

Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions

week of 8/2/26

Summary

This sermon explored the familiar miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000 through a fresh lens, focusing on the method Jesus chose to distribute the food. Rather than raining down manna or sending the crowd away, Jesus told His disciples, "You give them something to eat." This meant the disciples spent hours going person to person, family to family, distributing bread and fish in a deeply personal way. Pastor Mark suggested that the "you" in Jesus' command was just as important as the "something," because the personal connection was as important as the food itself.

The sermon drew a direct line from Jesus' incarnational ministry style to how the church is called to operate today. Jesus consistently chose one-on-one, face-to-face encounters over large-scale, efficient proclamation. The Gospel is not merely a set of propositions to be broadcast to crowds. It is a person, Jesus Christ, meant to be embodied and enfleshed in His followers. Just as Pastor Mark learned about Jesus through real people like a Sunday school teacher and a youth leader, the church is called to be the incarnate Word to one another and to the world around them.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come together grateful for the gift of community and for the truth that You chose to dwell among us in the person of Jesus Christ. As we open Your Word and share in discussion today, we ask that You soften our hearts and open our eyes. Help us not simply to hear information, but to encounter You personally through one another. May Your Spirit guide our

conversation, and may we leave today with a clearer sense of what You are calling each of us to do and to be. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

Think back to your childhood or early faith journey. Was there one person, a teacher, a neighbor, a family friend, who made Jesus feel real to you simply by the way they lived? What is one thing you remember about them?

Key Verses

- Matthew 14:19
- Mark 6:39-40
- John 1:14
- John 6:7

Questions

1. Pastor Mark pointed out that Jesus told His disciples, 'You give them something to eat,' rather than handling the situation Himself or sending the crowd away. What do you think Jesus was communicating to His disciples through that specific instruction?
2. The sermon suggested that the personal connection between the disciples and the crowd was just as important as the food itself. Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Jesus consistently chose face-to-face, one-on-one encounters over large crowds, even though He had the fame and opportunity to do otherwise. What does that pattern tell us about how God values people?

4. Pastor Mark shared that he learned about Jesus not just from the Bible, but through specific people like Larry Borland and Wesley Bryant, who embodied Christ to Him. Who has been that kind of person in your life, and how did they shape your faith?
5. The sermon made the statement that 'the Gospel is a person first.' How does that idea challenge or change the way you think about sharing your faith with others?
6. Pastor Mark said, 'Church is not an event. Church is a community.' How does that distinction affect the way you personally engage with your church and the people in it?
7. In what ways do you feel God might be calling you to be a 'Larry Borland' to someone else, whether a child, a neighbor, or someone in your small group?

Life Application

This week, identify one person in your life, at church, in your neighborhood, or in your family, who needs a personal, face-to-face expression of Christ's love. Make a specific plan to reach out to them. It does not have to be elaborate. It could be a meal, a phone call, a handwritten note, or simply sitting with them. Ask God to help you be the embodied, enfleshed Gospel to that one person, remembering that the "you" is just as important as the "something."

Key Takeaways

- Jesus chose a personal, incarnational method to feed the crowd, sending His disciples out one on one rather than using a more efficient approach, because the personal connection mattered as much as the food.

- The ministry of Jesus was consistently characterized by face-to-face, one-on-one encounters. He did not leverage crowds or fame, but invested deeply in individuals and small groups.
- The Gospel is not primarily a set of propositions to be broadcast. It is a person, Jesus Christ, and it is meant to be embodied and enfleshed in His followers as they live among others.
- We learn who Jesus is through people in whom Jesus lives. The church community is one of God's primary tools for forming faith in the next generation and in one another.
- The church is called to be a community, not just an event, where the Word becomes flesh again and again through name-to-name, face-to-face relationships that reveal Christ to the world.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for not staying at a distance. Thank You for becoming flesh, for walking among us, for looking people in the face, and for calling Your disciples to do the same. As we leave this time together, remind us that we carry Your presence into every conversation, every meal, and every moment of care we offer to another person. Give us the courage to show up personally, to go to people rather than waiting for them to come to us, and to trust that You will multiply whatever small offering we bring. May the Word become flesh in us, for the sake of those around us who need to see You. In Your name we pray, Amen.