

JESUS DISPLAYS HIS GLORY IN FEEDING THE CROWDS A MIRACULOUS MEAL

John 6:1-15

Jesus Feeds the 5,000

Many people still misunderstand Jesus. Some think He is a revolutionary, or a reformer of Judaism, or simply an enlightened man who was a miracle worker. Some are interested in Him for only what they want for their own needs. This was the attitude of many in Jesus' day.

1.THE FICKLE CROWD: SEEKING JESUS FOR MORE SIGNS – John 6:1-4

- The feeding of the 5,000 is found in all four gospels. John adds some details we don't find in the other gospels, including the ending about wanting to make Jesus king. This miracle emphasizes the power and majesty of Jesus as God in the flesh. "Who is this that can multiply food and feed thousands of people?" One greater than Moses is here – the Son of God Himself!
- The crowd follows Jesus out to a desolate place where Jesus wanted to be alone with His disciples. The crowd comes because they "saw the signs Jesus was doing on the sick." It is not so much interest in Jesus as in miracles. They are seeking the sensational and fail to grasp the true significance of the miracles of Jesus – John 20:31.

2.THE FAITHLESS DISCIPLES: LESSONS IN MINISTRY – John 6:5-9

- Jesus purposely tests His disciples. He asks Philip how to feed these crowds – Numbers 11:13. Philip responds by only considering the natural world and natural resources. He says 200 denarii (8 months' pay of an average worker) would not buy enough to give each one a bite!
- Andrew mentions the small boy who had five loaves and two fish. The barley loaves are the food of the poorer classes. The fish were probably pickled fish to be eaten as a side dish with the bread. But Andrew thinks this is ludicrous. This is nothing. What difference can this small amount of food possible make? – 2 Kings 4:42-44. Philip sees the immense need and considers it insurmountable. He doesn't realize a greater than Elisha is here! Andrew thinks the available resources are insignificant. Neither Philip or Andrew see the power of Jesus over need and resources!
- The disciples of Jesus all fail to see in Him the One who has the power to provide food for a multitude. Jesus, in contrast to the disciples, is also an example of Servanthood, in that He gives up His rest to serve others – Mark 6:30-34. *"As in the case of Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, Jesus foregoes His rest for the sake of service to others in accordance with His Father's will."*- Alfred Plummer.
- Application: Don't just look at issues from a worldly viewpoint. Consider God. PRAY! Don't forget His sovereign power. You may feel like you have little, but put what you have in Jesus' hands. *"Little is much when God is in it."*

3.THE FILLING DINNER: A SIGN OF JESUS' DEITY – John 6:10-13

- The miracle points to the Godhood of Jesus. Jesus blesses the food. Jesus first gives thanks to God. Then Jesus breaks the food and distributes it through the disciples to the people. The miracle is a miracle of multiplication. Jesus just keeps breaking the bread and passing it out. In John 2 Jesus had taken water and turned it into wine, now he takes existing bread and fish and

multiplies it. The fact that there were 5,000 men means that the actual crowd was much larger, perhaps 15,000 – 20,000.

- Jesus provides lavishly – “as much as they wanted.” Jesus provides in a way that defies reason. There are 12 baskets left, showing the abundance of the provision, and even giving His disciples food for the future – Matthew 6:25, 33.

4. THE FALSE CORONATION: MISUNDERSTANDING JESUS – John 6:14,15

- The people do not see this as Jesus’ self-disclosure of His deity. Their bellies were full, but not their hearts. The people who ate think Jesus is the Prophet to come – Deuteronomy 18:15. They want Him to give them manna daily like Moses – John 6:30,31. They desire Jesus give them material blessings and political power. They want Jesus to be their powerful liberator. They want to “force” and “seize” Jesus to become their king. But they misunderstand the nature of Jesus’ kingship – John 18:36. They did not understand Jesus would be King by being the Suffering Servant. So Jesus withdraws from them – Mark 6:45, 46. He even sends away His disciples. Jesus will stay alone to meet with His Father.
- *“There is a great difference between wanting the bread Jesus gives and the Bread that Jesus is.” – Richard Phillips, John.*

Concluding Applications:

- Are you looking at Jesus correctly as He is revealed in the Bible?
- We must come to Jesus on His terms, not ours.
- Do you look at your life and resources only from a human or worldly point of view?
- Are you willing to give Jesus what you do have? Even if what you think you have seems like nothing or totally insignificant? *“if the only thing you have to offer is a broken heart, you offer your broken heart. So in a time of grief, the recognition that this is material for sacrifice has been a very great strength for me. Realizing that nothing I have, nothing I am will be refused on the part of Christ, I simply give it to Him as the little boy gave Jesus his five loaves and two fishes – with the same feeling of the disciples when they said, ‘What is the good of that for such a crowd?’ Naturally in almost anything I offer to Christ, my reaction would be, ‘What is the good of that?’ The point is, the use He makes of it is none of my business; it is His business, it is His blessing. So this grief, this loss, this suffering, this pain – whatever it is, which at the moment is God’s means of testing my faith and bringing me to the recognition of Who He is – that is the thing I offer.” – Elisabeth Elliot, Worldwide Challenge.*