



Preliminary Exercises

1. The story of what is often referred to as 'the feeding of the five thousand' is recorded in all four canonical Gospels: Mark 6.30-44; Luke 9.10-17; Matthew 14.12b-21; John 6.1-14. Read the four accounts.

 - a) Make a list of what the four accounts have in common.
 - b) Make a list of where the accounts differ.
 - c) How similar are the accounts in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke?
 - d) How do the accounts in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke differ from the account in the Gospel of Mark?
 - e) How does the account in the Gospel of John differ from the accounts in the three synoptic Gospels?
 - f) As you look at the similarities and the difference you have identified between the accounts in the four Gospels, what – if anything – strikes you as significant?

2. Read Mark 4.35-41 and Matthew 8.18-27.

 - a) How do the conclusions differ?
 - b) What – if anything – strikes you as significant between the two accounts?

3. Read Mark 6.45-52 and Matthew 14.22-32.

 - a) How do the conclusions differ?
 - b) What – if anything – strikes you as significant between the two accounts?

4. The 'Parable of the Good Samaritan' is a story from the New Testament with which many people are familiar. Read Luke 10.25-37.
What are the cultural references in the story which need to be understood if the story itself is to be understood?

5. Read John 3.1-21.
What difference – if any – does it make if the quotation concludes with verse 15 rather than with verse 21?