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Intro

(upbeat music) Good morning, good evening, and good afternoon. Whenever and wherever you're listening, we just wanted to extend the warmest of welcomes. So kick back and relax as we continue through our sermon series.

Pastor Larry Davis

So we have been on this journey. Last week was epic. Some of you guys don't even know this, but we ended up baptizing, I think, 37 people last weekend, which was so cool to see. I'm right, Megan, right, 37? Yes. There was spontaneous baptisms. There were so many people here. It was wild. That's actually the most baptisms we've ever done on one day before. And it was so much fun. And then I also found out that a lot of, maybe even you who are in the room, were new with us. We had 43 people come to us and say, "This is my first time here," and let us know so we could start getting connected. So if that's one of you and this is your second time here, I actually wanna encourage you to go back out or the new friends area. And we have another gift for you to help you take another step. If you are new here, newer, I told you guys like, "Hey, come on back this week, I get to share." And we're gonna jump back into this book of Matthew, which is really beautiful, where we're just reading the words and learning about the life of Jesus, what he says, who he says it to, what he's like, what it looks like to push the kingdom in, how it acts out in our lives when the kingdom of heaven arrives in the form of Jesus. It's been really beautiful to go on this journey. I was actually just today digging in. We're gonna be starting chapter 14. This is actually a great time for those of you who come in. I was just like, man, if we just, the things that we're learning, if we just focused on Jesus's words, if you were just gonna get like a red letter Bible or you're gonna get out your phone, a lot of that stuff's highlighted. We're getting into 14, so I was like, what does Jesus say in chapter 14? Like, what are his words? So I'm gonna just read you to them real quickly out of context so you can just see the beauty that we've been experiencing and then we'll dive in. So only the words of Jesus in chapter 14. He says this, "They do not need to go away. "Give them something to eat. "Bring them here to me. "Take courage, it is I. "Don't be afraid. "Come, you of little faith, why do you doubt?" Isn't that beautiful? Just his words out of context. What we're doing is we're taking his words and the stories about him. And as we are walking through, we're digesting and chewing on it and saying, what is the context? Like, what is the things actually that's like right here that we're missing? And so in the 21st century, we're trying to go back to the first century and say, how does that make sense for us? Or what can we glean or learn that they just knew, that they understood in the time and the things that were taking place? So we have been going now through the book of Matthew for 20 months. That's crazy. 20 months and we are now starting chapter 14. It took us 20 months to get to chapter 14. Now what's really fun about this is some of you guys may know how many books are in Matthew? How many chapters? Somebody knows, 28. So it's taken us 20 months, we are now halfway. So congratulations. I'm gonna tell you, yeah, there is something that's really rich about going at such a slow pace, about two years ago, I really had this idea coming out of COVID where I was leaning in and being like, what is it that we need as a community? Like, how can we slow down and stop? And so this idea was to do something that we've never done before, which was this expository

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teaching to go through a long book, literally word by word, section by section, skipping nothing, and to digest it, and we'll just take as long as it takes. And people were like, oh my gosh, we're gonna be in this thing forever? This is so boring. Like give me some new quip I can use and wax elegantly with a rad title besides the gospel according to Matthew. It was like, oh my gosh, no way. That's not what we need. We like need to hear and digest and just sit in the words and the life of Jesus and understand who he is. There is nothing more exciting and freeing than that. But as much as I have, I'm gonna tell you right now, I have so loved this. It has been so rich for my own life. I have grown so much from it, and I've talked to so many of you that are rediscovering or re-encountering Jesus in a beautiful way and just falling more in love with him and understanding what this looks like and taking off shame and living a kingdom life. It's been so much fun. There is something lost to spending time going that slow for the whole story. Matthew, it's 28 chapters. These books and the other books in the Bible were actually meant to be read aloud. They weren't meant to be read quietly as we do page by page so often. They were meant to be read aloud. And if you were going to sit and you're going to listen to Matthew, it would take just under two hours. It's like going to a movie where someone will read it from beginning to end. And if you've never actually done that and listened to any of the gospels just through nonstop read aloud to you, it's very powerful. It's a really powerful thing that happens. And the things that you hear and discover and you feel. So what we've been doing is we've just really slowed down. And so it takes some of that understanding of connecting the whole story out of it. And this morning, we don't have just under two hours with each other, but we do have eight minutes or so. And so what I want to do now that we've reached the halfway point, I'd like to give you a summarization, a synopsis of where we have been so far before we continue the second half of Matthew. So watch the screens.

Video

The Gospel According to Matthew is one of the earliest official accounts about Jesus of Nazareth, his life, his death, and his resurrection. The book itself is anonymous, but the earliest reliable tradition links it to Matthew the tax collector, who was one of the twelve apostles that Jesus appointed, and he actually appears within the book itself. For about 30 to 40 years, the apostles orally taught and passed on their eyewitness accounts about Jesus, along with his teachings that they had all memorized. And Matthew has then collected and arranged all these into this amazing tapestry and designed the book to highlight certain themes about Jesus. In this video, we're just going to cover the first half of the book. Specifically, Matthew wants to show how Jesus is the continuation and fulfillment of the whole biblical story about God and Israel. That Jesus is the Messiah from the line of David, that he is a new authoritative teacher like Moses, and not only that, Jesus is God with us, or in Hebrew, Emmanuel. And Matthew's designed this book with an introduction and then a conclusion, and these act like a frame around five clear sections right here in the center, each of which concludes with a long block of Jesus' teaching. Now this design is very intentional and it's amazing. Just watch how this works. 1-3 they set the stage by attaching Jesus' story right onto the storyline of the Old Testament scriptures. So Matthew opens with a genealogy about Jesus that highlights

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how he is from the messianic line of the son of David, and he's a son of Abraham. That means he's going to bring God's blessing to all of the nations. After that, we get the famous story about Jesus' birth and how all of the events fulfilled the Old Testament prophetic promises, that the nations would come and honor the Messiah, that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, but even more than that, Jesus's conception by the Holy Spirit, his name Immanuel, all these work together to show that Jesus is no mere human. He is God with us. God become human. So you can see two of Matthew's key themes right here in the introduction. He's from the line of David, he's Emmanuel. But Matthew also wants to show how Jesus is a new Moses. So like Moses, Jesus came up out of Egypt, he passed through the waters of baptism, and he entered into the wilderness for 40 days. And then Jesus goes up onto a mountain to deliver his new teaching. So through all of this, Matthew is claiming that Jesus is the promised greater-than-Moses figure who's going to deliver Israel from slavery, he's going to give them new divine teaching, he's going to save them from their sins, and bring about a new covenant relationship between God and his people. This Moses and Jesus parallel also explains why Matthew has structured the center of the book the way that he did. These five main parts highlight Jesus as a teacher, and he's created a parallel. Jesus as a teacher parallels the five books of Moses. Jesus is the new authoritative covenant teacher who's going to fulfill the storyline of the Torah. Now in the first section, chapters 4 to 7, Jesus steps onto the scene announcing the arrival of God's kingdom, and this is really key. The kingdom is in essence about God's rescue operation for his whole world, and it's taking place through King Jesus. Jesus has come to confront evil, especially spiritual evil and its whole legacy of demon oppression and disease and death. Jesus has come to restore God's rule and reign over the whole world by creating a new family of people who will follow him, obey his teachings, and live under his rule. So after Jesus begins healing people and forming a movement, a community, he takes his followers out to a mountain or a hillside and he delivers his first big block of teaching, traditionally called the Sermon on the Mount. And here Jesus explores what it looks like to follow him and live in God's kingdom. And it's an upside-down kingdom where there are no privileged members. So the poor, the nobodies, the wealthy, the religious, everybody is invited and is called to turn to repent and to follow Jesus and join his family. Jesus says that he's not here to set aside the commands of the Torah or the Old Testament. Rather, he's here to fulfill all of that through his life, through his teachings. He's here to transform the hearts of his people so that they can truly love God and love their neighbor including their enemy. After concluding his great teaching on the kingdom, the next section shows Jesus bringing the kingdom into reality in the day-to-day lives of people. So Matthew's arranged here nine stories about Jesus bringing the power of God's kingdom into the lives of hurting broken people. There are three groups of three stories, and they're all about people who are sick or have broken bodies or they're in danger and Jesus heals or saves them by these acts of grace and power. And then right in between these triads we find two parallel stories about Jesus' call that people should follow him. Matthew's making a point here. One can only experience the power of Jesus' grace by following him and becoming his disciple. Now after Matthew has shown the power of the kingdom through Jesus, Jesus then extends his reach by sending out the twelve disciples who are going to go do what he's been

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doing. And this leads to the second large block of teaching, chapter 10. And here, Jesus teaches his disciples how to announce the kingdom and what to expect once they do. Many among Israel are accepting Jesus and his offer of the kingdom, but Israel's leaders, they aren't. They stand to lose a lot if they repent and become disciples of Jesus. And so Jesus knows they're going to reject him and persecute his followers, which is exactly what happens. In the next section, chapters 11 through 13, Matthew has collected a group of stories about how people are responding to Jesus in his message, and it's a mixed bag. So some stories are positive. People love Jesus, and they think he's the Messiah. Others are more neutral, like John the Baptist, or even the members of Jesus' own family. And they make it clear that Jesus is not what they expected. And then you have Israel's leaders. They're entirely negative. You have the Pharisees and the Bible scholars. They all reject Jesus together. They think he's a false teacher, he's leading the people astray, they think he's blasphemous in these exalted claims he's making about himself. But Jesus isn't surprised or thrown by all these diverse responses. In fact, he focuses on it in the third block of teaching, chapter 13. Here Matthew's collected together a bunch of Jesus' parables about the kingdom, like about a farmer throwing seed on four types of soil, or about a mustard seed, or a pearl or buried treasure. These parables are like a commentary on the stories that you've just read in chapters 11 and 12. Some people are accepting Jesus with enthusiasm, others are rejecting him, but God's kingdom is of ultimate value and it will not stop spreading despite all of these obstacles. So that's the first half of the Gospel according to Matthew. Now here's a few more things to look for as you read through these chapters. Matthew's presenting Jesus, remember, as the continuation and fulfillment of the Old Testament storyline. So, look for how he weaves in quotations from the Old Testament scriptures, and what you'll find is that they're placed at strategic points in the story, explaining more about Jesus and his identity. So stop, take time to go look up these references and read them in their Old Testament context, and most often you'll discover really cool, interesting connections. Lastly, pay attention to the types of people who accept Jesus and follow Him. And you'll see that it's most often people who are unimportant, they're nobodies, or they're irreligious. And these are the people who are transformed by their trust or faith in Jesus and follow Him. And it's the religious and the prideful who are offended by Him. So how is this tension between Jesus and Israel's leaders going to play itself out? That's what the second half of Matthew is all about.

Pastor Larry Davis

- All right, so was that helpful? Yeah, that's good. See how far you've come? You're like, "Oh yeah, this is good." So if you're new at this, welcome, you're all caught up. You didn't miss a thing, right? You get a good taste. And so now, we are now jumping into this other section, starting with chapter 14. And so this is a really important piece and a change and this kingdom movement that Jesus is starting. So let's go ahead and hop in chapter 14, verse one. It says, "At that time, Herod the Tetrarch heard reports about Jesus. And he said to his attendants, 'This is John the Baptist. He has risen from the dead. That is why miraculous powers are at work in him.'" So we just wanna pause here for a minute and just look back, if you can go back to the other one. If you just look back at this, This is really interesting news right here. We just now

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heard that for the first time, Herod has gotten information about Jesus and who he is, and that there's things that are taking place. And yet we get this little like information here that suddenly it's saying, this is John the Baptist. He has risen from the dead. That is why miraculous powers are going on, taking place. And so if we pause for a minute, let's think about the last time that we heard about John the Baptist. Remember, we've already seen him twice. We saw him once at this really beautiful moment of this baptism and this partnership and the Holy Spirit. And then before he goes out into the desert. And then we saw him just two chapters ago. Do you remember where he was? He was in prison. So the last time we actually heard about him, he was in prison. He actually, he sent his disciples to Jesus to say, are you really the one? Like, because like I'm in prison, there's things, there's hard things going on. There's persecution. Are you the one? really the one and Jesus gave news to send back that John the Baptist would clearly understand. And now all of the sudden, out of nowhere, we get this little clip of information that John is what? He's dead. So now Matthew knows that we don't know this, that we just found out through Herod that John the Baptist is dead. And he does something very interesting that we haven't seen here, he doesn't normally do, is now he goes backwards to give us the reader and the listener information about what happened because we've just discovered that he's not with us anymore, that Herod was thinking that this was John the Baptist. And so he pauses and goes backwards and says this. Says, "Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. For John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her. "Herod wanted to kill John, "but he was afraid of the people "because they considered John a prophet." Now, as he's looking backwards and starting to tell some story, they understood kind of informationally what was going on in this little statement of because of who Herodias was, and that was Herod's brother, Philip's wife. Now, some of us were familiar with Herod. we've heard the name Herod before, right? We heard it in the very beginning. Herod was this awful, murderous man that slayed babies in Bethlehem 'cause he had heard the first time that there was a Messiah, got on his radar. And so what people would have known then is kind of what was taking place. Now, I'm gonna share something with you that gives you some more cultural and historical background because I want you to understand that this stuff is real, that it's fact, that it actually happened. It's the same thing with the resurrection last week. We talked about how the stone was rolled away from the tomb and the tomb was empty that he has risen. And it's factual. Now, here's a question. Did they need to roll back the tomb to know that Jesus had risen? He could have gotten out. It's God. He's gonna do what he wants to do. The reason that the tomb was rolled away wasn't so he could get out. It was so that we could actually look in and have factual evidence. I witnessed, I have seen that the tomb is empty, right? That's the factual part of this stuff. So I'm gonna actually share with you some history that gives you some facts about what takes place so we can understand what was actually happening and what causes it to happen because it represents the rumbling of the kingdoms of the world. And Matthew is actually painting a picture of what the kingdoms of the world look like even today. And that when the kingdoms of the world get crunched and mixed up with the kingdom of heaven, it doesn't fit and it doesn't work. And because of that, there's sadness and grief and loss and hurt. So let me show you a map. I'm gonna explain this map here. You're

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gonna see it in a couple of different ways. So if I was to show you back then at the time of Jesus, or when Jesus was first born, there was Herod the Great. What the Herod we're talking about right now is not the same Herod. I'm gonna explain. Herod the Great or Herod the Builder, this awful man, There was a section of land over here that he had been given and was in charge of from Rome. Herod the Great, he was this puppet king, he was half Jewish, and so Rome had given him as a gift this land to care for and to oversee and to govern over. Now, he had three sons. When he died, his sons all began to fight for and fight over the land, who would be the next king. And it was almost a civil war, and it got to a point where what they did is they ended up creating some sort of treaty and divvying up the land. So you have, here, we're just gonna start over there. You got the idea with that one. So you have this little blue section right here, and this was the first son. This is Archelaus. This is, he got this area, and he took over this. It says around 6 AD, so Jesus was like between like eight and nine years old at this time when he took that piece of land. And you have Bethlehem where he was born here in Jerusalem. That's not too far away. So this is his area to govern. Then you have this little purple section where it's the region of Galilee where we've seen a lot of the kingdom movement, Jesus' movement where he's preaching and teaching. But you also see this little section right here called Perea, which was also, this is Herod Antipas. Now Antipas, when he became governor, he wanted to be like his dad. And so he took the name Herod. It's the heron we're talking about today. So this is interesting how we got this piece of land. If you see really down low here, you see Nabatea. This is Nabatea. And Nabatea, some of you guys are familiar with. This region in Jordan, this is where Petra is. You guys have heard about that archeological site where it's this kingdom that's like literally carved into the stone. It's really beautiful. You can see pictures. A lot of people will still go visit there today. And the kingdom of Nabatea, That was where the capital of Nabatea was. Now what happened was, is Nabatea, the king of Nabatea, had this land in Perea right here. And what he did is he gave this to him as a gift for marrying the princess of Nabatea. So Antipas is now marrying the princess of Nabatea, and he's now given this gift. I will slow down. Some of you guys are like, "You're telling me so much stuff right now." So that's Antipas. This area right over here, this yellow section, this is Philip, the third son. So now all of these three brothers of Herod, they are ruling and governing this area, but they report to Caesar. And now it turns into this political soap opera of what takes place. They all have to go and they report to Caesar. So they go on a trip to Rome, all of them. And what happens is Antipas falls madly in love with his brother's Philip wife, and an affair begins. And they end up coming back, and the first thing that happens is Antipas then divorces the princess of Nabatea and sends her back. This causes a big problem, because now the king of Nabatea is declaring war on his land that was given for his daughter. And so you have thousands of soldiers on the border, literally dying, fighting for this area of land. The same time, Philip's wife has come back and has divorced Philip to go live with her lover, Antipas, Herod Antipas, back in Galilee. Well, how do you think that went over? So now there's war on this border, civil war between them and his brother. So now it comes to this situation where Antipas has war down here, war down here, and the kingdoms that are happening and taking place are the same kingdoms we have here. I mean, nothing's new under the sun. War on the

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borders, there's power and pride and sex. It's all this affair that's causing all of these issues and chaos. And so what we've now found ourselves sitting in is you have Herodias is now the wife, which used to be brother Philip's wife of Antipas or Herod in the story. So if we jumped back into this, let me recap exactly where we are. So chapter, let's see, this is verse six. So verse six, we now know who Herod is. We know that Herodias is his new wife. Now it says, "On Herod's birthday," think throne room, think big, huge meals, think lots of wine, think like all kinds of things that would be for a royal birthday. On his birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced for the guest. The daughter of Herodias, who used to be his niece, and now is his daughter-in-law, it says, danced for the guest and pleased Herod so much. I want you to read through the lines here. I mean, this is not a PG-13 movie. Think "Throne Room," lots of wine. "Your used-to-be niece," now your daughter-in-law, "is dancing for the guests, and please herit so much "that he promised this drunken oath "to give her whatever she asked." And then prompted by her mother, Herodias, She said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." I mean, think about this, this moment. I mean, sit there in the room. This is what's going on. The king was distressed. He was distressed. He was like, "What did I say? What did I do? You don't say whatever." And it's an oath and it's in front of all these people. He says he was distressed, So because of his unthoughtful, crazy oath that he made in his dinner guests, the people, to not lose his pride, he ordered that her requests be granted and had John beheaded in the prison. Then his head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl who carried it then to her mother." Think about this. This is John the Baptist. But think about what happens in the kingdoms of the world, like the kingdoms that take place. Matthew is painting a picture of the same things that happen now. The decisions that are made because of pride, and money, and power, and sex, they push up against the kingdom of God. And imagine this now, that John dies this brutal, gruesome death. And think, royal party, this throne room area, And now you have a platter with a bloody, severed head on it that's being delivered to Herodias because of her dumb request. It's crazy. It's awful. It's gruesome. And it says, John's disciples, they came, and they took his body, and they buried it. They gave it a proper burial. And then they went and told Jesus. That's the story. That's what we get right in the beginning of chapter 14. And this is so important 'cause this is a change because Jesus in the kingdom movement, it's been stirring up some things, but it's only been religious leaders and they're plotting already to kill him and destroy him. But now for the first time, it's on Herod's radar. He's hearing about this Jesus figure for the first time. So this is concerning. This is not good news. And now this has just taken place and now his disciples are going to tell Jesus, and it sets us up for this next part of the story. It's already here, sorry, I was trying to surprise you here. If you looked in your Bible, you would see, or you read stuff, you see little headings, which a lot of times tell us, like, oh, end of story, new story, new scene. You need to take that away, so we can take it away. I mean, but you can put it back up. No, no, no, I mean the other one, the next one. Yeah, there it is, so it's gone. Wait, no, the next one. Go one more. Yep, that's it. When Jesus heard what happened. There you go. So that's how you should hear it. They went and told Jesus what happened. Get rid of that little title. This is still continuing the same story. This is where we get to see Jesus' reaction and compassion and grief and hurt from what we think

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is a very familiar story. So then when Jesus heard what had happened to his cousin, They withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Now think about this. Think about like what's just taken place. Matthew just paused and went back and let us know what's happening. And now he's bringing this back up into the story, back to Jesus, back to what's taking place. And Jesus is hearing for the first time that one of his closest friends' family has been beheaded and slaughtered because of a drunken party. This shouldn't happen. This isn't what the kingdom movement is about. And now think about him as a person, how would you react? What would your feelings be? What would your thoughts be? It would be deep grief and sorrow. And so what does he do? We see that he withdrew, but he says he went to his disciples and said, "We need to get out of here. I need to get away from people. I need to grieve. I need to process." I mean, partly he could have been even on the run, fearful again because he had already discovered what it was like to be over the shadow of Herod as a baby when his parents had to retreat to Egypt because he was slaughtering all of these kids. Now, once again, he's hearing that he's on Herod's radar and he's hearing what happened to John. He's like, if that can happen to him, I mean, oh my gosh, what can happen to me? And we're just getting this thing moving and going. And so he goes away privately. Now he wasn't a lot of times really privately away. He always has 12 disciples with him in most cases. And so this group of people then cared for him and they pushed off and they went off to a private place and they took the boat, they got in the boat and they just tried to love him and he was probably there. He probably wasn't even talking. They were just with him, grieving with him. And so then it says, "Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot." They're looking out into the Sea of Galilee trying to watch him as he's grieving. And they followed him on foot from the towns. And when Jesus landed, he saw a large crowd. I mean, imagine this. You have your friend, you're caring for them, and all of a sudden you're trying to go to this like secret, like a solitary place, this kind of desolate place where people wouldn't come, where we can just retreat and grieve and work through this. And then we're getting away from people, and then you finally pull up to land, and what do you see? people. I mean, for the disciples, exactly what they did not want to see. They're trying to protect Him and care for Him in the midst of their grief. And then Jesus does what only He can do. I mean, this is beautiful, friends, this part right here. He has been-- they have been following Him, these disciples, for about a year and a half. And at some point, you're around that type of person and it begins to rub off on you. And you're like, this is why they followed this guy. When they landed, when Jesus landed and saw the large crowd, he had compassion, compassion on them, and he healed them. He got out of the boat. He didn't do what the disciples wanted him to do. That was not the disciples' responses when they saw all these people. Jesus' response was to walk right past them. And in the midst of his grief and sorrow, he still was able to see somebody else that also was full of grief and sorrow. The losers, those who had issues with their body, those who were sick, those who were poor, that didn't have food, that were just hungry for Him in this kingdom experience. In the midst of that, He connected with them in their grief and their loss and their sorrow, and He had compassion. And now the disciples are looking going, I love this guy. Who is this guy? Of course he is. Of course this is his response, to go up to them and ask their names, to pray for them, to care for them, and to heal

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them, and to look at them in the eyes. And then it says, "As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a remote place.'" This is actually in Bethesda. We're going to get into this next week really deeply. But I want you to understand right now is in context of this whole story. So next week, we're gonna dive in deep. But they said, this is a remote place and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food. This is really beautiful. They now were learning from Jesus. They actually were thinking not of themselves and not of just Jesus, but of other people. And they had compassion on the other people and said, Jesus, they're gonna be hungry. Like they're poor and we're far away. We're in a desolate place. "There's no towns around, this is like a desert." Now, you just saw that video where we're learning that Matthew is continually teaching us how Jesus is the new Moses, which is very important in that culture. Do you remember a story that's similar to this? Of a group of people that are in a desolate place and they're hungry and they need some food? Jesus replied to the disciples, "They don't need to go away." Like, good job. You love people. You love my people. They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat. Now, look what they said. We don't have enough. Like, we only brought here five loaves of bread and two fish. Like, we just have enough for 12. Like, we were just coming to take care of you right here. And so Jesus says what he always says. He's like, just bring them here to me. Just come to me. And he said-- and he directed the people then to sit in groups. These are groups of 5,200 on the grass, taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to the heaven, he gave thanks. Or some translation says he blessed it, and he broke the loaves. And then it says, "Then the disciples gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave to the people." Now, this is really beautiful. And like I said, we're going to dive into this next week even more. But what happened? The disciples saw something. And this whole bit of conversation isn't as much about Jesus as it is about what he says and what the disciples do. They had compassion, they let him know a problem, then they let him know we cannot fix this, and he says, just bring it to me. But he didn't go out and feed the people, he gave it to them to go out and feed the people in the midst of their own sorrow and grief and hurt, that there was work to be done, even in the midst of the bad, horrible things that we sit in and that happened to us. And then they picked up 12 baskets of broken pieces that were leftover, and the number of those who ate it was about 5,000 and that's just men besides women and children. So you can just imagine. Now watch, it doesn't end there. You get this other subheading. Now Jesus walks on water. Hold on, time out. Let's take that away. This is still part of the story. Immediately, he's dismissing the crowds. Or they've just eaten. It's about 5,000 people. Immediately, Jesus made the disciples. He says, "Get in the boat and go on ahead of him "to the other side." And he stayed behind and dismissed the crowds. And we'll talk about, I can't even imagine him going to like these small groups and talking and dismissing them. And after he dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. He got back into solitude where he can get comfort from his father. After yet, he had compassion. Now, isn't that interesting again? We just learned that he's trying to show that he's the new Moses. What other story do we see where a group of people were in a desolate place, hungry, asking for food. And someone begged and provided them Moses in the desert. And yet we see again just this little

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teeny thing where Matthew is telling a group of people that would have understood exactly what-- immediately would have been like, you're the new Moses. You're feeding the people in a desolate place out of compassion and care and love. So we'll get into that bit of the story next week. And then Jeff, after that, is going to share about the rest of this story. But for today, as we wrap up our time, I want us to reflect on this idea that in the midst of our own pain and grief, when we see Jesus in pain and grief, that God can still do things, that he's still working. I mean, if you think about this, you just saw-- I mean, it's crazy. John was beheaded. That wasn't the plan. We can sit there and be like, so that's what God's plan was? I don't think so. Because the kingdoms of the world don't fit in the plan of the kingdoms of heaven. And unfortunately, there's tragedy after tragedy after tragedy. And he's painting a picture of the tragedy in which we live right now, where we can sit here and be like, why did this happen? Why is my kid suffering? Why am I suffering? Why did I get that phone call? And yet, we can carry all of that, and we can still see that in the midst of that, that wasn't supposed to happen, this pain and the grief, that God is a God of compassion and care and still can use you to feed others, to care for others. So that song we sang just earlier, we're going to actually sing it again. I want to actually show you just the first verse right here, just so you can put this into context. It first says, "When did I start to forget all of the great things that you did?" Maybe that moment that you got that phone call or you heard about this dinner party. When did I throw away faith for the impossible? How did I start to believe you weren't sufficient for me? Friends, we've sat in this. We've said, how can he do this and ask me to carry this at the same time? And why do I talk myself out of seeing miracles? We do this every day. We do this all the time. And so today, just even as we read in the story and the context and what took place, we can still stand there and say that you are more than able. You are so much more than able to do what you want to do. My life threw me into somebody else. And then there's that staple, who am I to deny what the Lord can do? Some of you guys need to hear that today. Some of you guys need to grab onto that. Who am I to deny what the Lord can do? There is nothing so lost that cannot be found, friends. There is nothing so broken that He cannot begin to do amending work here today in this place. There's nothing so dead that He cannot resurrect and make new again. We saw miracles last week, we'll see miracles today, and He's ready to do it in your life. So would you please stand and respond and worship.

Outro

- And this concludes this week's podcast. We hope you've enjoyed spending some time with us. And if you haven't already, like and subscribe to our YouTube and find us on Instagram @ngatecf. See you next week.