

**Giving It Over**  
The Gospel of Mark #24  
Mark 6:30-44

*Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

In my closet resides an item that has never been used. Come to think of it, it has barely even seen the light of day. It is a painting canvas that I bought at Michaels for 3 easy payments of 49.99 a year or so ago. In my closet, this canvas collects dust. But if I decide to put it where it belongs, in the possession of a skilled painter, the blank canvas will eventually display a polychromatic array of colors. It all depends on giving it over. In my garage resides 14 of my most precious possessions that get used quite often. There's one catch though: I'm not very skilled at using them. They are my golf clubs. In my garage, they are worth about a quarter less than what I paid for them. On the golf course, they are only worth throwing. But if I put them in the hands of someone with a last name like Parris, Miller, or Baird, they would be worth far more. It all depends on giving them over.

I want to suggest to you today, church, that one of the most important lessons you will learn as a follower of Jesus is the lesson of giving "it" over to the Lord of all creation, maker of the heavens and the earth, whatever "it" may be for you. If there is a problem in your life, the answer lies in giving it over. If there is an opportunity, the answer lies in giving it over. If there is a great fear, the answer lies in giving it over. And even if there is great faith, the answer lies in giving that over also. For everything we possess comes from the provident hand of the Divine Giver. And when we hold on to it instead of giving it over, we never learn to trust God. Nor do we discover the full potential of what could be, even with something as seemingly paltry and insignificant as 5 loaves and 2 fish.

The passage before us today is a familiar one. It was also familiar enough to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that they all chose to put it in their Gospel. That's an important piece of information because only two miracles occur in all 4 Gospels: (1) the resurrection of Jesus Christ and (2) what I call the feeding of the multitudes. You may know it as the Feeding of the 5000. It's a significant passage, therefore, for this reason: God ranks "giving it over" just below the resurrection as one of the central tenants of Christian discipleship. It has one central lesson. It is this: little is much when God is in it, and it's given to Him. So today I want you to take your Bibles and turn with me to Mark 6:30-44. As we read together, I want you to think about something. Most likely, some church somewhere else right now is hearing this story from Matthew's perspective (14:13-21). Another is hearing it from Luke's (9:10-17), and another from John's (6:1-15). Regardless of the Gospel text, the Spirit of the Lord's message to His people is the same: He calls us all to give it over. To see what the process of something over to Jesus, let's read from Mark 6:30-44.

<sup>30</sup>The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup>Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." <sup>32</sup>So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. <sup>33</sup>But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup>When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So, he began teaching them many things. <sup>35</sup>By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. <sup>36</sup>Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." <sup>37</sup>But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" <sup>38</sup>"How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish." <sup>39</sup>Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup>So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. <sup>41</sup>Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup>They all ate and were satisfied, <sup>43</sup>and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. <sup>44</sup>The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

### 1. Why We Give It Over — Because of Who We Are in Christ (30)

- **Daughter's First Babysitting Job:** (1) You know you are getting old when your kids stop being kids and start getting real jobs. My daughter had her first babysitting job a couple of weeks ago. (2) At first, I protested. But then I just accepted that she's growing up. (3) While babysitting, an extra sense of responsibility came over her I had not seen before. She'd been given responsibility and had the trust people greater. As a result, she considered it a privilege to watch over and follow their lists.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** The apostles "gave it over" and considered it a privilege to do so. We are not apostles. But we have the same access to Jesus. Therefore, giving something over to Jesus is a privilege that non-believers with no access do not have.
- **The Apostles:** (1) Mark has referred to the individuals Jesus called to follow Him as (a) fisherman; (b) the Twelve; (c) the disciples; (d) individuals that lack faith; (e) individuals that are sent out. But here after they return, Mark refers to them as "the apostles." A new term meaning "one sent out." It's like the term ambassador except it was unique because it only applied to the 12 men Jesus called to Himself. They were the original apostolic messengers. (2) They willingly gave their lives over to Jesus because of who they were. (3) We are not apostles. But we "give it over" because we are ambassadors and have the same access to Jesus.

## 2. How We Give It Over — By Resting (31)

- **Pushing a Rock:** (1) For centuries in most cultures around the globe, there is an image that people are familiar with that reflects the difference between striving and resting. (2) It's the image of pushing a rock uphill. We know that feeling, don't we? (3) The reason the image works so well is that we subconsciously know why the person is going uphill in the first place: to get to the summit so he can rest and use gravity all the way down. (4) Giving over happens when you recognize that as a follower of Jesus, you have already summited. As a result, Jesus wants you to understand that everything about your life in him is a matter of rest.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** Everything about the Christian life is identified with rest in the New Testament. Salvation is rest. Heaven is rest. And giving something over to Jesus is rest. We give it over not by striving or by holding on. We give it over by resting in Him.
- **Come With Me to a Quiet Place and Get Some Rest:** (1) This invitation came on the heels of being sent out; an invitation that included rejection (Jesus at Nazareth) and danger (John the Baptist beheading). (2) After the rest, Jesus would perform the miracle of the feeding of the multitudes. So now was the time to rest. (3) What's interesting here is how the invitation is phrased. Jesus doesn't say "go away by yourselves." He says "come with me by yourselves. "Giving it over" requires that we know true rest and peace comes from fellowship with Him. We are not alone. (4). Also, the word "quiet" here doesn't mean what you think it does. In the language of the NT, it is the same word for wilderness/desert. It's in the desert — the wilderness, the place free of the busyness and the noise — that God speaks the loudest right into the heart of our souls. It's in the desert — the place of refuge and rest — that we learn to wrestle with God and give over.

## 3. What We Give Over — Whatever We Have, No Matter How Paltry or Insignificant (36-42)

- **5 Loaves and 2 Fish:** (1) I've always been intrigued by the statement 5 loaves and 2 fish. (2) It's a question Jesus asked the disciples just before the miracle. (3) You don't have to be a biblical scholar either to know that amount isn't very much. (3) Five loaves weren't enough "daily bread" for 12 disciples. 2 fish was just enough protein for 1 disciple, but not 12. (4) 5 loaves weren't enough. Neither were 2 fish. But 5 loaves and 2 fish was plenty for Jesus. For little is much when God is the one about to perform the miracle.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** In their eyes, 5 loaves and 2 fish was paltry and insignificant for the disciples. But for Jesus, little was much when surrendered to Him. For nothing is paltry nor insignificant when given to the glory of God.
- **The Humorous Movement of the Narrative:** (1) The narrative of the miracle starts in verse 36 and begins humorously, which is intended, I believe, by Mark. (2) It begins with the apostles' giving directions about what he should do: send the people away so they can eat. (3) To which Jesus responds: you give them something to eat! Can you imagine the picture after that response? (4) Then Jesus gives them a deliberate order. It's one that immediately would have given them a sense of the impossibility of the situation in to accomplish this by themselves: Go and see (what you have). (5) Where they saw impossibility, Jesus saw opportunity. (6) The disciples couldn't see past that. But Jesus could. They looked at what they had and said to themselves: "this is paltry and insignificant." But Jesus looked at it and said, "this will do just fine." (7) The lesson here is as important as any lesson for the Christian. Had they not given the loaves and fish over, they never would have been able to see what God could do with it. When we hold on instead of giving over, we not only tell the Lord "I will go about trying to solve an impossible situation on my own." We also limit our Christian experience, which is built on the miraculous (resurrection).

## 4. Who We Give It Over To — To the One Who Does Exceedingly More than We Can Imagine (44)

- **When You Ask Someone in Your Home to Use Concentrated Outdoor Cleaner with No Experience:** (1) When you ask someone to use concentrated outdoor cleaner who has no experience, things will get interesting. (2) The first thing they will do if they must clean a large area is not pay attention to the phrase on the bottle that says "concentrated." (3) Then before you know it, the whole area they cleaned looks and smells like a nuclear waste disposal. (4) The damage is exceedingly more than you can ever think, ask, or imagine. (5) That's what happens when we refuse to give over. (6) But the opposite is true. When we do, Jesus solves the issue in a way that's more than you can possibly think, ask, or imagine.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** When we hand over what we want to hold on to, we get the privilege of trusting God to do exceedingly more than all we can think, ask, or imagine with it.
- **The Feeding of the Multitude:** (1) The best blessing of the story comes when you read it closer than you have previously. (2) We call it the Feeding of the 5000 because that's what we've always called it. (3) But if you look at the text, Mark tells us something interesting: "the number of men who had eaten was 5000" (Mk 6:44). Matthew tells us "The number of those who ate was about 5000, besides women and children" (Mt 14:21). John tells us "about 5000 men were there" (Jn 6:10). (4) In ancient Israel, the average family size was 6 to 7. The average number of children was 4. (5) The Gospel writers only include the men numbering 5000 because the actual number who were fed was too numerous to count!
- **DL Moody:** "Let God have your life. He can do more with it than you can."
- **Chuck Swindoll:** "The happiest people I know are the ones who have learned how to hold everything loosely and have given the worrisome, stress-filled, fearful details of their lives into God's keeping."