

"Best. Fish Tacos. Ever."

Mark 6:33-44

13 May 2018

Whether you can say that you have the *Best. Mom. Ever.* or not, we are reminded on this day that we should we should honor, respect, and love the mothers in our lives. So do that today. Personally, I think that I have the *Best. Mom. Ever.* and I am who I am today because of her. And I think that my wife is the *Best. Mom. Ever.* Maybe you can say that about your mom today. Or, maybe you can't.

Maybe you didn't have a good mother. Maybe Mother's Day conjures up painful memories for a variety of reasons. Maybe Mother's Day means you go through a whole box of *Kleenex*. If that is the case, you need to know that Jesus is the Good Shepherd- the *Best. Shepherd. Ever.* He will care for you today. He will take you in His arms and carry you close to His heart. A bruised reed He will not break and smoldering wick He will not snuff out.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who has compassion on lost, wayward, hurting sheep. That's what Mark is going to tell us in his gospel today.

But Mark will also tell us that Jesus makes a mean fish taco. Did you know that Jesus loved to make tacos? Jesus loved making tacos. Jesus was Texan before being Texan was cool! Because to be a Texan is to love tacos of all kinds and varieties. Tacos were a part of Texas even before Texas became a state! Dallas-based food blogger José Ralat says, "*Texas has two national cuisines—barbecue and tacos. Tex-Mex fits in there sure, but people eat a lot more tacos than they do enchiladas and combo platters.*"

Journalist Allison McNearney says in her article, "How Texas Fell In Love With The Taco"-

"...there are only two types of Texas families: barbecue families and Mexican food families (the distinction is determined by the answer to one simple question: what's the first restaurant you go to when you return home to Texas?)."

Mando Rayo, the author of "The Tacos of Texas," says, "*[Tacos are] part of the Texas culture whether you grew up here, [were] born and raised [here], or you got here as soon as you could... It's what we do, it's how we bring people together. We don't break bread, we tear off a tortilla for the taco.*"

Not only do Texans love tacos, Jesus loved tacos too! Fish tacos to be more precise. Twice in the gospels, like we'll see in our passage today, we see Jesus making fish tacos for several thousand people. And one morning, after His resurrection, Jesus makes fish tacos for breakfast for the disciples on the beach. How much does Jesus like fish tacos? He makes them for His best friends after His resurrection.

Listen to John's account from his gospel:

When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread... Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."... Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. John 21:9, 12-13

First meal Jesus makes post-resurrection? Tacos. I knew Jesus was a Texan! Apparently Jesus likes to serve people fish tacos because He does it several times in the gospels. And he'll do it in our passage today. And what we'll see in Mark 6 today, as He serves up the best fish tacos ever, is this incredibly breath-taking truth about Jesus-

HIS HEART GOES PITTER-PATTER WHEN HE SEES US.

Surely Jesus' heart went pitter-patter when He saw the disciples that morning on the beach when He made them breakfast. They were His best friends. And you can hear it in His words, "*Come and have breakfast.*" What a heart-felt invitation! "*Come here, guys! Sit down with Me. I made you fish tacos for breakfast. Let's eat!*" And Mark will remind us in our passage today that Jesus is the Good Shepherd whose heart moves out in compassion toward wayward, lost, stupid, ignorant sheep. Mark will remind us that Jesus' heart goes pitter-patter for His people, the sheep of His pasture. And that's good news for ignorant sheep like us. We have a Shepherd whose heart goes pitter-patter when He sees us.

Think about that. It's mind-blowing. It's the nature of grace. This is how grace works. The unruly, the unlovely, the uncouth- we are accepted. We are loved. We are welcome. And when Jesus sees us, His heart goes pitter-patter. Truly mind-blowing!

As I mentioned a few weeks ago, this whole section in Mark 6 belongs together, so let's rewind a few verses and start with verse 30.

LOOK AT VERSE 30...

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

You no doubt are familiar with this episode. Most young children know this story. *Loaves* and *fishes*. Those 2 words just belong together, right? When I was in seminary in Dallas, Texas, they had a food pantry and a thrift store at the seminary where the food and the clothes were free, and poor seminary students could be fed and clothed, and the name of the place? *Loaves and Fishes*. This story in Mark's gospel is synonymous with giving, and that's how it's typically taught: we should give and share things. That's how many people teach this passage: the little boy shared his food and you should share your things. But that's not what Mark is getting at. Mark has a deeper and richer point to make.

So even though you may be familiar with this story, Mark is telling us things about Jesus and His relationship with His people that you may not be aware of. First, the location, the setting of this famous story is very important. It cannot be glanced over. Maybe you noticed it when I read the verses. Where does this incident take place? 3x Mark tells us where:

- v. 30 *a desolate place*
- v. 32 *a desolate place*
- v. 35 *a desolate place*

Mark is tipping us off here about the location where the feeding of the 5,000 occurs. The Greek word that he uses is the word for "desert" or "wilderness." It's the same word that Mark used in chapter 1 to describe the location of John the Baptist's ministry (Mark 1:3), and the location of the temptations of Jesus (Mark 1:12), as well as the place where Jesus often got away to pray (Mark 1:35). This of course does not mean that it was a desert like Arizona or New Mexico. It was not a completely desolate or barren place because there are villages and towns around this area, as we see the disciples suggest going to these places to get food in verse 36.

And it's not a typical "desert area" as some translations imply, and here's why: Mark tells us in verse 39 that before Jesus fed the 5,000 people "*he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass."* Mark adds this particular detail about the green grass to tip us off that this was not a desert area with the obligatory scorpions and cactus and tarantulas and cow skulls. Mark is telling us that this was just an area that was on the outskirts of these villages. A quiet place that they could get away to in order to get refreshed.

But there's even more significance that this is *the wilderness*. So what's significant about this event taking place in the wilderness? Why did Jesus take His disciples to *the wilderness*, to get refreshed? And why do all of these Israelites chase them down at this spot *in the wilderness*? And why does Jesus have them sit down in *the green grass*? All of these clues are very significant!

Here's why and here's what Mark wants us to see: The wilderness was a special place. The wilderness was where Israel honeymooned with Yahweh. Where they roamed and ate manna. Where Jesus successfully resisted the Devil's temptations. And where Jesus will feed the 5,000. The lights should be going off for us! The wilderness is pregnant with meaning and significance! The wilderness was where the nation of Israel honeymooned with the Lord! This place is special! And this is exactly what the prophet Jeremiah says:

Jeremiah 2:2

"Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the LORD, "I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown."

So the nation of Israel once loved and served Yahweh in the wilderness. It's where the nation of Israel honeymooned with the Lord and where they spent the early days of marital bliss. This is where the "newlyweds" enjoyed the beginning of their relationship! But we know the rest of the story, right? We know how this episode ends. The nation of Israel eventually *rebelled* in the wilderness and chased after other lovers and other gods- *in the very place of their honeymoon*. They mumbled and grumbled and complained in the wilderness. And the first generation was forbidden to enter the Promised Land and roamed for 40 years.

So the wilderness was a very significant place in Israel's history. It was where they entered into covenant with Yahweh, it was where the wedding reception was, it was where they honeymooned, and then it was where they turned away from the Lord, where they broke covenant and were unfaithful to the Lord. So the wilderness was the place of their sin, the place of their failures.

But the wilderness was also significant because this was the place where Yahweh said that He would restore the nation. In Hosea 2, after 13 verses detailing all of their whoring after other gods, Yahweh at last declares His redeeming love for the nation and how He will woo them back in the wilderness. He will win their hearts again in the wilderness. Listen to these comforting words from the prophet Hosea.

Hosea 2:14-20

"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt."

"And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.' For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD."

So the wilderness was not just the place where they had their wedding and their honeymoon. The wilderness was not just the place where they disobeyed God. It was also the place where Yahweh said that He would restore them one day. The nation of Israel knew Hosea 2. These verses were highlighted in their Bibles. These were verses that they memorized. They catechized their children with these hope-inspiring words. They put Hosea 2 on their coffee mugs. Why? Because it was a promise from the Lord about where He would allure the nation one day and speak tenderly to her: *in the wilderness*.

And this is where Jesus purposely took the disciples and where the crowd of 5,000+ followed and found them. Of course, this event likely took place in northern Israel, likely in the northern section surrounding the Sea of Galilee. They are not in the exact location as the wilderness wanderings in the Old Testament. But they are in an area called the wilderness, and that is very significant, one that any good student of the Old Testament Scriptures would pick up on. Just because they are not in the wilderness in southern Israel does not mean that this is not significant.

For instance, Heather and I met each other in Texas and we got engaged in Texas. So if you plopped me down anywhere in Texas right now and said, *"This is where you met the love of your life. This is where you got engaged to Heather,"* I would not say, *"No. You're wrong. This is Amarillo. I met Heather in Dallas and we got engaged in Cedar Hill, not Amarillo. I didn't meet her in Amarillo."* I wouldn't say that because anywhere in Texas is Texas. So if you plopped me down in Amarillo and said, *"This is where you met the love of your life. This is where you got engaged to Heather,"* I would say, *"Yes it is. This is Texas. The most wonderful place on the planet and this is where I met and got engaged to the most wonderful person I've ever met. God bless Texas and God bless Heather for marrying me."*

So when Mark says that Jesus is *in the wilderness*, he expects the lights to go off for us. They are in the spot where Israel spent their honeymoon with the Lord. And where they broke covenant. And where the Lord promised that He would restore them, just like the prophet Hosea said. It's where the Lord said that He would bring the nation again and speak tenderly to her, where He would make her lie down in safety, where He would betroth her to Him forever, where He would betroth her to Him in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy, where He would betroth her to Him in faithfulness.

And it's in the wilderness that Jesus is moved with compassion for the crowd.

LOOK AT VERSE 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.

Jesus saw the crowd and He had compassion on them. Why? Because they were lost! Why were they like lost sheep? Because the Pharisees and religious leaders should have been caring for these people! But instead, they were placing burdens on the people that no one could bear (Matthew 23:4). So Jesus sees them and they are like lost sheep with no shepherd to protect and care for them. So He is moved with compassion. The Greek word for compassion is *spagchnon*. It means literally "guts." Your innards. Where you feel love and heartache and compassion. It means you have great affection for someone. We use the

word "heart" for this in English, but "guts" is more accurate because when you get your heart broke, you really feel it in your gut, in your stomach, right? So Jesus sees this large crowd of people who are like lost sheep with no shepherd to protect them and He has compassion on them. He cares for them and feels it in His gut. Mark is telling us this incredible truth about Jesus-

HIS HEART GOES PITTEP-PATTER WHEN HE SEES US.

And it's true for you too. Jesus sees you and all of your needs and He has compassion on you. He's the Good Shepherd. You and me? We're just a bunch of dumb sheep who stumbled into this "Jesus' heart going pitter-patter thing." We don't deserve it. We're just like the nation of Israel. We walk away. We all walk away. We chase after other lovers. And yet He still loves us.

Alec Motyer said, *"The Old Testament is the place where we learn about the good shepherd looking after his sheep. God is in love with us. His heart goes pitter-patter when he sees us. That's so plain in the Old Testament."*

Listen, Grace: He is not indifferent to your struggle, pain, sorrows, etc. If Mother's Day is difficult for you because you had a terrible mother, or because you miss your mother because she lives in another state, or because your mother passed away, or because as a mother you lost a child, Jesus knows. He cares.

All that is happening in your life, the drama, the chaos, the heartache- it moves Jesus to compassion. He sees you and feels your pain, your sorrow, your heartache in His gut. His heart breaks. Just pour your heart out to the Good Shepherd. Only Jesus can meet the needs of sinners, of lost sheep. And that's exactly what He's trying to teach the disciples.

LOOK AT VERSE 37...

But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

So the disciples come to Jesus to inform Him of the situation: it's late and we should send these people to the surrounding villages so they can eat. And Jesus tells them, "Hey! I've got an idea. You feed them!"

What's Jesus doing here? Being sarcastic? No. Jesus is teaching the disciples that they have nothing in and of themselves to meet needs and help people. Jesus is teaching the disciples that they are just as dependent on Jesus as the crowd is. We are all sheep who need a shepherd.

So the disciples take Jesus at His word and they try to problem solve this. They ask Jesus if they should find a *Costco* and buy some food for these people. And they propose 200 denarii's worth of food, which was the equivalent of over half a year's salary for a day laborer. Jesus shoots their idea down and tells them to find out how many tortillas they have, and they do find out, and then they tell him, *"Five, and two fish."* So they've got five tortillas and two fish to feed 5,000+ people.

And the 5,000 people? Actually, that's just the number of men present. That number does not include the women and children. Matthew tells us in his gospel that the 5,000 only included the men: *And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children* (Matthew 14:21). So there were 5,000 men + maybe 10-15,000 women and children. So there's around 15-20,000 people to feed and all they had was 5 tortillas and 2 fish...*and Jesus!*

The bread that they had was not like a loaf of bread that we would have in our kitchen. It was more like a tortilla or pita bread. There were different ways to make bread back then. Bread was baked either over a fire on heated stones or on a griddle, or in a clay oven. Leavened bread was usually in the form of round, flat loaves, and unleavened in the form of thin cakes (*New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed., p. 146).

* INSERT PICTURE OF TANNUR OVEN



This is a picture of a *tannur* oven recently built by Biblical archaeologists. This was probably the most common used method. You would flatten the dough and stick it to the side of this clay oven and it would cook and then you would just peel it off and eat. So bread was more often than not like pita bread or a tortilla. So they could just stick their fish inside their tortilla, fold it in half, and then they would eat the best fish tacos ever.

And Jesus does what Mando Rayo said about Texans, "*It's what we do, it's how we bring people together. We don't break bread, we tear off a tortilla for the taco.*" That's what Jesus does for this huge crowd. He breaks bread He tears off tortillas for tacos! And Mark tells us in verses 42-43 that "...they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish."

Mark is giving us another clue here: How many baskets of leftovers were collected? 12. Numbers are significant in the Bible and it is no accident that 12 baskets were taken up. Jesus is trying to tell the disciples something: 12 baskets = 12 tribes of Israel. Jesus is trying to get them to see that He is God incarnate, Yahweh, the Messiah, the Good Shepherd.

And the theme of Yahweh being the Shepherd of His people is all over the Old Testament! The prophets spoke of this all the time. But where do we see that God is our Shepherd most clearly? Obviously Psalm 23! It's all over the Old Testament, but *the place* where see it clearly, is the beloved Psalm 23.

Psalm 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

And that's what Mark is saying that Jesus is saying here. When Jesus takes the loaves and feeds the people, He's saying that He is the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23. He's telling us that He is Yahweh, God incarnate, who fed the nation of Israel manna, bread in the wilderness. Jesus expects us and He expected the disciples to get this. But as we'll see next week, Mark tells us in verse 52 that the disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying by the 12 loaves.

The disciples weren't connecting the dots. Jesus is miraculously feeding the crowd with bread- *manna*. How many basketfuls are left over? 12. How many tribes of Israel? 12 tribes of Israel. Where is Jesus when He feeds the crowd? In the *wilderness*- where Yahweh promised to restore the nation. Where are the people sitting down? In the green grass- like the *green pastures* of Psalm 23. What body of water are they next to? The Sea of Galilee. What did Jesus do a few chapters back? He calmed, He stilled the waters and waves. Like the *still waters* of Psalm 23. But they aren't connecting the dots!

The wilderness + the green pastures + the still waters + miraculously feeding 5,000+ people with bread + 12 baskets of bread leftover = Jesus is God incarnate, Yahweh, the Messiah, the Good Shepherd. Jesus is telling the disciples that He is Yahweh. He is the Shepherd who feeds and cares for His sheep. He is the one Isaiah was speaking of-

Isaiah 40:11

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Shepherd. All the good and comforting things that we know about God, that we sing about God, that we love about God are captured in this word *shepherd*. The shepherd cares for his flock. The shepherd protects his flock. The shepherd guides his flock. The shepherd feeds his flock. The shepherd leads his flock to places of rest and peace. As Mark tells us in verse 34, He has compassion on His sheep. And that's what Isaiah was telling his audience. Isaiah was pointing back to Psalm 23 as he looked into the future and preached good news to those in exile. And here in Mark, Jesus is pointing back to Psalm 23 and pointing back to Isaiah 41 and saying, "*That's Me! I'm here! I'm the Good Shepherd. I'm the Messiah that the 12 tribes of Israel were looking for!*"

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays His life down for His sheep (John 10:11). That's the Gospel! That's the Gospel that comforts the hearts of broken, weak, and wayward sheep! And our hearts need to be comforted *because we are sheep*. Our hearts need to be comforted because God's law exposes us as needy sinners. And it's the word *sheep* that exposes us! The word *sheep* exposes us a weak, needy sinners who need a shepherd!

Question: When we blow it, just like Israel did in the wilderness, just like the disciples do in the gospels, what do we need most? Comfort. Compassion. And lots of it. Who gets the last word in our lives? Our sin? Our failures? Or God? God does! God gets the last word. And He comes to comfort us as a Shepherd. To carry us close to His heart. Thankfully He doesn't leave us in our sins, He doesn't leave us in exile. He does what a shepherd does: *He overrules our stupidity*. He gently leads us back home. Does that mean that there are no consequences to our sin? Does that mean that we never cry prayers of repentance? Of course not! But when we fail, He comes to comfort. He has compassion on lost, wayward sheep.

How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender.
Hosea 11:8

I think these are some of the most beautiful words in Scripture. Yahweh is revealing His heart for His rebellious children so as to allure them to love Him. His heart "recoils" within in Him when His people walk away from Him. This Hebrew word (hapak) is the same word that was used to describe Yahweh "overthrowing" Sodom and Gomorrah. Interestingly, Hosea mentions 2 suburbs of Sodom and Gomorrah here: Admah and Zeboiim. I assume he does this to startle God's people. Perhaps they thought, "Admah and Zeboiim. Where's that again? Oh, yeah. They were suburbs of Sodom and Gomorrah, which Yahweh overthrew."

When we run away from Jesus, His heart is overthrown with compassion and He moves out in tenderness toward us. Yes, He disciplines us (Hebrews 12:5-11), but His knee-jerk reaction is one of kindness. After all, what leads us to repentance? The law? The whips, terrors, and threats of the law? No! His kindness leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4).

And we see His kindness here in Hosea 11 because when we run away after other lovers, Yahweh's compassion grows warm and tender. The Hebrew word for "warm" (kamar) is used of an oven heating up (Lamentation 5:10) and also when Joseph saw his brother Benjamin for the first time after all those years (Genesis 43:30). God's anger does not flare up when we sin, rather His compassion does! His heart heats up like an oven, not with anger, but with compassion! This is why grace is amazing.

And that amazing grace should make you want to live for Him and His glory. That's what His kindness is designed to do. As Charles Spurgeon said-

"While I regarded God as a tyrant I thought my sin a trifle; but when I knew Him to be my Father, then I mourned that I could ever have kicked against Him. When I thought God was hard, I found it easy to sin; but when I found God so kind, so good, so overflowing with compassion, I smote upon my breast to think that I could ever have rebelled against One who loved me so, and sought my good."

This is what Jesus feels for His sheep: compassion.

Sally Lloyd-Jones says this in her book *Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing-*

HELPLESS

What animal does the Bible say— four hundred times!— that people are most like? Oh dear. It's sheep. Sheep aren't clever at all. They're foolish. For instance, sometimes they just topple over and can't get themselves back up again. They just lie there! And they're constantly falling off cliffs. Or going to unsafe places and getting stuck. Or eating poisonous things. Or getting hurt. Or running off and getting lost. Or not finding their way home again— even if their fold is in plain sight! So you see, sheep are completely helpless on their own and desperately need a shepherd. And God says we are helpless on our own too. And we desperately need a Shepherd. Which is why he gave us Jesus. (p.93)

If you can come to grips with the truth that saying, "The Lord is my shepherd," means you are a weak, needy sinner who is prone to run from God, then you are a prime candidate to receive the grace of God. That's the sweet spot right there. That's the sweet spot because that's where you find the Good Shepherd. If you can come to grips with what Mark wants you to see- *that you are a lost sheep that needs a shepherd and Jesus is that Shepherd*- then you have heard the Gospel. The Gospel is the good news that-

HIS HEART GOES PITTER-PATTER WHEN HE SEES US.

That we are His. That we are loved. The Gospel *is the voice* of our Shepherd Jesus. And in the Gospel He demands nothing of us. God simply announces the good news that He has given us- poor sinners, wayward sheep- He has given us His Son to be our Shepherd. The Gospel is the good news that the Son has laid down His life for His sheep. And our Shepherd will seek us out when we roam, when we find ourselves in exile, and He will bring us to the green grass and the fresh water that restores our souls. The green pastures and the still waters are the Gospel, the good news that we are called to return to daily, moment-by-moment!

Because of the gospel, because Jesus the Good Shepherd laid His life down for His sheep, we can walk through a dark, broken world with the Good Shepherd, not by ourselves or obsessed with ourselves. We are not alone in the valleys. He is carrying us.

May you look to your Shepherd this morning, Grace. May you see His strong, providential arm working for your good. May you see His smiling face and run to Him. May you see His strong arm and say, "I trust you." And may you feel most gently the warmth of His shepherding arms around you.

Alec Motyer, *"The Sovereign God is never more sovereign than in the work of mercy and salvation, and it is those who know they have most signally erred and strayed from his ways, who, within the blessed arena of salvation, feel most gently the warmth of his shepherding arms around them, and know themselves for sure to be the lambs of his flock."* (Isaiah By The Day, p/190)

Do you know yourself to be one of the lambs of His flock? You can. Today. Just open the empty hands of faith and believe. And He will carry you and you will feel the warmth of His shepherding arms and then one day He will make everything sad come untrue. One day Revelation 7:17 will become our reality-

For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The Lamb is our Shepherd. He cares. What's the first thing Jesus says to Mary after His resurrection? The very first thing that Jesus says after the resurrection is, "Why are you weeping?" He moves out to immediately comfort Mary's broken heart. He doesn't pop out and say, "I'm back! I told you so!" He calms and comforts Mary's heart and offers her a Kleenex. And one day He will wipe away every tear from our eyes. Did you know that that is the last action we see Jesus doing in the Bible? Wiping away our tears. The last thing that we see Jesus doing in the Bible is taking out a Kleenex and wiping away our tears.

That's what the Good Shepherd does. He has compassion on lost sheep, wayward sheep, stupid sheep, ignorant sheep. And then He feeds them fish tacos. What's not to like about Jesus?

HIS HEART GOES PITTER-PATTER WHEN HE SEES YOU.

Puritan Thomas Goodwin said, "Be not afraid, 'your sins will he remember no more.' ... And does he talk thus lovingly of us? Whose heart would not this overcome?"

Let His heart overcome your heart today.

"Best. Fish Tacos. Ever."
Mark 6:33-44
Sermon Study Questions

1. When you sin and really "blow it," how do you think God sees you? What does Scripture say?
2. Is your default view of Jesus that 1) He is constantly irritated with you or 2) that He has compassion on you?
3. Why does the Bible repeatedly refer to us as sheep? What does that say about us?
4. Discuss these quotes from the sermon:

Alec Motyer

"The Sovereign God is never more sovereign than in the work of mercy and salvation, and it is those who know they have most signally erred and strayed from his ways, who, within the blessed arena of salvation, feel most gently the warmth of his shepherding arms around them, and know themselves for sure to be the lambs of his flock."

Pastor Benji

"Jesus is not indifferent to your struggle, pain, sorrows, etc. If Mother's Day is difficult for you because you had a terrible mother, or because you miss your mother because she lives in another state, or because your mother passed away, or because as a mother you lost a child, Jesus knows. He cares. All that is happening in your life, the drama, the chaos, the heartache- it moves Jesus to compassion. He sees you and feels your pain, your sorrow, your heartache in His gut. His heart breaks. Just pour your heart out to the Good Shepherd."