

## Mind of Christ - Lesson 118

August 6, 2021

Welcome to another edition of The Mind of Christ. I am glad that you joined us today. We are making our way through everything Jesus said everything Jesus did. We are following A. T. Robertson's book, "The Harmony of the Gospels" and he has divided the life of Christ in chronological order into sections. We are in the middle of a **section 72** about when Jesus was calling His disciples to go to a lonely place, which I call a "retreat". Jesus was initiating a retreat with His disciples. He needed to get away. He had been teaching and healing people and He didn't have time to eat. So He needed to get away so He attempted to do that. He was by the Sea of Galilee or the Lake of Galilee but the crowds followed Him. He ended up teaching them, healing them and this leads into the story of the feeding of the 5,000.

We have gone through some of the aspects about the nature of the retreat He attempted to have. I don't think He actually got to enjoy all of that retreat, but now we're getting into a little bit more of where He's going to be feeding the 5,000. The various texts that are used in this section are: in Matthew it is **Matthew 14:13-21**, in Mark it is **Mark 6:30-44**, in Luke it is **Luke 9:10-17**, and in John it is **John 6:1-14**. So that's the section that we will pick up in the middle of today to try to finish this section.

### Matthew 14:13-21

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus heard about John, He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself; and when the people heard of this, they followed Him on foot from the cities. <sup>14</sup> When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

<sup>15</sup> When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and the hour is already late; so send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." <sup>16</sup> But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat!" <sup>17</sup> They said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish."

<sup>18</sup> And He said, "Bring them here to Me." <sup>19</sup> Ordering the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds, <sup>20</sup> and they all ate and were satisfied. They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets. <sup>21</sup> There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children.

### Mark 6:33-44

<sup>33</sup> The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup> When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and it is already quite late; <sup>36</sup> send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." <sup>37</sup> But He answered them, "You give them *something* to eat!" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them *something* to eat?"

<sup>38</sup> And He said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go look!” And when they found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.” <sup>39</sup> And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. <sup>41</sup> And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed *the food* and broke the loaves and He kept giving *them* to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> They all ate and were satisfied, <sup>43</sup> and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. <sup>44</sup> There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

### **Luke 9:10-17**

<sup>10</sup> When the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done. Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida. <sup>11</sup> But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing.

<sup>12</sup> Now the day was ending, and the twelve came and said to Him, “Send the crowd away, that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside and find lodging and get something to eat; for here we are in a desolate place.” <sup>13</sup> But He said to them, “You give them something to eat!” And they said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we go and buy food for all these people.” <sup>14</sup> (For there were about five thousand men.) And He said to His disciples, “Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each.” <sup>15</sup> They did so, and had them all sit down. <sup>16</sup> Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the people. <sup>17</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied; and the broken pieces which they had left over were picked up, twelve baskets full.

### **John 6:1-13**

<sup>1</sup> After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). <sup>2</sup> A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick. <sup>3</sup> Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples. <sup>4</sup> Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. <sup>5</sup> Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?” <sup>6</sup> This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. <sup>7</sup> Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.” <sup>8</sup> One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, <sup>9</sup> “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?” <sup>10</sup> Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. <sup>11</sup> Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup> When they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost.” <sup>13</sup> So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

So *Matthew* describes the place as a desolate place and so does *Mark* and *Luke* who adds that they needed to be sent to “the surrounding villages in order to find lodging and get something to eat.” This indicates that though Jesus although Jesus came ashore at Bethsaida, He was headed off to His retreat into the surrounding hills and they began to follow Him. They were near Bethsaida but they were up going into the hills so they ended up in a remote place when this occurred. His retreat is interrupted so he spends time preaching and healing.

John mentions that the Passover was ‘at hand’. Robertson notes that this was likely the Passover before the crucifixion so what this indicates is that we’re entering the last year of Jesus’ life. He also knows four separate withdrawals. These are found in A. T. Robertson’s sections 72, 78, 79 and 81 so there are at least four occasions where Jesus had a retreat or a withdrawal with His disciples to a lonely place. It seems He spent some special alone times with His apostles during the last year of His life. So, even in this last year, that’s where these four retreats occurred.

Thinking about what was important to do during this precious and limited time on earth, Jesus decided that He needed to spend some alone time with his disciples. Training and retreat go hand in hand it seems. I have not valued this enough to implement it often enough in my ministry, I’m sorry to say.

‘It was near evening, late in the day and the time had already passed’ simply means *it is getting late* so Jesus decided to use this as an opportunity to teach His disciples a lesson. Specifically He targeted Philip, one of the Apostles; John says to “test him” (**John 6:6**). Jesus already knew what He was going to do, it says. When did He conceive of this plan? Was this a spontaneous and impulsive test or lesson He had planned on the spot, or had Jesus been planning this all day long; maybe even *intentionally* keeping these people there so that the Apostles would have to deal with what to do to take care of them? Well, we don’t know.

The word used here for “test” # 3985 is the word “peirazo” (πειραζω). It means to *endeavor*, to *scrutinize*, to *entice*, to *discipline* or to *assay*. So contextually, the word “test” has to be looked at in order to determine its meaning in any particular context.

In **Acts 16:7** the word is used. Here Paul and company were trying to go to Bithynia but *prevented* by the Spirit. This was again, something of a test. It says, “*after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did **not allow** them*”. **Acts 24:6** the word is used here about a false accusation saying “Paul *tried* to desecrate the temple”. The word tried there is the word “test”. In other words, he “endeavored” to desecrate the temple. It is used in **Matthew 22:35** where a lawyer asked Jesus a question in order to *test* Him. It’s used in **John 6:6**, our passage regarding the testing of Philip, and by extension, the other apostles. “*This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.*” It is also used in **Revelation 2:2**. He uses it there saying they are being “put to the test” ... those who call themselves apostles yet are not. They are found to be false. So “so-called” apostles, people who claim to be apostles, can be “*put to the test*”.

The word “test” is used in the sense of “tempting” with evil intent, or with ill intent, like in **Mark 8:11**. The Pharisees “test” Jesus by looking for a sign from Him. It says on that occasion, Jesus sighed deeply in His Spirit because He knew He was being “tested” in order to make Him fall. **Mark 10:2** says “*Some Pharisees came up to Jesus, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.*” **Mark 12:15** says they tested Him about taxes and Jesus even asked them on that occasion, “*Why are you testing Me?*” He defined that testing as hypocrisy. In **Luke 11:16** the word is used on the occasion of casting out demons; others tested Him by asking for “a sign”. In **Luke 20:23** He was tested in regard to paying taxes to Caesar. “*But He detected their trickery*” or this testing.

It's used in **John 8:6**. The woman in adultery ... they said they brought this woman to Jesus in order to "test" Him. They were looking for grounds of accusation. In **Galatians 6:1** it says, "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently." In restoring another, Paul says watch yourself lest you be "tempted." Another place where this word is found is **James 1:13-14**. He says "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup> but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed." No one is tempted by God; it is our own lust that leads to sin and then leads to death. In **Revelation 2:10**, Satan will tempt for about 10 days and then he tells Christians on that occasion to be faithful to death and they will receive a crown of life.

**Matthew 4:1, 3** is an occasion where Jesus was tempted by Satan and Satan is even called "the tempter". Of course, Satan was trying to get Jesus to fall! In **1 Corinthians 7:5** the word "tempt" is used. It's the idea of a husband and wife being separated for a short time, and then it says that they should come back together "lest they be tempted". Here He's talking about sexual temptation on that occasion. In **1 Thessalonians 3:5** Paul was afraid that the *tempter* might have *tempted* the Thessalonians and that his labor among them may have been in vain.

So, we see it is 'the intent of the test' that makes it good or bad. Jesus was testing Philip to see what he would do. Jesus was often tested to see if He would fail or to make a mistake or get caught in some kind of trap. Our testers are Satan but we can also be tested by our own lusts or desires. We also see that temptations or tests have a duration. They do not last forever. When we fail the test by giving in to the tempter, it can cause godly labor to be in vain.

In our case, *Jesus was using the test as a part of Philip's training*. It was the kind of "see what he will do" test or training. How do we know what we will do or are capable of doing until we put ourselves to the test (or we put some other person to the test)? A person under some pressure *reveals what they are made of*.

Jesus, at the time of the test, already knew what He was going to do. *He was the answer* to the test. When we are tested, the answer is always Jesus who has the power to do what needs to be done. Can you imagine what 10,000 to 15,000 people going into a small village at sunset looking for food would look like? That would be a chaotic scene and perhaps businesses would like it if they were prepared, but likely it would be a burden on local families. Of course, the Apostles did envision them buying food for themselves, so I don't know how far they thought they were going to have to go. It would have required quite a bit of provision to accommodate this big crowd!

When Jesus suggested the apostles provide the meal, the apostles calculated that it might cost \$200 denarii, or the equivalent of 200 days' wages. If this were today at \$20 per hour for 8 hours a day, times 200, that would be about a \$32,000 food bill! Can you imagine \$32,000 worth of bread? How would they transport it? That would be a major 'take-out pizza delivery', wouldn't it? Philip was the one who suggested that 200 denarii worth of bread would provide "only a few bites for everyone", he said. So even \$32,000 would only give people a little sample to eat.

Did Jesus have this much in His bag which was kept by Judas? Probably not because Judas was taking out of the bag and I'm sure it never got to be that amount. This would have been quite a bank account for the disciples. Did Philip ask Judas, how much do we have in the account? Was this all that was in there, or was Philip simply putting some numbers out in the air?

Well, Andrew found a lad, it says, who had 5 barley loaves and 2 fish. Jesus sent them to see what they had. How could this be all among such a great crowd? Because they had traveled a long distance in hurry, they may have already consumed what they had brought with them.

In this story, Philip and Andrew are mentioned specifically by name. Jesus wanted the crowd to be seated in an orderly fashion on the ground. This is green grass; that's where they were. (**Mark 6:39**). **Matthew** says that they were reclining on the ground; that's the customary way that they would eat in the first century. **Mark** specifically says to recline by groups on the green grass in companies of 50 and 100. **Luke** says of groups of about 50 each quoting Jesus. **John** says that He said "have them sit down". There was much grass in this place. Green grass was important because otherwise they would be reclining on rocky ground; not very comfortable ... but why in groups?

Perhaps it was so that they would all be aware of the miracle that was about to take place. It just struck me that there is a little 'organized religion' going on here. ***Modern men seem to have reluctance to be involved in something they feel is too 'organized' or controlling, yet mega churches are highly organized and orchestrated.*** Take the worship which involves lots of preparation and coordination. It is a production. Even those who preach "against" organized church write elaborate and detailed books, very organized books by the way, to explain why we shouldn't have 'organized religion'.

Did ordering these thousands into companies of 50s and 100s diminish the awesomeness and the power of the miracle? People are going to naturally organize in some way to accomplish something, even if it is passing out bread and fish to a large crowd. **Mark 6:39** says that Jesus commanded them to recline by groups, and the word here is "epitasso" (ἐπιτάσσω) #2004. It means to give an order to, to place appropriately. God is a god of order, not of chaos and confusion.

In **Matthew 14:16** Jesus tells His disciples, 'they do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.' The word "need" here is from the word #5535 chreizo (χρηζω). The word "need" is an important word. In other words, He says, 'they don't "need" to go away'. That is not a "need" that they have.

Let's show some places where this word "need" is found. In **Matthew 3:14**, John says, he has "need" to be baptized by Jesus. I want you to think about, as we read through these different examples of where the word "need" is found; just think about the things that you truly "need" in your life. In **Matthew 6:8** Jesus says, "Your Father knows what you "need" before you ask Him." In **Matthew 9:12** it is not the 'healthy' who "need" a physician but those who are sick. It's the sick people who "need" a doctor. In **Matthew 21:3** the donkey that Jesus was riding on ... it says the Lord has "need" of him. (He had to have some kind of mode of transport into the city.)



In **Matthew 26:65**, the high priest, after hearing testimony says, “What further “need” do we have of witnesses.” And **Mark 2:25** adds to this list that David, when he was hungry, and his men were hungry, “needed” food. In **Luke 9:11** He talks about those in “need” of healing. In **Luke 10:42** Jesus says, “but only one thing is necessary; for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” This is regarding Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus. That is what is needed, that is what’s necessary. In **Luke 15:7** it says, the 99 who “need” no repentance. Remember Jesus went after the one who had wandered away instead of staying with the 99 who needed no repentance. In **John 2:25** Jesus did not “need” human testimony about Himself. In **John 13:10** where Jesus is washing his disciples’ feet and He comes to Peter and he says no, you’re not going to wash my feet and He says, “Well, then you’ll have no part with me.” And remember Peter said, “Not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!” <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath “need” only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” **John 13:29** Jesus told them to go and buy the things that were “needed” for the feasts. Then **John 16:30** the disciples said to Jesus that they had no “need” to question Him.

So, who has the proper perspective regarding our “needs”? Do we always know what we “need”? Jesus alone knows what we “need”. It would be interesting for us to compare ‘our’ list of “needs” with the things that Jesus would say that we ‘really needed’. On a physical level, the word “need” is used regarding food and healing. When we get into a spiritual “need” there are four spiritual “needs” that were mentioned in this list that we just read.

Sitting at the feet of Jesus to learn from Him is a very “needful” thing. One thing is needful and Mary chose to listen and learn and to spend time with Jesus instead of fixing a meal or cleaning the house. So which one was more important? It was listening to Jesus.

Another “need”; a physician for our spirits is “needed”. We are ‘all’ sick spiritually and emotionally. Those who are ‘well’ or ‘think they are well’ do not “need” a doctor; only those who are sick and know it.

The third thing that we need is: we “need” for Jesus to serve us as in ‘washing’. The example is in baptism or in washing our feet. We “need” Jesus to serve us. We “need” to be cleansed. We “need” to be a part of who Jesus is by allowing him to cleanse us. Jesus acts upon us to bring us into connection with Himself and we “need” to have this connection. So that’s the third thing that’s “needed”.

The fourth thing we “need” is repentance. We “need” to change. We “need” to grow. We “need” to grow up. We “need” to progress. We “need” to learn. We “need” to become. And when we think that we don’t “need” it, we are in trouble.

Those are four things that the Scripture that we looked at in regard to “needs” say that we absolutely “need” in our lives.

So, when Jesus tells the apostles that the people do not “need” to go and take care of their hunger, He already had a plan on how He was going to meet that “need” because Jesus already knows what we “need” before we ask.

The second half of Jesus' statement after saying that they did not "need" to go away was to tell the apostles to "give them something to eat". The reason they did not "need" to go was there was a 'source of supply' available where they were; but it wasn't the apostles ... they weren't the source; they weren't the supply. Likely, they were as hungry as the people were. Remember in **John 4:5** when they had to go into Sychar, the city of Sychar to buy food. How can someone as poor as the one in "need" help? It is "who you know" that makes the difference. It's about knowing the difference between feeling responsible for meeting the "need" yourself, or connecting someone to someone who can meet their need. This story is full of lessons and insights into *the mind of Christ*.

Just to summarize a little bit there ... when you're thinking about meeting the "needs" of other people, you can feel overly responsible about meeting those needs, when really, what you need to be responsible for is putting them in touch with the person who can actually meet those needs, and in this case it would be Jesus. When Jesus blessed the loaves and the fishes, he looked up to heaven. The reason is obvious. It was not just an act of dependence; it was an act of dependence *and* submission. He knew where good gifts come from; they come down from the Father of lights according to **James 1:17**.

When Jesus prayed in **Matthew 6:9**, He began with "Our Father, who is in heaven". Up is where God is, as opposed to going down into the pit. The outcome of the meal, according to **Matthew** was, "And they all ate and were satisfied." **Mark** says the same, and so did **Luke**. **John** says, "When they were filled". Everyone got enough. This was a meal and not a snack; *fish and chips* is what they had.

Then came the 'cleanup' and Jesus did not waste anything, and He did not allow the crowd to keep the leftovers. He had the disciples collect it. **Matthew 14:20** says what was left over; the broken pieces, twelve full baskets. **Mark 6:43** says essentially the same but adds "and also the fish" implying that the broken pieces were of bread. **Luke 9:17** agrees with **Matthew** and **John 6:13** has Jesus specifically telling them to do this; "gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost. They did so and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves", and not only does John give us the type of bread, barley, but he also gives us the words of Jesus concerning His motive, that is, "So none would be lost". The word "lost" in **John 6:12** is #622 "apolatai" (αποληται), a word applied in many cases including being "eternally lost". Jesus means the obvious; the food would be wasted or ruined if He didn't 'save it'. Now, the twelve disciples *each* have a full basket. Remember the miracle was also for their sake. Now each one held in his hands "proof of faith".

Earlier, one had a nearly empty basket and now twelve of them had full baskets! And what of the lad who supplied the seed for the miracle? What must this have done for him and his family? Did he get the leftovers to take home? Could he have carried that many baskets, or is it just part of a great story?

Well, **Matthew 14:21** says that there were about or approximately 5,000 men. Sometimes I wonder if it was a preacher's count (besides women and children). Mark just says there were 5,000 men. **Luke 9:14** says there were about 5,000 men, and **John 6:2** calls them a great multitude, and the men sat down in numbers about 5,000. So there's no real count; only an estimate, but the seating arrangement made it easier to estimate how many people were actually there.

*Could it have been the men who were so ordered and they had to take enough to share with their families who were with them?* So maybe just the men sat down in these companies of 50 and 100 and the disciples distributed the food to them, and they took the food back to their families. That's possibly the way it was organized.

**John 6:14** adds that when the crowd saw the sign, which probably reminded them of the *manna in the desert*, they said, "This is of a truth, the prophet who has come into the world." This is probably a reference to **Deuteronomy 18:18**, "I will raise up for them a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them everything that I command him."

*This will set up the sermon that Jesus will preach in John 6* and all of this is a heavy reference to Moses; and so Moses in 'kind of the person in the Old Testament who's at the center of the scene and also of what is going to follow, the teaching of Jesus.

Let's recap just for the end of this section:

1. Jesus was trying to get some rest, but He ended up healing, teaching and feeding thousands.
2. Jesus used the occasion to test His apostles just to see what their response would be.
3. Jesus knew what He would do before He even gave the test.
4. Jesus worked with what He had, but clearly performed a miracle of *creation* on this occasion.
5. Jesus *ordered* the crowd; He didn't just *suggest* it, but He *ordered* the crowd to sit down.
6. Perhaps an indication of the type of bank account that the apostles had ... maybe, maybe not.
7. The reaction was not "God is among us" but "the prophet of Deuteronomy 18" has arrived. That was the reaction of the crowd.

This story is found in all four Gospels and this story indicates the popularity of Jesus at about two thirds of the way through His ministry. The crowds were becoming larger and more aggressive in their pursuit. They are feeling more ownership of Jesus. There are more and more demands on the apostles regarding the people, and the ministry is getting more and more complicated.

This is where we're going to end for today. Thank you for joining us and we will take up another section next week. You can find more lessons at <https://www centralsarasota.org/>.

Thank you for spending time with us and exploring the Mind of Christ. Take care.