

Week Five: *We Do Courageous Things*
Mark 6:30-44

Spend FIFTEEN - Day One

1. How much physical rest do you think the average person should get every day in order to be healthy? And then, how do you personally compare? Do you think you're getting more rest? Less? About the same?
2. If you get too little rest, what is keeping you from getting the rest you'd like? If you're getting more than most, what intentional choices have you made that allow that additional rest to happen?
3. Look at how Jesus and the disciples struggled with this issue in Mark 6:30-31. How busy were they?
4. What decision did Jesus make?
5. Do you think Jesus was shirking His responsibilities by leaving the crowd of needy people to get some alone time? Why or why not?
6. What lesson for your own life can you draw from Jesus' priorities in this passage?
7. If you need more rest in your own life, take some time to mark on your calendar where you're going to make the margin for that available in your schedule. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer and ask God to help you make rest a priority.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Two

8. Picture your normal work flow. How do you feel when someone – a boss, a customer, or coworker – drops a task on your plate without warning?
9. Why does unexpected work feel so different than work you'd already planned on doing?
10. Read what happened to Jesus when He was just trying to get a little break from the demands of His ministry. Mark 6:30-34. What happened in spite of Jesus' attempt to get some rest?
11. What are some different ways that Jesus *could* have responded to this interruption?

12. What does His actual response reveal about His motivations and character?
13. What is one way that God has been compassionate to you when you have struggled?
14. Close your FIFTEEN by thanking God for His compassionate mercy for you, and ask that He would grant you that same compassion in your interactions with others.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Three

15. Think of a conflict or crisis that's going on right now. It could be a personal conflict in your life or between friends. It could be a crisis at work or something that's embroiling our county. Once you've thought of one, ask yourself this question: whose fault is this conflict? And why?
16. Once you've gotten your answer, ask yourself a follow-up question: whose responsibility is it to fix this conflict?
17. Are those two answers the same person or group of people? Or are they different? In what circumstances can it be a different person's responsibility to fix something, even if it wasn't their fault in the first place?
18. Now let's look at how a certain situation unfolded for Jesus. Read Mark 6:35-37. What was the problem facing the crowds? Whose fault was this problem?
19. Who did Jesus make responsible for fixing this problem?
20. Is there a conflict or crisis in your life that might not be your fault – you didn't cause it – but it might very well be your responsibility to fix?
21. Pray for God's wisdom to help you take responsibility without blame. If you can't think of a situation that fits, pray that He would reveal to you something that you can take responsibility for in a healthy way.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Four

22. What is the easiest part of your job? What is the hardest part of your job?
23. What relationship does the difficulty of a task have with the satisfaction that comes from completing that task?

24. Read Mark 6:35-43. What difficult task did Jesus give His disciples to do? Was it something they were capable of doing on their own?
25. What needed to happen to accomplish this task?
26. Think about the things you're often called on to do. If they're well within your power, how much of God's help do you actually need?
27. What is a big challenge facing you in your life? How can you bring God into that situation? (If you don't have a big challenge, what big thing could God be wanting you to step out in?)
28. Close your FIFTEEN by thanking God for giving us big (and scary!) things to do. Ask Him for His help and power to accomplish things that would be impossible by your own efforts alone (Matthew 19:26).

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Five

29. When was a time where you dreamed big for yourself? Where you strived for something that was exciting and audacious and scary?
30. What was a time when you settled for less than what you hoped for? Where you accepted something that was mediocre and safe instead of exciting and risky?
31. Which one of those situations felt more God-honoring to you? Why?
32. Read the conclusion to the story we've been unpacking this week: Mark 6:44. How did this ending compare with the disciples' expectation of the story? (Go back and re-read verses 30-43 if you need the context.)
33. Place yourself in the disciples' shoes. Would living out this story have inspired you or freaked you out? What would it have felt like to experience Jesus' call to do something miraculous in the middle of ordinary life?
34. Jesus continues to call us to do such things. In Matthew 28:18-20, He asked for His followers to make disciples *of all nations*. There is no person in the world He wanted to be left unreached. Who might God be calling you to in a big (if intimidating) way?

35. End your FIFTEEN by reading Ephesians 2:10. Then pray that God would reveal His big plan for your life in a mighty, powerful, and clear way. You are God's workmanship and He has amazing things in His plan for you to do!