



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Matthew 14–28 Sermon Series

Supports Session 1: Courage

Sermon Title: “Jesus Is Enough” (Matthew 14:13-21)

Connection to Session 1

Session 1 highlights the miracle of Jesus walking on the water in the midst of the storm. There are two important considerations in preparing a sermon from this text. First, Jesus no longer teaches the crowds after His rejection in Nazareth (13:53-58). While Jesus does give teaching to the disciples and corrects the religious leaders, Matthew no longer mentions Jesus teaching directly to the crowds.

Second, the feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle in all four gospel accounts. While each gospel emphasizes different details, Matthew emphasizes the disciples’ spiritual inability to meet the needs of the world. We must read this story as part of Matthew’s narrative and not over-emphasize details not included in this account. Matthew’s focus was on the Savior as He prepared His disciples for the task ahead.

Introduction/Opening

Have you ever been to an all-you-can-eat-restaurant? If so, you may have attempted to “beat the buffet.” This is where one tries to eat enough food with a goal to get the best value for their admission price. To “beat the buffet,” a strategic eater will go for the higher-cost items and avoid filling foods. It’s not uncommon to later regret this experience when one over-eats!

In the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus showed that you cannot “over-eat” with Jesus. He’s the source that never runs empty. As Jesus prepared the disciples to face many trials, he showed that His power is sufficient for every need His disciples had.

Outline

The Compassion of the Savior (Matthew 14:13-14)

Verses 13-14 beautifully emphasize both Jesus’s humanity and divinity. Jesus had heard of John’s death (13a) and intended to withdraw to be alone. The other gospel accounts give us the details of the story. Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee (John 6:1) near the town of Bethsaida (Luke 9:10). This is likely Peter’s hometown (John 1:44), though he may have moved to nearby Capernaum (Matt. 8:5-13). Mark’s gospel account tells us Jesus and the disciples were so busy with ministry they did not have time to eat (Mark 6:30-31).

Though Jesus had come to this place to be alone, the crowds were relentless. They had outpaced the boat and were waiting for Jesus’s arrival. Verse 14 shows this as Jesus departed of the boat. Can you relate to this feeling? Just a like a busy parent being chased by a toddler, there is not a moment’s peace. The instant Jesus landed, the crowds were waiting!

Despite His physical exhaustion and hunger, Jesus saw the need of the crowds. He had compassion on them and healed them. We have seen the Savior do this before in Matthew 8. What a beautiful portrayal of the love of our Savior!

The Conundrum facing the Disciples (14:15-17)

Evening had come. The Twelve (who are likely as hungry as Jesus) were ready to shoo the crowds away. While Jesus cared about the people, the disciples were worried about the practical.

Jesus posed a challenge to His disciples in verse 16. “They don’t need to go away . . . you give them something to eat.” This verse is the crux of the story. Jesus taught the disciples that He is their true source of provision in ministry.

Verse 17 is comical. “But we only have five loaves and two fish here.” The disciples had nothing to give. Matthew does not tell of the little boy mentioned in John 6:9. The point of this miracle in Matthew's gospel is not about how God can use what we bring (although He does); rather, its focus is on our complete inability to do anything on our own.

The Command of the Savior (14:18-21)

The Lord instructed the disciples to bring their meager offering to Him and commanded the crowds to be seated. Can you imagine the murmurs of the disciples and the audience! Though they were uncertain, Jesus knew exactly what to do. He is enough.

The public blessing of the meal is meant to stand out to the audience. It was common for the people of Israel to thank the Lord for their food, and it’s likely that the disciples would have remembered the events from Matthew 6:25-34 as Jesus blessed the meal. Later in Matthew, Jesus will bless another meal, break bread, and give it to His disciples at the Last Supper.

This miracle is above and beyond what the disciples imagine! Not only is everyone satisfied, but there is a significant amount left over. Some commentators see the twelve leftover baskets as a symbolism that points to Jesus as the Savior of Israel, while others view it as simply the leftovers of Jesus's miracle. This is no small miracle as the size of the crowd is revealed to be 5,000 men, not including the women and children. There were roughly enough people to fill a large high school football stadium!

Application Points:

- Jesus is never too busy for you. He always cares for those who come to Him! If you are worried God will reject you, know you can come to the compassionate Christ.
- Sometimes the Lord places us in a predicament where the only thing we can do is trust Him. Rather than look to other sources, we must always go to Jesus for our needs.
- Jesus’ provision is far beyond our comprehension. He tells His disciples today to receive and share His provision for ministry. We can never “beat the buffet” of Jesus’ blessing!

Conclusion

As disciples of Jesus, if we try to provide for the needs of the crowds, we will never have enough. Only the compassionate Christ is enough to satisfy. When trials, discouragement, and even persecution come, we must remember and return to the true source of strength for ministry—Jesus Himself. Come to the Savior who cares for your needs. When you are faced

with challenge, realize the Lord is calling you to rely upon Him. Remember His provision is far beyond our comprehension, and we are called to receive His blessing as we share it with others!

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