You yourselves.* ὑμεῖς αὐτοί, "you yourselves": This phraseology indicates the importance of the Twelve. (CC)

The death of John the Baptist and the strenuous work of the Apostles caused Jesus to say what He did here. Jesus' command reads literally: "Come you yourselves privately to an uninhabited place and rest a while." This plainly indicates that they had been working hard and also the true humanity of Jesus. Though Jesus tells them to rest, it is of short duration. Whether the rest was limited to the voyage or shortly thereafter, it was not long. (Buls)

This is the sole place in the Gospels where this idea occurs. And the only other place where "rest from labors" is mentioned is Revelation 14:13, in heaven. Christians get little rest in this life. Many people in our culture are preoccupied with leisure and it often leads to a lot of unhappiness. (Buls)

*Deserted place.* Jesus called the disciples apart to "rest" for a time to restore their strength and vision. It was to be a time for spiritual renewal. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit* for 1979, pages 189–91. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

Even before Jesus extends his compassion to the crowd, he invites his disciples to retreat to a private place for renewal. This renewal included physical rest as well as undisturbed consultation with their master. Jesus has a gracious habit of showing genuine compassion for those in need and for all levels of need. Preceding the raising of the widow's son, Luke records, "When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her" (7:13). Out of compassion flow acts of mercy and kindness. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

What is in view is the concept of rest within the wilderness. Mark indicates this by repeating the expressions "a wilderness-place apart" in verses 31 and 32. The site toward which the disciples set sail cannot be identified with any degree of certainty; but this was not important to the evangelist. What was significant was the character of the place to which Jesus and His disciples withdrew, and this is sufficiently indicated by the descriptive phrase "wilderness place." That God provides rest for His people within the wilderness is a recurring theme in the Scripture. It was the literal rest of the wilderness generation led by Moses and Joshua which became the type of the final rest promised to the people of God in the second exodus in the preaching of Isaiah and Jeremiah. The ancient hope of rest within the wilderness is to be fulfilled as Jesus gathers His disciples to a wilderness-place that they may be by themselves. The disciples and the multitudes who pursue them prove to be people of the new exodus. The presence of Jesus and the provision of God will give to this time of withdrawal the character of rest within the wilderness. (Lane)

**6:32** *they went away in a boat to a desolate.* John reports that they went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (Jn 6:1). Luke, more specifically, says they went to Bethsaida (Lk 9:10), which locates the feeding of the 5,000 on the northeast shore. (CSB)

*desolate place* – Not a desert, since there was green grass there. The TLSB note on Luke 9:10 says, "Jesus brings the Twelve to an isolated place, away from the crowds. He probably did this in order to provide a time of rest for the apostles and debrief them after their just-completed mission. (TLSB)

Despite an unending list of ministry tasks to get done, Jesus made time for Himself and His disciples to rest and recover. Presumably, this time of rest included instruction and prayer (cf. 1:35; 7:17). (TLSB)

Jesus took his disciples "to a solitary place." However, the people were so eager to see Jesus and receive his help that they traveled by foot and got there ahead of him. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit* for 1979, pages 189–91. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

The actions in this verse weld the Twelve ever closer to Jesus and to his preaching/ministry. Now, as they go to a deserted place, they replicate Jesus' own activity in 1:35, namely, retreating "to a deserted/desert place" (the identical wording, εἰς ἔρημον τόπον, is in 1:35; cf. also ἔρημος, "deserted/desert," in 1:12–13, 45), which means that their entire lives are coming to be

conformed to his. Jesus seems to focus ever more intently on the Twelve as his own mission plays itself out. This will become even more apparent from 8:27 onward. (CC)

**6:33** *ran there on foot ... and got there ahead of them.* Perhaps a strong headwind slowed down the boat so that the people had time to go on foot around the lake and arrive before the boat. (CSB)

From the parallel at Luke 9:10 we learn that Jesus and His disciples were headed for Bethsaida which was evidently on the eastern shore of the lake. (Buls)

Underlying verses 31 and 33 is the great hunger of these people, spiritual hunger. It is true that they are curious, but if their spiritual needs would be satisfied they would no longer run around as sheep without a shepherd. (Buls)

Note that Jesus does not become impatient or disgusted with them.

The expression "from all the towns" is quite strong. It likely means that they came in large numbers as we shall see in next Sunday's text. (Buls)

KJV and NKJV read: "They arrived before them and came together to Him." All of the versions say the subject is the people who got there ahead of Jesus and the Apostles. (Buls)

Lenski and Hendriksen disagree. They say that Jesus and the Apostles got there before the people. Our translations, in verse 34, say Jesus "landed," getting out of the boat. But Lenski and Hendriksen insist that the Greek word means that Jesus and the Apostles were coming down from the hill after a brief rest, having arrived there before the crowds. They do this to avoid a contradiction with Matthew 14:13-14; Luke 9:11 and John 6:3. (Buls)

The distance around the northern part of the lake was about ten miles. The distance by boat, straight across, was about four miles. The comparative distance adds fuel to Lenski and Hendriksen's argument. But if there was little wind for the boat and in view of the intense desire of the people to see Jesus, perhaps it is not too unthinkable for the people to cover ten miles while the boat covered only four. Furthermore, this indicates that the Apostles did get the rest which Jesus desired for them. Perhaps Jesus made sure that the boat proceeded slowly so that there would be time for rest. And yet, the "uninhabited place" might well have been the middle of the lake. (Buls)

From Lk 9:10 we learn that they sailed to the vicinity of Bethsaida on the northeast shore of the lake. The crowds who had been with Jesus saw him leave with his disciples by boat and noted his direction. Excited and curious by what they had already heard and seen of Jesus, they pursued him on land. As they went through neighboring villages along the coastal route, additional people from the towns may have joined the pursuit. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)

There is some textual uncertainty on who arrived at the destination first—the people or Jesus and his disciples. Many translators and commentators follow the reading *proēlthon autous*, "They [the crowds] went ahead of them [Jesus and his disciples]" since it has the better manuscript authority (A and B). Others, notably Lenski and Hendrickson, prefer the reading *prosēlthon autois* "They [the crowds] approached them [Jesus and his disciples]" on the basis of the parallel account in Jn 6:35, which has Jesus and his disciples going up to a mountainside before the people reached them. In that case *exelthōn* in v 34 would mean "coming off/down" the mountain instead of



“coming out” of the boat. This unresolved textual variance does not compromise the point of the account. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)

Jesus actually managed to get away in a boat alone with His disciples; but His embarking was nevertheless witnessed by some people, and His identity was too well known in the district, probably the neighborhood of Bethsaida. Besides, they noted and drew correct conclusions as to the course which they were taking in their boat, and the part of the country toward which they were heading. And the news was rapidly passed along the line. While Jesus, therefore, was slowly sailing across the sea, the multitude, swelled by additional inquisitive people from the cities on the northwest shore, made the trip around the north side of the lake afoot, a distance of some ten miles. They walked very rapidly; they ran together, and came ahead of them; they beat them to their destination. Curiosity, for the most part; what an immense factor in the destiny of individuals and of nations! (Kretzmann)

**6:34** Those who see the people arriving first, see Jesus getting out of the boat to greet them. Those who see Jesus and the Apostles arriving first, going up the hill, resting, then see Jesus and the Apostles coming down to greet the people. (Buls)

*compassion* – It is an aorist passive meaning to “to have pity, to feel sympathy, to show mercy, to be moved with compassion.” This verb occurs 12 times in the NT, all in the synoptic gospels, and all either describing Christ Himself or describing Christ-like compassion shown by someone in one Jesus’ parables. The result of Christi’s compassion can be either an action, as when He heals (Mt. 14:14; 20:34; Mk 1:41), or miraculously feeds (Mt. 15:32; Mk. 8:2), exorcises (Mk. 9:22), or raises the dead (Lk. 7:13); or speech, as when Jesus teaches the crowds in our text. Christ has compassion on the crowds (Mt. 9:26; 14:14; 15:32); Mk. 6:34; 8:2), on a leper crying out to Him (Mt. 20:34), on a father and his demon-possessed son (Mk. 9:22), and on the widow of Nain whose son has died (Lk 7:13). The word is used in three parables describing the father of the prodigal son (Lk. 15:20), the king with the unforgiving servant (Mt. 18:27), and the good Samaritan (Lk. 10:33). All the passages where this verb is used point not merely to an inner feeling, but to an emotion that bears fruit in outward action of providing assistance, which can be either physical aid or the verbal provision of God’s Word. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 7, Part 3)

When Jesus saw the great crowd, he had compassion—he felt deep emotional concern for the people and their needs. They needed a shepherd to feed and lead them, to rescue them from danger and death, to guide them to life with God. The image of the Savior as a shepherd occurs frequently throughout the Old Testament, with Ps 23 and Ezekiel 34 (especially vv 23–24) perhaps the best-known passages. Jesus often appropriated this image for himself (particularly in John 10), and those who bear the Latin word for shepherd, *pastor*, serve as Christ’s undershepherds. Adapted from *The Concordia Pulpit* for 1979, pages 189–91. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

*Began to teach them.* καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν αὐτοὺς πολλὰ, “and he began to teach them a lot” (6:34): Here Jesus is represented as a Moses figure who teaches his people in the desert (6:35), even as did that great prophet (see Exodus 20–40; Leviticus; Numbers; Deuteronomy). Again, another OT vision for the future comes to fruition, namely, that of Deut 18:15, where Moses says that the Lord God will raise up “a prophet” (עֲדָנָי; LXX: προφήτης) like him from among the people: “him you shall hear” (LXX: αὐτοῦ ἀκούσεσθε). (See also Mk 9:7 and the voice on the mount of transfiguration: ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ, “hear him!”) As is appropriate in the Marcan verses that follow (6:35–44), features of Moses’ ministry to God’s people in the desert

are also present in the feeding of the five thousand men. It must not be forgotten, however, that Jesus' teaching continues a key theme in Mark's Gospel, namely, that the spreading of the Word by proclamation (1:14–15) and especially by teaching (1:21, 27) is central to the implementation of the eschatological reign and rule of God. (CC)

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, fulfills the needs of His flock. Here, He provides instruction as well as an unforgettable meal. Christian worship services today typically have Jesus' teaching and a miraculous meal as their most important elements. (TLSB)

*Esplagchnisthē* (v 34) is the aorist passive of *splagchnizomai*, “to have pity, to feel sympathy, to show mercy, to be moved with compassion.” This verb occurs 12 times in the NT, all in the synoptic gospels, and all either describing Christ himself or describing Christ-like compassion shown by someone in one of Jesus' parables. The result of Christ's compassion can be either an action, as when he heals (Mt 14:14; 20:34; Mk 1:41), miraculously feeds (Mt 15:32; Mk 8:2), exorcises (Mk 9:22), or raises the dead (Lk 7:13); or speech, as when Jesus teaches the crowds in our text. Christ has compassion on the crowds (Mt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; Mk 6:34; 8:2), on a leper crying out for help (Mk 1:41), on two blind men who call out to him (Mt 20:34), on a father and his demon-possessed son (Mk 9:22), and on the widow of Nain whose son has died (Lk 7:13). The word is used in three parables describing the father of the prodigal son (Lk 15:20), the king with the unforgiving servant (Mt 18:27), and the good Samaritan (Lk 10:33). The compassion of the father and the king results in an act of forgiveness toward a sinner and a debtor, respectively, while the Samaritan's compassion leads him to assist a victim. Therefore in all the passages where this verb is used, it points not merely to an inner feeling, but to an emotion that bears fruit in outward action of providing assistance, which can be either physical aid or the verbal provision of God's Word. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 7, Part 3)

*esplagchnisthē . . . probata mē echonta poimena*, “compassion . . . sheep without a shepherd.” The theme of compassion and the metaphor of sheep and a shepherd are naturally connected. This produces a clear opportunity for Law (sheep without a shepherd) and Gospel (he had compassion on them). Sheep without a shepherd wander and perish. This is the fate of all who walk apart from Christ and his life-giving and life-sustaining Gospel. The Greek for “compassion” indicates that deep, in-the-gut ache for those in need. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

The word used for “compassion” is always used of God and his great compassion for sinner. (Buls)

Without a shepherd sheep are lost and are vulnerable. The lives of these people were aimless and exposed to paganism and false teaching. (Buls)

Bengel: He began afresh, as if He had not taught them previously. There is need of real compassion to enable one to teach; and compassion is the virtue of a good teacher. (Buls)

Jesus gave them thorough instruction. We learn from the next pericope what Jesus taught them. (Buls)

Fahling: The sad feature of it was that it was not a Savior-seeking, but a miracle-seeking crowd. (This is brought out in the Johannine account.) (Buls)

Stoeckhardt: Through the preaching of Christ and the preaching about Christ everywhere in the land many disciples were won. But the majority of the people hardened themselves against the Word and Work of Christ. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: The Synoptists call attention to the fact that Jesus first provides for their spiritual needs. (Buls)

Fahling: When Jesus came out and saw so many people, the vision of Ezekiel flashed into his mind, Ezekiel 34:1-15; Numbers 27:17. (Buls)

Kretzmann: In all the synagogues of Galilee there were rabbis and scribes, but the food which they supplied to their congregations was a diluted pap and treacle of matter which the Jerusalem schools were teaching the young theologians. The people were in a state of greatest spiritual neglect. And so the great friend of sinners forgot His own weariness, His urgent need of rest, and He began a long sermon to them, He taught them many things, things that pertained to their salvation. (Buls)

Lenski: Mark notes the main part of this shepherding 'he began to teach them many things.' Luke is more specific 'he spoke unto them of the kingdom of God.' Matthew and Luke add that he healed the sick 'the strengthless one' (Matthew), 'them that had need of healing' (Luke) . . . Jesus had a few hours to himself before He was compelled to meet the crowd. (Buls)

**6:35-36** Because it was likely late afternoon, the people would have time to buy food at the market. (TLSB)

**6:35** ἔρημος, “deserted”: The deserted area/desert as the scene of the feeding is critical to the theological significance of many features of this pericope, not the least of which is the connection to the figure of Moses. (CC)

**6:36** He should dismiss them; they could go to the farmhouses and the little villages situated within a radius of a few miles and buy themselves something to eat. (Kretzmann)

**6:37** *you give them* - When Jesus somewhat bluntly suggests that the disciples give the crowd something to eat (*dote*, imperative), he introduces the impossible solution to the people’s needs. No one can satisfy God’s people but Christ himself. Our Lord’s statement redirects both the disciples’ and the readers’ attention from their own (and our own) insufficiency to his own singular sufficiency. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

*eight months of a man’s wages.* See NIV text note. The usual pay for a day’s work was one denarius (see Mt 20:2), meaning that about 200 denarii would be earned in eight months. – Note from John **6:5 Philip**. Since he came from nearby Bethsaida (1:44), it was appropriate to ask him. (CSB)

Keep in mind that Philip has been forcing out demons and healing the sick (Mark 6:13). We’d expect him to be optimistic. A bit of faith would be appropriate. After all, he had just spend several weeks seeing the impossible happen. He can recite the stats, but can’t see how to help. He can crunch the numbers, but he can’t construct the answer. (manager vs. leader) And though the answer to prayer is standing next to him, he doesn’t even pray. Equally disturbing is the silence of the other disciples. It never occurred to the disciples to turn the problem over to Jesus. God’s faithfulness has never depended on the faithfulness of his children. He is faithful even

when we aren't. No, we don't give up. We look up. We trust. We believe. We remember of baptism. And our optimism is not hollow. Christ has proven worthy. (A Gentle Thunder – Hearing God Through the Storm – Max Lucado pp. 90-93)

**6:38** God's affinity for the finite is evident with the fish and the bread. Sacramental theology rests upon the communication of spiritual gifts through physical means. Whereas this is not a sacramental situation, it can point to the consistent pattern of anti-Gnostic tendencies of our Lord. Even more anti-Gnostic than the use of bread and fish is the physical presence of God in the flesh —Jesus Christ. We also see here our Lord's answer to his own prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

Obviously, this amount of food was insufficient for Jesus and the Twelve, let alone the multitude. (TLSB)

πέντε, καὶ δύο ἰχθύας, "five, and two fish" (6:38): Why these numbers? Perhaps because five plus two equals seven, which is a number of divine completeness (cf. Gen 2:1–3), or perhaps because there simply were that many! More important is the question "why these two items?" The loaves of bread continue the exodus/new exodus motif, with Jesus taking on the functions of both Yahweh and Moses in providing the basics (see the manna in Exodus 16), and instantiating the promise that in the new exodus God's people would feed upon the way (Is 49:9) and not be hungry (Is 49:10; cf. Mk 6:42). (CC)

**6:39** *green grass*. Grass is green around the Sea of Galilee after the late winter or early spring rains. (CSB)

Only Mark records this detail, possibly a vivid recollection from the disciple's memory. (TLSB)

**6:40** *groups of hundreds and fifties*. Recalls the order of the Mosaic camp in the desert (e.g., Ex 18:21). The word translated "groups" means "garden plots," a picturesque figure (v. 39). (CSB)

**6:41** This sequence – taking the bread, speaking a blessing, breaking, and then giving – also occurs in the institution of the Lord's Supper, which may be foreshadowed here. (TLSB)

In Judaism it was a stringent rule that nothing should be eaten without thanking God before and after the meal. (Lane)

**6:42** *all ate and were satisfied*. Attempts to explain away this miracle (e.g., by suggesting that Jesus and his disciples shared their lunch and the crowd followed their good example) are inadequate. If Jesus was, as he claimed to be, God incarnate, the miracle presents no difficulties. God had promised that when the true Shepherd came the desert would become rich pasture where the sheep would be gathered and fed (Eze 34:23–31), and here the Messiah feasts with followers in the desert (cf. Isa 25:6–9). Jesus is the Shepherd who provides for all our needs so that we lack nothing (cf. Ps 23:1). (CSB)

The Lord's superabundant provision was such that, despite the overwhelming number of people, no one went away hungry. (TLSB)

*echortasthēsan*, "were satisfied." This verse introduces the theme. They ate. They were full. There were leftovers (v 43). One can't get much more satisfied than that. We continue to feed upon Christ and his grace. We are full. And there are leftovers. The task of the Church is to

continue feeding upon the Gospel and to share the leftovers with other sheep. Like Jesus, the Church is to attend to the needs of both body and soul, knowing that ultimately Jesus is still the source. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)

**6:43** *twelve baskets full of broken pieces of bread and fish.* Bread was regarded by Jews as a gift of God, and it was required that scraps that fell on the ground during a meal be picked up. The fragments were collected in small wicker baskets that were carried as a part of daily attire. Each of the disciples returned with his basket full. (CSB)

One for each of the doubting disciples. They had more than they had started with. (PBC)

The fragments were collected in the small wicker baskets that every Jew carried with him as a part of his daily attire. These baskets were used to hold such items as a light lunch and general odds and ends. (Lane)

**6:44** *men.* Lit. “males,” as in all four Gospels. Matthew further emphasizes the point by adding “besides women and children” (Mt 14:21). (CSB)

Women and children were fed but not included in the number. (TLSB)

*five thousand.* The size of the crowd is amazing in light of the fact that the neighboring towns of Capernaum and Bethsaida probably had a population of only 2,000–3,000 each. (CSB)

The miracle took place before the multitude, but there is no indication in the Marcan text that they had any realization of what was taking place. The simplicity of the meal Jesus provided is congruous with His general reluctance to perform miracles and give signs; there was nothing extraordinary in the peasants’ fare which would call attention to itself. The event is intended to be revelatory to the disciples alone. They are the ones who prompt the action, who bring the loaves and the fish, who distribute the meal and who gather the fragments. In contrast to their usually passive stance Jesus actively involved them in the total proceeding. His extended discussion with them prior to the event baffled them, while His wordless disclosure of His divine power through the event exceeded all understanding. In the eyes of the people Jesus remained an enigmatic prophetic teacher (Cf. Ch 6:14 F.), but He should have been recognized by the disciples as the Son of God at whose disposal are all of the riches of His Father. The people fail to perceive who Jesus is and they do not understand Him. The disciples do not understand Him although they were given an abundant opportunity to see His glory. That is why they alone reproved for their hardness of heart and their failure to grasp the meaning of the miracle of the loaves in the subsequent narrative (6:52; 8:17-21). (Lane)

**6:30–44** When a multitude of Jesus’ followers have far too little food for all to eat, Jesus multiplies five loaves and two fishes so that all are satisfied. When problems threaten us and needs overwhelm our resources, what is our reaction? Do we turn first to the Lord? We should, as His Word makes clear, for He still treats His flock with compassion and more than provides for every need of body and soul. • Lord, thank You for providing so abundantly and for graciously sustaining our bodies and souls. Teach us to turn to You first in every want and need. Amen. (TLSB)

*Jesus Walks on the Water*

**45** Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. **46** And after he had taken leave of

**them, he went up on the mountain to pray. 47 And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. 48 And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, 49 but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, 50 for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” 51 And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, 52 for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.**

**6:14-8:30** The new section introduced by Ch 6:14 and extending to Ch 8:30 focuses upon a period during which Jesus was frequently in retirement beyond the borders of Galilee. During the mission of the Twelve, Mark calls attention to the reaction of Herod Antipas, who has heard of the mighty works of Jesus. Herod’s suspicion that Jesus is John returned from the dead (Ch 6:14-16) introduces the parenthetical account of the imprisonment and execution of the Baptist (Ch 6:17-29). At the return of the Twelve Jesus withdraws to a solitary place, pursued by multitude. In compassion He provides bread in the wilderness, and five thousand are fed (Ch 6:35-44). A second feeding of four thousand is reported in the region of the Decapolis (Ch 8:1-10), and the striking recurrence of the word “bread” throughout this section provides the pervading motif (Chs. 6:52; 7:2, 28; 8:14 ff). The importance of the two feeding miracles is emphasized when the disciples’ own misunderstanding of Jesus are traced to their failure to understand the significance of the abundant provision of bread. While a single instance of the public teaching occurs in Ch 7:1-23, the accent falls on the instruction of the disciples, whose hardness of heart, unbelief and failure to understand is a prominent element in the record. A point of transition is provided by Ch 8:22-26 where the restoring of sight to a man who was blind signals the opening of the eyes of the disciples as well. A climax in Mark’s narrative is achieved in Ch 8:27-29 when Jesus and His company approach Caesarea Philippi where Jesus’ dignity as Messiah is acknowledged for the first time. (Lane)

**6:45-56** First, it is good to note that parallel accounts of this miracle exist in Matthew (14:22–36) and John (6:16–21). Matthew’s is the longest account, the only one that includes the detail of Peter walking on the water, sinking, and then being rescued. John’s is the briefest and without extra detail. All three have the words of Jesus: “It is I. Do not be afraid.” Matthew and Mark also have Jesus first saying, “Take heart,” *tharseite*. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

Mark seems to emphasize how readily the people accept the result of Jesus’ miracles (just prior, five thousand were glad to be fed; the disciples now embrace the calming of the storm; the crowds bring all their sick to Jesus) but don’t have the faith to realize what this means. Jesus is not just a “bread king” for immediate and temporal needs; he is a victorious and eternal King, and faith in him is more significant than the immediate result of a miracle. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

**6:45** *immediately he made his disciples get into the boat* – The tension of messianic excitement was dangerously in the air after the meal in the desert. The hurried dismissal of the disciples prevented them from adding fuel to the fire by revealing to the people the miraculous character of the evening meal. (Lane)

Jesus obliged the disciples to embark for the other shore. This shows that Jesus was responsible for the disciples’ all-night struggle against the wind. Note further that this was the second time in a day that Jesus commanded the disciples to do something difficult or even impossible (cf. v. 37). (TLSB)

*euthus* is notable in Mark to emphasize that this event takes place “immediately, right away,” following the feeding of the five thousand; it is a reaction, an aftermath. Jesus is splitting up the group into those who have seen the miracle of the fish and loaves (the crowd) and those who are yet to see a greater miracle (his disciples). It is clear that Jesus takes charge to have the crowd dispersed and the disciples sent off so that he is left alone to pray. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

*go before him* – John indicates that the people were ready to take Jesus by force and make him king (Jn 6:14–15), and Jesus therefore sent his disciples across the lake while he slipped away into the hills to pray. (CSB)

*toward Bethsaida*. πρὸς Βηθσαϊδάν, “toward Bethsaida” (6:45): Bethsaida was in Gentile country (see the first textual note on 6:45). Why does Jesus give that as their destination? Is he about to begin a new stage of ministry to the Gentiles, which, in fact, commences with the Syro-Phoenician woman in 7:24 and continues through 9:30, with a brief detour back to Israelite land in 8:10–21? Perhaps the plan is thrown off by the current episode, which ends with the boat going to Gennesaret (6:53), which is on the north shore of the Lake/Sea of Galilee, but west of the point where the Jordan River flows into that body of water. (CC)

This suggests that perhaps the disciples themselves had been inclined to join the crowd in its efforts to proclaim Jesus king. (PBC)

**6:46-48a** Jesus has chosen a place far away geographically (a mountain), but he still sees their peril: “And he saw . . .” (v 48). It seems the disciples (some former fishermen) should have been able to handle the boat but were not able to make progress against the wind. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

**6:46** *to pray* – He did so frequently when facing a critical hour. (PBC)

The evangelist speaks of Jesus’ withdrawal to a solitary place for prayer after the excitement of the Sabbath activity in Capernaum (1:35-39), after the miracle of the loaves (6:45 ff), and following the Last Supper (15:26-42). In each case it is night and Jesus finds Himself in a moment of crisis prompted by the enthusiasm of the crowds or the impending passion. (Lane)

**6:47** *out on the sea* – They were completely off course because they were facing a strong head wind. It was so contrary that they had taken down the sail and picked up the oars. And even that had brought them nowhere on the stormy lake. They were in real danger. (PBC)

In the late afternoon the disciples had left the eastern shore, and when night came on, they had not yet crossed the lake, for they were obliged to battle with contrary winds. And He alone was on the land. (Kretzmann)

**6:48b-50a** It seems clear that Jesus had sent them into a difficult situation. Perhaps he was teaching them yet another faith lesson about his presence in their lives or their need for him. Mark alone points out that “He [Jesus] meant to pass by them” (v 48). This peculiar phrase can be understood in Jesus coming close enough for them to see him but waiting for their cry to him for help. Their cry may initially be one of fear—their fear of the storm is compounded by their fear of a ghost—but seems to end up a cry of undeveloped faith. The irony in their seeing something

supernatural is that Jesus was supernatural (above nature!) in a more profound way. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

**6:48** *making headway painfully* – Jesus though deep in prayer was aware of their situation. He left them struggle for some time in order to show them, as He so often shows us, that He is able to help in the hour of need. (PBC)

He knew their plight; He was with them every inch of the way; but He did nothing to help them. It is often good for the believers to be buffeted by adverse winds of life. It is only by overcoming difficulties and by conquering in the hard places that Christian character is formed. (Kretzmann)

*fourth watch.* 3:00–6:00 A.M. See 13:35. (CSB)

Until the fourth watch of the night, according to Roman reckoning, between three o'clock in the morning and sunrise, He prayed, although the eye of His omniscience and the reassurance of His omnipresence was with them during all these hours. (Kretzmann)

The disciples had been in the boat for a long time, fighting with the wind for almost the whole night. (TLSB)

*walking on the sea.* A special display of the majestic presence and power of the transcendent Lord, who rules over the sea (see Ps 89:9; Isa 51:10, 15; Jer 31:35). (CSB)

Jesus comes to reveal Himself as the Lord of all creation. (TLSB)

The wind and the waves did not hinder our Lord as He walked on the water. (PBC)

*he meant to pass by them* – This was by design – to get the attention of the disciples and to test them. (PBC)

In the OT, God passed by Moses (Ex. 33:22; 34:6) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:11-13). (TLSB)

But now He came walking on the water as man otherwise steps along on dry land, He, the Master of all creation, that can make all things serve His will. He was about to pass by the boat, when the disciples saw Him. (Kretzmann)

**6:49** *a ghost.* Popular Jewish superstition held that the appearance of spirits during the night brought disaster. The disciples' terror was prompted by what they may have thought was a water spirit. (CSB)

Greek phantasma. Appears only here and in Matthew 14:26. The disciples are not far from the truth as they assume that one walking on the water is more than a mere mortal, for Jesus' divinity is clearly visible. (TLSB)

They did not pass the test. Superstition overwhelmed them. Undoubtedly we would have reacted in much the same way. (PBC)

And then ensued a time of panic. Superstition, the fear of ghosts and specters, was still living in their hearts. And so the unwonted appearance of a human figure striding along over the waves set them to crying and wondering and fearing. (Kretzmann)



**6:50b-51a** Again, Mark moves the story along with *euthus*. Their cry for help is addressed with words of comfort. *tharseite* (“Take heart”) is a word of being cheerful or confident. As Jesus offers help and the Gospel is received, those who embrace it have confidence and courage and are of good cheer, even in the midst of frightening circumstances. Jesus’ identification *egō eimi* (“It is I”) is more than just assurance. He identifies himself with the great I AM, God’s revealed name of the Old Testament, Yahweh *YHWH*. Jesus shows that he has power over the wind and the waves (he is their Creator) and then speaks his name as an exclamation point. As Jesus gets into the boat, the wind dies down. Where Jesus is, there is calm in the midst of storms. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

**6:50** *were terrified*. ἐταράχθησαν, “they became terrified”: In Mark’s Gospel, fear is generally a sign of divine activity (see the parallel in 4:41 and further discussion there; see also 5:15, 33; 10:32; and 16:8 [also 11:18]). (CC)

*Spoke* – ἐλάλησεν, “he spoke openly” (6:50): Here we see a public declaration of Jesus’ identity. (CC)

*take heart it is I do not be afraid* – This command will be echoed at another important moment of revelation – at the empty tomb. (TLSB)

**6:51b-52** The disciples’ reaction is complex: there is astonishment (*existanto*) but lack of understanding, which leaves their hearts *pepōrōmenē* (“hardened”). The brief commentary on hard-heartedness in *The Lutheran Study Bible* in the introductory comments on Mark is helpful ([St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 2009], 1653). The disciples’ hearts are still hardened in ch 8, after another miracle of bread but lack of understanding (Mk 8:17). It is more the stubbornness of the sinful flesh to reject what it cannot understand than antagonism toward Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

**6:51** *Wind died down*. He then climbed over the side of the boat into their midst, whereupon the wind immediately stopped. The effect of this double miracle on the disciples, wrought up as they had been by their fear, was such as to bring them almost out of their senses for astonishment. (Kretzmann)

ἀνέβη πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, “he mounted up toward them into the boat”: Note the intimacy of this act. Despite being the Lord of all creation, Jesus comes to his frightened disciples as a shepherd to his frightened sheep (6:34). This is quite unlike the Lord of the OT who passes by his prophets in revelations and does not stoop to human interaction with them. This is another expression of human and humble incarnation. (CC)

*were utterly astonished* – They were undoubtedly physically drained from their rowing against a strong head-wind and emotionally drained from their experience of terror. They had no categories for understanding Jesus’ presence with them in the boat. They were utterly astonished. (Lane)

**6:52** *they had not understood about the loaves*. Had they understood the feeding of the 5,000, they would not have been amazed at Jesus’ walking on the water or his calming the waves. (CSB)

Despite the unmistakable ways Jesus had just displayed His divine nature and power, the disciples somehow remain in the dark. (TLSB)

*their hearts were hardened.* They were showing themselves to be similar to Jesus' opponents, who also exhibited hardness of heart (3:5). (CSB)

It is somewhat surprising that Jesus describes the disciples and His opponents in the same way (cf. 10:5; 16:14). The disciples' lack of comprehension will only worsen in the coming chapters (e.g. 9:32; 10:32). Jesus' predictions of His death will prove most difficult for them to grasp. (TLSB)

Their hearts were not open to what Jesus was seeking to teach them. Mark is very candid about exposing the spiritual weaknesses of the disciples and very lucid expounding the greatness of Christ. (PBC)

**6:45-52** Demonstrating mastery over the winds and waves for a second time, Jesus calms another storm. Even more amazing, however, is the fact that Jesus' disciples do not recognize his divine nature. Too often, our eyes are also blind and our hearts are just as hard. It is a good thing, therefore, that he who walked on the water that night also died on Calvary's darkness to save us from our hard-heartedness – Lord, save us when we are overcome by life's storms and our hearts are darkened by unbelief. Calm the tempest, open our eyes, and create within us the faith to recognize you. Amen

*Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret*

**53 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. 54 And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him 55 and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. 56 And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.**

**6:53-55** “recognized him.” There is irony in that they see who he is—Jesus who had fed the five thousand—but they don't really know what this means or who he is fully. Here, Jesus also might have thought to “pass by them,” but he had compassion and healed those who came to him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

**6:53** *Gennesaret.* Either the narrow plain, about four miles long and less than two miles wide, on the west side of the Sea of Galilee near the north end (north of Magdala), or a town in the plain. The plain was considered a garden spot of Palestine, fertile and well watered. (CSB)

Town on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, between Capernaum and Tiberius. (TLSB)

It is from John's Gospel that we learn when Jesus and His disciples landed in the area of Gennesaret, they set out for nearby Capernaum, where Jesus on the following day gave His discourse on the bread of life (Jesus Himself). After hearing these words, many of His followers began leaving Him. It seems they were ready to settle for earthly bread, but not the spiritual food Christ offered them when He pointed to Himself as the only way to the Father. (PBC)

**6:54** *recognized him* – He was well known from His ministry at Capernaum and reports of His healing power had penetrated the entire region (1:28). The healing of a paralyzed man who had been brought to Him (1:32-34), undoubtedly had been the subject of bazaar conversation in many towns and cities and created the climate of expectation which greeted Jesus in Gennesaret. (Lane)

Note how starkly this picture contrasts with the depiction of the disciples in vv. 50-51. The Twelve's hardened hearts had just failed to see Jesus' divine nature, even after He had multiplied the loaves and walked on the water. (TLSB)

But no sooner had Jesus stepped to the shore than He was recognized by some of the people living in that neighborhood, and there was a repetition of former experiences. (Kretzmann)

**6:55** *they ran about the whole region* – Those who had recognized Christ as He stepped off the boat at Gennesaret immediately went throughout the region with the news that Jesus was in the area. Crowds welcomed Him in the days that followed as he went through villages, towns and countryside. (PBC)

They ran throughout the region and spread the news of His coming. And now the sick were brought to Him. Also, whether He walked along city streets or country lanes, the relatives of the sick, undiscouraged and unwearied, brought their unfortunate ones. (Kretzmann)

*carried the sick* – Instead of the usual goods on the market, Jesus found a multitude of desperately ill people, all asking for His touch and healing. The numerous healings here in Gennesaret contrast with the few that were healed in Nazareth (6:5-6). (TLSB)

**6:56** *touch even the fringe of his garment* – This confidence echoes that of the woman who touched Jesus' garment and was healed (5:28-29). (TLSB)

The healing is connected to the faith that touched his garment. This is the same faith shown in the detailed miracle of the woman who had suffered from bleeding (Mk 5:27-29; also in Matthew and Luke). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

*were made well* – Though Mark does not mention it, Jesus undoubtedly also used these occasions to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, the spiritual healing His hearers needed even more than the physical healing. (PBC)

**6:53-56** Not long after Jesus' disciples failed to recognize an unmistakable display of His divinity, the people of Gennesaret show great faith by receiving Jesus and clamoring for His healing power. Even today, those new to the faith often exhibit more conviction than those who have known Jesus for a long time. It is good news, then, that Jesus remains devoted to us even when our commitment wavers or fails. His resolve to suffer and die for all is ample proof of that.

• Lord, give us the zeal of the Gennesaret believers. May we ever press toward You, resolute in our conviction that You can heal and restore us. Amen. (TLSB)