

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity – Vicar Cody Anderson sermon  
St. Mark 8:1-9: “We Are Fed by Christ.”  
July 30/31, 2022 | Saude, Jerico, & Redeemer Lutheran Churches

### In Nomine Iesu

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Gracious Father in heaven, we come before you in thanksgiving of all that you have given us here in this life. As you heap blessings on our head, we ask that you forgive us when we forget about the love that you show us. When we forget that you are providing for our physical needs. Continue to remind us that everything we have comes from you and that you have us in the palm of your hand. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (Rom. 1:7, etc.)*

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*The sermon text for today is taken from the 8th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Mark. We read selected verses in Jesus’ name:*

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, [Jesus] called His disciples to Him and said to them, “I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with Me now three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away.” And His disciples answered Him, “How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?” And He asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, Seven.” And He directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, He broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, He said that these also should be set before them. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And He sent them away.

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*These are Your words, heavenly Father. Sanctify us by Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen. (Joh. 17:17)*

In Christ Jesus, who never leaves us hungry but who fills us up abundantly, dear fellow redeemed:

Sometimes when I skip breakfast before going to church, I can often find myself saying that “I am starving” when it is time for lunch. We have other sayings that go along with hunger. One I remember hearing is always, “I’m so hungry I could eat a horse. Well, I’m pretty sure that I am not actually that hungry, and I know I definitely could not or would not want to eat a horse. And I also know that like the people in our text, I’ve never been to the point of where I thought I might collapse because of my hunger. That is where these people are. They have been with Jesus for three days and Jesus says that they are at the point that if they go to find food, they won’t make it.

Leading up to this point, the crowd following Jesus had become larger and larger. Jesus has been showing the power that he has over the diseases of the world. He has healed people who are sick. He brought a little girl back to life. The disciples witnessed him walk on water. This is a

big deal. The people of Jesus day have only heard about God working miracles in the Old Testament when he used the prophets. Now here was Jesus, a man from Nazareth who was performing all of these signs and wonders. Only a couple of chapters before this account, Mark tells us that Jesus had already had a big crowd seated before him. There was over 5,000 people that Jesus fed with five loaves of bread and two fish. They picked up twelve little baskets full of leftovers, there was more than enough food. As Jesus shows his power to provide, and after he does a miracle of healing someone's deaf ears, another crowd has gathered.

Now as Jesus is looking at this crowd with compassion about their needs, the disciples yet ask, *"How can one feed these people with bread in this desolate place?"* Jesus has shown them that before this they have nothing to worry about. The disciples have been watching Jesus perform miracle after miracle. We already listed what he has been doing. Jesus has been healing people's physical ailments, and he performed this miracle already! What is 4,000 if he has already fed 5,000! So why did they respond, *"How can one feed these people with bread in this desolate place?"*

The disciples continue to doubt Jesus' power, they were tested for a second time, knowing the outcome of what Jesus could do, and they failed. Can you imagine the patience that Jesus must have had with them? They saw a little girl brought back from the dead and over 5,000 people be fed by Jesus. Yet they failed. This place is too desolate Jesus, there is nothing here to feed the people. The disciples had forgotten what Jesus was capable of and this isn't at all surprising as we also forget what Jesus is capable of.

We don't fully understand how much compassion God has for us. He tells us not to worry about what will happen to us, by telling us that he will provide for our physical needs. God created the heavens and the earth. St. Matthew records, *Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?* (Matt 6:25-26) But we are often anxious and worrisome. We do not wait for God to feed us when we know that he can and he will but instead we look for more instant gratification. We start to think that we do not have enough stuff. We start to covet what our neighbor has. We might even overindulge even though we know that it could put us behind with our expenses.

When we take these matters into our own hands, we are doubting God's care for us. We can hear what Jesus tells us, but as life gets hard, as budgets can get tight, we fail Jesus' test too. Like the disciples, we doubt what God tells us in his Word, which puts us into despair. As we creep into despair, that doubt that we have, then turns into unbelief. How can something so simple turn into something so severe? That is what the devil wants. He wants us to doubt God. What are we fully doubting? Jesus only tells us the truth; He has never told a lie. As humans though the devil continues to use that same temptation. *"Did God really say..."* This can seem very small. Unfortunately, that is all it takes. One little doubt and we can start to think, *"Well if God can't do this, then what can He really do for me?"*

The disciples did not understand the amount of compassion that Jesus had and neither do we. Jesus with great compassion, provided for the group of people with a great miracle. He fed them, saving their physical health, and providing for them. Jesus put the disciples doubt to rest. He puts our doubts to rest too. He provides our daily bread, all that we need for this life on

earth. And He has also given Himself as the Bread of Life from heaven. As Jesus is able to feed our physical bodies, his great compassion stretched farther than that. He laid down His life for us. He paid for our sins, and then rose from the dead. Jesus has made sure that we will be provided for here on earth and forever in eternity.

Jesus wants to satisfy your spiritual hunger, which is deeper and more pressing than your physical hunger is. He continually feeds you through the Means of Grace. We receive this feeding every Sunday. As you come to church and listen to his Word, there he is with you. God's Word gives you the strength to carry on when you think that you are on the verge of collapse. Your souls need to stay fed. When your souls get hungry, that is when your soul can fall into temptation which can lead to unbelief. As you continue to gather with your families with devotions and prayer, your souls continue to stay nourished. This isn't just to make us feel good, this is for our survival. Our lives here on this earth are very short compared with living for eternity. He feeds us with his Word as it shows the life he lived in our place. Jesus shows us that we can't make it on our own. All we can do is collapse on the way. Jesus is the one who has compassion and feeds us.

Jesus feeds us with his body and blood at the altar. Here, this holy food is taken and distributed to each of us hungry sinners. This is Christ coming to us. He comes to forgive us our sins, to assure us that those sins of coveting, those sins of doubt are not counted against us. Along with this medicine for our souls, Jesus is giving us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet that awaits us. He doesn't tell us to receive it occasionally. Or to receive it when we feel like it. Jesus tells us to receive of it often. We need this holy nourishment. This is a gift that we receive not based on our merits, but from Christ, who had compassion, who did not want to see us starve for eternity.

The people ate until they were satisfied. Jesus didn't feed them a little morsel. He fed them so that they were full. It wasn't partial mercy. God feeds us in abundance. He makes sure that we will be satisfied here on this earth by providing us with everything that we need. This is what we confess in the meaning of the Apostles' creed. He provides for us clothing, food, land, and all that we own. All that we need for our bodily life. When life gets difficult, it can be hard for us to find the positives of life that we have. When there is financial burden, a loss of a loved one, that doubt will try to creep back in.

Our text shows that God does not abandon us. He had so much compassion that he gave us the ultimate gift that we never deserved. He gave up his own Son so that we would be saved. When our journey on this world is over, God shows us that he has provided for our eternal lives as well. Our pains in this life, they are only in this life. They will soon cease to exist. Jesus tells us how he has prepared a place for us. His compassion is beyond our comprehension. He promises that someday, there will be no suffering, there will be no pain, and every tear will be wiped away from our eyes, because He has fed us.

The next time that we are hungry, more than likely soon as our service ends today, it is good to remember how Jesus feeds us with everything we need. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has had compassion on us. He had so much compassion that he gave his life for us. He will continue to provide for us even when we think that we don't have enough. He gives us all that we need. We don't deserve anything, yet he has given us everything. He will continue to bless

us with the physical and spiritual things that we need in this life until he calls us home. Where we will eat at the heavenly banquet, forever and ever. Amen.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.*

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