

In the Gospel, the crowds were **with him for 3 days, some had come from afar, in a desolate place**, far from provisions. Been with Him days, not concerned over their bellies, embracing His teaching, His words. Which of you this morning haven't already been distracted, daydreaming already, thinking about later today or this week, even before I finish a 10 minutes sermon. Shame on us all. Modern man is not better than those before us. God help us to learn to pay attention, not be driven by our belly, our appetite to be constantly entertained; God help us to focus, get your mind off of 'you' and what 'you' do. God help us to stop. Quiet your minds. Be like that crowd in a desolate place- that's the world out there, the world we live in -a desolate place, without provisions to take care of ourselves, yet so focused, trusting, hungering for His teaching, His Word, what He gives.

By this time in Jesus' ministry, He's well known. 1000's followed. Many who were injured, lame, sick, all hungry in a desolate place. He won't send them away. They had come for healing, for comforting Words, for compassion only God could give. He says, **I have compassion on the crowd**. Now we hear the word "compassion" we think of an emotion, feeling, feel sorry for someone, empathy. In the Bible it is more. So much more than just sympathy for sick, hungry people; His compassion moves Him to act, even in your life. Compassion drives Him to the cross.

What do you have in a desolate place? We see there in the disciples reaction, **how in this desolate place?** -a reflection of ourselves -against all human reason, your negativity, your practical wisdom, your ideas. How often, we look at things from a perspective of hopelessness, or scarcity. What could God possible do?

You know what happened for 1000's. It is enough. More than enough. What happened then and there has a lot of meaning for what goes on here and now. He sees you, injured, lame, sick in your life, from your sin and as a victim of cruel world, all hungry.

Jesus still feeds His people. You have a God who is compassionate. He always acts, to take care of you in the desolate places in life. Comes with healing, with comforting Words, with compassion only God could give.

Here's some Latin: Nemo resideo. Nemo resideo -No one left behind. A critical part of Roman Legion morale. Greek mythology portrays heroes rescued those captured by enemies. This is instill in our soldiers. In the US Armed Forces, they don't leave anyone behind. One of the basic pillars of the Warrior Ethos: "I will never leave a fallen comrade." Our soldiers make a sacred commitment: no one left behind on the battlefield. You even see this in our law enforcement, firefighters.

Our Lord's compassion, the oath, the promise made in your baptism **I will never leave you.** You are rescued from desolation, from the enemy of sin and death; the devil cannot harm you. No one in our Lord's ranks, not one of His people in this Church militant, that is the church this side of eternity; no one is left behind, the fallen are not left. A perfect, sacred commitment -He will have compassion. He will not let the enemy have you. He fights for us. Every one of you so precious. Every single life matters. None of His own are ever lost. He binds up the fallen, the wounded, you bask in His healing, forgiveness, His gifts.

Here is power for life. There is no circumstance in your life He is unaware of; unable to help. His compassion for you dear child moves Him to act in your life in ways against your practical wisdom, your reason can see, your own ideas.

Scripture declares you have a great cloud of witnesses, people, even loved ones who've gone before us, whom the Lord has helped beyond all human reasoning, in all our desolate places. There is no such thing as an impossible situation. He has promised to work for your good. His Words still have power to call things to be that are not, even your forgiveness, even you will not die. Ours is not a God of disappointment but of kept promises. He gives what He says He will give; will be where He has promised to be.

They ate and were satisfied. We do you long for so many things that will never satisfy? Shame on us for not being satisfied with what He gives. Thinking God is not compassionate.

I know, you crave miracles. Not like feeding 1000's- but for a small healing, this particular thing to work out. Crave some special God-intervention.

Long to see great miracles like when Jesus fed 1000's, yet how foolish if you don't realize far more and greater miracles in your life; He's still performing countless miracles. Martin Luther said it well, "everything is a miracle, look around you, what isn't divine work at hand, what isn't a miracle of life". Miracles all around , miracles taking place countless times in your body and life every day. What happened on the shore of the Sea of Galilee wasn't the 1st miraculous feeding, it wouldn't be the last.

Today, this very day, you have a miracle far, far greater than feeding 4000. From the hands of His ministers today as it was then, Jesus is still feeding multitudes – not with bread and fish, or mere bread and wine, but miracles of miracles, God in flesh and blood joined to you.

They all ate and were satisfied. That should be the story of your life from this Altar. You eat, satisfied, filled with His grace and goodness, filled with Him and His life. For Christ's gifts of forgiveness and compassion are limitless and eternal. It never fails, it never runs out. There's always more. We feast on the Lord's compassion.