

## 9th Sunday after Pentecost July 22, 2018

Seventh Sunday after the Trinity Proper 11 (16)

Year B – the Gospel of Mark

**LUTHERAN**

# LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.  
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the  
rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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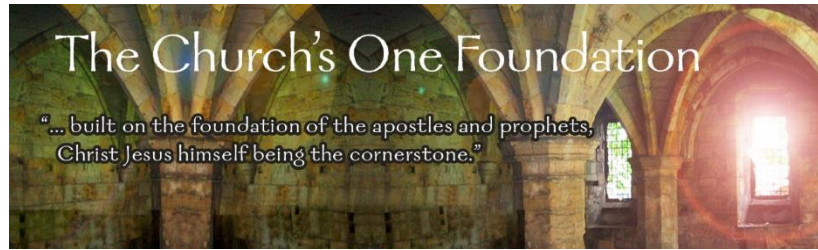


<https://gospelmusicnaija.com/god-multiplies-whatever-you-give-to-him/>

### Hymn of the Day

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 644 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 473**

“The Church’s one foundation”



➤ <http://www.churchsonefoundation.com/>

“In the mid-nineteenth century, Bishop John William Colenso of Natal raised a ruckus in the Catholic Church when he challenged the historicity and authority of many of the Old Testament books. Bishop Gray of Capetown wrote a stirring response of defense, which, in 1866, inspired Samuel Stone, to write this beloved hymn, basing his text on Article 9 of the Apostle’s Creed: “The Holy Catholic (Universal) Church; the Communion of Saints; He is the Head of this Body.” Now an affirmation of Christ as the foundation of our faith, we sing this hymn with those who have gone before us and with Christians around the world, declaring that beyond any theological differences, cultural divides, and variances in practice, we are all part of the same body, the body of Christ.” (Found in 742 hymnals)

- [https://hymnary.org/text/the\\_churchs\\_one\\_foundation](https://hymnary.org/text/the_churchs_one_foundation)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKnvCO0batc> WELS Conference 2014 (video shaky for the first few minutes)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ECY2IleRg8> Dr. Rodney Wynkoop conducts the Duke Chapel Choir, the Duke Vespers Ensemble, and the Evensong Singers in the premiere (Sept. 29, 2016) of Dan Forrest's setting of The Church's One Foundation (AURELIA), commissioned by Duke Chapel, for the Celebration of Music honoring the re-opening of Duke Chapel.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ds3Zt6c4ls> The hymn was written as a direct response to some unorthodox teaching, which created a schism within the church in South Africa. This topic is alluded to within the third verse of the text "Though with a scornful wonder men see her sore oppressed, by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed." Samuel Stone became involved in the debate. It inspired him to write a set of hymns based on the Apostles' Creed in 1866. He titled it, Lyra Fidelium; Twelve Hymns on the Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed. "The Church's One Foundation" is based on the ninth article, "The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints." The hymn also served as inspiration for Rudyard Kipling's 1896 poem, Hymn Before Action.

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

**Jeremiah 23:1-6; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the same reading from Jeremiah or 2 Samuel 7:1-14a**

*(Next week: Genesis 9:8-17; RCL, 2 Kings 4:42-44 or 2 Samuel 11:1-15)*

This reading is also used for Christ the King Sunday at the end of the church year.

*“From 21:11 to 23:8, the book of Jeremiah contains a diverse collection of prose and poetry directed at the kings who reign after King Josiah. Jeremiah is critical of these kings in that they fail to uphold the law on behalf of the people, 21:12. Our passage for study, the concluding section, consists of three prophecies dealing with the future of the people and of the Davidic monarchy. The first passage, in prose, deals with three issues: judgment on Israel's kings, the gathering of a remnant and the raising up of new "shepherds", v1-4. The second passage, in poetic form, speaks of the coming of a new king, "a righteous branch from David's line", v5-6. The third passage, again in prose, speaks of a new exodus as God's people are rescued from bondage, v7-8...”*

- <http://www.lectionarystudies.com/studyot/sunday16bot.html> Pumpkin Cottage Ministry Resources

### **The Righteous Branch**

23 “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: “You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. <sup>3</sup> Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. <sup>4</sup> I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD.

<sup>5</sup> “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>6</sup> In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’

<sup>7</sup> *“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’<sup>8</sup> but ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he<sup>[a]</sup> had driven them.’ Then they shall dwell in their own land.”*

- a. [Jeremiah 23:8](#) Septuagint; Hebrew I

“Just as sheep need a shepherd to guide and protect them, the people of Israel need responsible leaders to provide for them. Wise leadership matters.

Jeremiah 23:1-6, which concerns shepherds and their sheep, was chosen for this Sunday in July because of the thematic connection to the Gospel reading, [Mark 6:30-34, 53-56](#), which includes a description of the crowd following Jesus “like sheep not having a shepherd.” As we will see below, this image of shepherd-less sheep provokes feelings of anxiety and concern...

Our passage issues judgment to shepherds who have not upheld their duties to their flock. Jeremiah is not concerned with actual livestock and real shepherds. Instead, the prophet is using a common metaphor from the ancient Near East to speak of human kings and leaders as shepherds to the people. The ovine imagery is appropriate since the duties and responsibilities of shepherds would be well-known to ancient readers. Shepherds are supposed to take care of their sheep. Feed them; protect them; guide them.

But the kings have not been good shepherds...

The theological and ethical perspective of Jeremiah 23 is quite narrow: woe to the shepherds!

The shepherd is indeed a very biblical image. Psalm 23 uses this same imagery to speak of God as a shepherd. Shepherds take their sheep to green pastures and still waters and along correct paths. They protect them with their rod and staff in the darkest valleys. Likewise, Ezekiel 34 speaks of the leaders of Israel as shepherds and of God as the good shepherd. God seeks out the scattered sheep and rescues them from dangerous places...

God’s solution to this instance of poor leadership is forthcoming. The oracle of judgment becomes an oracle of salvation in verse 3. God takes the initiative. God will gather the flock from their scattering, bringing them back to the fold of the land of Israel, and raise up new shepherds, new leaders, for them.

Verses 5-6 then move beyond the shepherd metaphor to speak of a righteous branch. God will raise up a Branch who will reign wisely so that Judah and Israel will be saved... Jeremiah has in mind an earthly king or line of royal figures here, a future Davidic monarchy...

God will begin again with the house of David to enthrone a sagacious shepherd.”

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2488](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2488)  
**Tyler Mayfield** Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

**Psalm 23; RCL, Psalm 23 or Psalm 89:20-37 (Psalm 136:1-9; RCL, Psalm 145:10-18 or Psalm 14)**

*“The 23rd Psalm is one of the best-known and most-loved literary works in the world, and it may well be the best poem ever written. It is also a fine example of the power of figurative language: We read deep things into the vision of ourselves as sheep, led to green pastures and good water by a kind shepherd. It’s empowering to feel the confidence to go fearlessly into the valley of the shadow of death, and to feel the love and caring of a table prepared by the Lord and a cup so full it overflows.*

What people don't know, however, is that this language actually has precise internal meanings, and that when we see them there is an even deeper beauty in the poem. That's because what it actually describes is the path to heaven, and the fierce desire the Lord has to lead us there..."

- <https://newchristianbiblestudy.org/bible/story/the-23rd-psalm/german-luther-1912> (This link also has the 23 Psalm in German)

## The LORD Is My Shepherd

### A Psalm of David.

23 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness<sup>[b]</sup>

for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,<sup>[c]</sup>

I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely<sup>[d]</sup> goodness and mercy<sup>[e]</sup> shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell<sup>[f]</sup> in the house of the LORD  
forever.<sup>[g]</sup>

- a. [Psalm 23:2](#) Hebrew *beside waters of rest*
- b. [Psalm 23:3](#) Or *in right paths*
- c. [Psalm 23:4](#) Or *the valley of deep darkness*
- d. [Psalm 23:6](#) Or *Only*
- e. [Psalm 23:6](#) Or *steadfast love*
- f. [Psalm 23:6](#) Or *shall return to dwell*
- g. [Psalm 23:6](#) Hebrew *for length of days*

Now hear the opening verse of Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want." I've written on this before, and so won't go into great detail here, except to say that while we tend to focus so strongly on the powerful imagery of the first half of the verse, that imagery simply makes no sense apart from the second half of the verse. Because the Lord is my shepherd, that is, I shall not want. Because I trust God for my good, I shall not cave in to the loud din of my

culture enticing me to want and want and want at every turn and corner of my life. Because God has promised to take care of me, I will get off the treadmill of work and accumulation so that I can rest, and notice the abundance, and rejoice.

And that's the key thing about Sabbath rest, I think -- it invites a chance to step back and stand apart from all the things that usually drive and consume us that we might detect God's presence and providence and blessing, experience a sense of contentment, and give thanks.

But that's hard to do. No wonder the Psalmist says quite honestly that the Lord didn't simply invite rest but rather confesses that the Lord "*makes me lie down in green pastures.*" We are a people that desperately needs rest yet resists it. And so the Lord commands it...

- <http://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=1494> **David Lose** Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

### **Ephesians 2:11-22; RCL, the same reading (*Ephesians 3:14-21; RCL, the same reading*)**

The readings from Ephesians that will continue through September 2.

A good preview of the book of Ephesians is "Reconciled in Christ: Ministry in Light of Ephesians\*" by Wendell W. Frerichs [http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/8-3\\_National/8-3\\_Frerichs.pdf](http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/content/pdfs/8-3_National/8-3_Frerichs.pdf)

*"Today's reading lies at the heart of the theology of Ephesians, and it is not tame.*

*No doubt some relatively tame sermons have been preached from this text from time to time -- maybe taking to task a congregation fussily divided over the color of the carpet or over the price of adding ten parking spaces to the parking lot. But the text is meant to do more than coax cranky congregants toward compromise. This is a text meant to shake empires..."*

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1332](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1332)  
Sally Brown, Princeton Seminary, Princeton, NJ

### **One in Christ**

<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— <sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility <sup>15</sup> by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. <sup>17</sup> And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,<sup>[a]</sup> but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by<sup>[b]</sup> the Spirit.

- a. [Ephesians 2:19](#) Or *sojourners*
- b. [Ephesians 2:22](#) Or *in*

When a text begins with a “Therefore” or a phrase like “After these things . . .”, you as a reader know you have to back up and read what came just before. Sometimes we don’t do that, of course. We have come to view the Bible as so many chopped-up chapters and verses—with convenient sub-headings thrown in by Bible translators and editors—and so we figure we can dive in most anywhere there is a sub-heading and just hit the ground running with nary a backward glance at what came before. The Bible is a Whitman’s Sampler of passages that stand alone just fine on their own.

Not true. “Therefore” Ephesians 2:11 begins. OK, so what follows is the logical conclusion of what Paul had written before. And what is that? That we are saved by grace alone. That we were all once “dead” as doornails in our sins and trespasses but we have been made alive through an out-of-the-blue and completely undeserved fell swoop of divine grace. The Son of God died to make this happen. This is no cheap gift, no inexpensive grace, nothing to sniff or to sneeze at. This is deadly serious, life and death in the ultimate sense of both words. You were dead but now you are alive. It’s all grace so forget about merit or earnings or status or your own moral scorecard and history of achievement. You have been made all new by God’s stunning grace and, as Ephesians 2:10 reminded us, that ought not lead to some quiet life of doing nothing but rather a life of producing the fruit of good works that will be the natural overflow of that tidal wave of grace that saturated your life.

“Therefore . . .” Paul begins in verse 11. And what follows is most remarkable, though all these centuries later we can scarcely imagine how radical Paul’s words here really are. Because especially for the Jews, there was no more wide and deep a chasm in life than the one that separated them spiritually from all other people. They had been elected out of the nations for God’s glory and the difference between them and anyone else you could name could not have been more significant. No mere human being could ever bridge that divide. This was a spiritual Grand Canyon and one did not merely leap across it just by getting a good running start. True, there were things that could happen to bring an outsider in but it was complicated. A minor surgery (literally) was involved for the men folk. A whole lot of education in a very complex set of Laws was involved for everyone. And then a hyper strict adherence to those Laws was expected. But in truth . . . even when that was all said and done, the outsider remained second class to a degree. Sure, they could be tolerated on the inside of God’s chosen people if they toed the line and all, ate what they were told to eat, did not violate the Sabbath, and so on. But whereas the Jews could trace their relationship back to God with a thick line drawn by a Sharpie, these other folks had a kind of dotted line connecting them to God—not so thick a line, maybe not a permanent line, and for sure not as *good* a line.

But no more, Paul says. Now everyone’s line of connection to God is as thick and rock solid and permanent as can be. And guess what? Everyone’s line is drawn by the same Sharpie for the same reason and it is all about Jesus and zero about lineage, heritage, ethnicity, obedience, or anything else (and above all it sure did not involve that whole circumcision thing). “Therefore” from now on all comparisons are out of order. All hostility and judging of one another is forbidden. There is no longer an “us vs. them” mentality because there is no “them” in Christ but only “us.”

“We are all bricks in one and the same spiritual edifice,” Paul claims “and we became those bricks by grace alone so that no one can brag or boast or claim some superior path toward brickdom!”

Actually the first few verses of this lection from Ephesians 2 might have sounded pretty good to any Jews reading this letter. It would not be too difficult to read into Paul here a kind of condescending tone. “Now listen up, you Gentiles, you outsiders, you foreign-born non-Jewish folks: you are darn lucky to have been brought near. We used to exclude you for good reasons, you know, so be thankful!”

That is not at all what Paul means, though. Because as you read on, his rhetoric turns to his fellow Jews to say “Same goes for us, folks. We, too, are in Christ now for the same reason and by exactly the same route as our Gentile brothers and sisters. Spiritual pedigree is so yesterday! We are all one now. No difference, no differentiation. Therefore . . . let’s not even use that kind of vocabulary anymore. Words like ‘insider’ and ‘outsider,’ like ‘Jew’ and ‘Gentile’ have no meaning anymore in Christ. So don’t talk that way. Not anymore.”...

The Gospel is that radical, that explosive, that revolutionary, that mind-boggling. To tame the Gospel, to reduce it to some easy steps toward being nicer; to domesticate the Gospel and make it apply to only the small things of our lives . . . well, that is all a disservice to the Lord and Christ who went so far to bring about the kind of new world of which Paul writes in Ephesians 2.

Do we dare in this divisive age even to dream such dreams? Do we dare to proclaim such radical hope? Do we dare call believers to live in such a radical way?

Be careful with what you do with what comes after the “Therefore . . .”

- [http://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/proper-11b-2/?type=the\\_lectionary\\_gospel](http://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/proper-11b-2/?type=the_lectionary_gospel) Scott Hoezee

### **Mark 6:30-44; RCL, Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56( Mark 6:45-56; RCL, John 6:1-21)**

Also told in Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 9:10-17 and John 6:1-15

““Be specific! Show, Don’t Tell!”

*Those are fairly common pieces of advice from me when I grade student sermons. Generalities, undefined words like “this” or “that,” brief lists that quickly conclude with “and so on” or “et cetera” just don’t cut it. The concrete and the specific always trump the vague and the general.*

*I guess it’d be presumptuous of me to tell that to Mark.*

*Mark tells us in 6:34 that Jesus taught them much (in the Greek it’s just the word *polla*, “much, a lot”). He taught them a whole bunch of stuff, to be colloquial about it. But what kind of stuff? What did Jesus discern these “sheep without a shepherd” needed to learn and to hear most of all? Did he snow them with more parables that they had a tough time making sense of initially? (Mark did say earlier in this gospel that Jesus never taught anything without using parables.) Did he teach them more plainly about the Kingdom of God and about the grace of God that is the true center to the universe? Did he do a Sermon on the Mount-like listing of beatitudes, sketching out in that way the shape of the kingdom-filled life?*

*We could speculate endlessly on this, and we could make some pretty educated guesses, too, based on the rest of Mark’s gospel. But we’ll never know the precise content. So maybe we can better focus on something else that is rather remarkable here. Jesus saw these large crowds of people and he had compassion on them. They seemed lost. They were like sheep unable to find green pastures, moving through life without a goal, without the security a shepherd could*



provide. That, after all, is the implication of Mark's pastoral image here: sheep without a shepherd were vulnerable, were unable to care for themselves, were liable to getting lost and/or injured..."

- [http://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/proper-11b-2/?type=the\\_lectionary\\_gospel](http://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/proper-11b-2/?type=the_lectionary_gospel) Scott Hoezee

## The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 6th Chapter

### Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

<sup>30</sup>The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught.

<sup>31</sup>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.

<sup>32</sup>And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. <sup>33</sup>Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup>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. <sup>35</sup>And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. <sup>36</sup>Send them away to 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 buy two hundred denarii<sup>[a]</sup> worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” <sup>38</sup>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.” <sup>39</sup>Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup>So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. <sup>41</sup>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. <sup>42</sup>And they all ate and were satisfied. <sup>43</sup>And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup>And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

- a. [Mark 6:37](#) A denarius was a day's wage for a laborer

### “This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“...Mark reported the re-gathering of Jesus' "apostles" (6:30) from a successful mission (cf. 6:7-13) after depicting the death and burial of John.

As John's mission came to an end, the apostles' mission had just begun. The only other time Mark used the term "apostles" for Jesus' disciples was in 3:14. [It could be argued that "disciples" was the term Mark used for the broader group of followers, which included the twelve; cf. 4:10.] While closely associating the two missions (John's and Jesus'), Mark also clearly delineated between the two leaders and their bands in the story. Jesus' immediate reaction was to secure a private place for his disciples to rest...

While the success of Jesus' "apostles" loomed large for the future of the mission, the death of John at the hands of Herod(ias) loomed larger. The mission may not be completely

defeated, but drastic persecutions would be part-and-parcel of the operation. The message was clear: do not expect to take on the ruling authorities and not suffer the consequences. That was the message for the Markan community. That was the warning for all future followers...

*"Sheep without a Shepherd" (Mark 6:32-34)*

This short summary showed just how large Jesus' following had become. Not only was the mission expanding -- as the work of the apostles had shown (6:30) -- but many regularly attempted to track down Jesus. In this passage, Mark described them ("many" from *polloi* in 6:33) as running faster on foot than those traveling by boat. They were intent on locating Jesus. Yet, when Jesus saw them, he viewed them as "sheep without a shepherd," an image of their vulnerability. ["Compassion" (from *splagchnizomai* in 6:34) was one of Jesus' more common emotions expressed in the Markan narrative (e.g., 8:2; 9:22; cf. some manuscripts at 1:41).]

All references to this phrase ("sheep without a shepherd") in the Hebrew Bible support this idea: it was used in scenes in which God stands *over against* abusive shepherds who no longer care for their sheep (e.g., Ezekiel 34:2-5 and Zechariah 11:4-17); and, Moses requested that the people not be left as "sheep without a shepherd" in light of his own failing (Numbers 27:17), to which the Lord responds by suggesting Joshua "in whom is the spirit" (Numbers 27:18).

At this stage in the Markan narrative, Jesus' reaction must be a critique of Herod in the previous scene. Herod held feasts for the "leaders of Galilee," but Jesus fed common people. Mark's juxtaposition of these two "shepherds" and their activities centered on issues of food and associations in the first century. Here was one instance of how, for Mark, Jesus "shepherded" the "sheep" of Israel. Jesus' feeding was a reminder of how Moses provided food for the people of Israel in the ancient wilderness (cf Numbers 27). The importance of food *and* community cannot be overstated as a primary function of first century life in the Mediterranean life."

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1326](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1326) [Emerson Powery](#) Professor of Biblical Studies, Messiah College, Grantham, PA



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