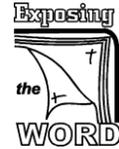




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12- Feeding of the 5000 John 6:1-15

In chapter six of John's gospel we have the fourth and fifth sign miracle of John's seven recorded. The one we look at in our text this session is the fourth with the fifth signs inserted between the discourse of Jesus that explains the fourth. So in essence we will see two miracles then will return for a discourse of Jesus that gives us a deeper meaning of the fourth.

In our last session we saw that Jesus created quite the controversy when he healed a man on the Sabbath. Still the greater conflict arose when Jesus made Himself equal with God. The Jews knew exactly and certain that Jesus was claiming.

Between the events in chapter 5 and 6 we know from the other gospels that many events took place. One of those was the sermon on the mount of Matthew 5-7.

I- Multitude Follows:

Joh 6:1 After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. 2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

Jesus is beginning to have a mass following of people. But why did they follow Him? Was it because they knew He was Messiah? This also brings us a burning question to our hearts as well. Why do we follow Jesus?

They followed because of what they could potentially receive not because of who He was.

I am reminded of what Peter said when asked by Jesus the very next day found in *John 6:66-68 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the*

twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

We certainly need to follow Him because He alone has the words of life.

II- Great Company:

Joh 6:3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. 4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. 5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

Jesus went away with just a few of His disciples. Jesus looked up and saw a great company coming. He asked Philip what he thought they should do.

As we look at the following verses we see there were 4 solutions offered.

- 1- Send them away:
- 2- Buy bread for them:
- 3- A lad's lunch:
- 4- Miracle of Feeding of 5000:

III -Disciple's Solution:

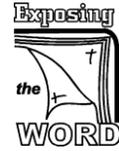
The first solution we have here is not found in the gospel of John. All four of the gospels present this miracle. It is the only miracle that all four gospels record. We find the disciples solution in *Mar 6:35-36 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: 36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.*



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While we often are tempted to send away the needs of others Jesus knew that evening was upon them and some would not make it if sent away. So sending them away was not a solution.

IV- Philip's Solution:

The next solution is one brought forth by Philip. Remember Jesus had asked him what he thought they should do. Notice *Joh 6: 6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.*

Jesus was doing this as a test of Philip's faith. The word translated prove, is most often translated in other English translations "test." *The Message* says "*He said this to stretch Philip's faith. He already knew what he was going to do.*"

Have you ever had your faith stretched? Philip did some calculating and realized with so many that even 200 days of wages would not buy enough. Philip really did not have a viable solution. Philip was only thinking in terms of what they could afford. Money is not always the solution as it is often thought to be. Philip looked and saw the situation as hopeless because he could only see what they could do. Philip failed the test of faith.

We need to also understand this from another view point as well. Bread was not available in large quantities in those days. It was hand made and baked in small capacity ovens. There was probably not enough bread in the region to feed all these people. This simply reminds us that where the weakness of man stops the strength of God is just beginning. Remember what Paul said in *2Co 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's*

sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Many times we have to come to the conclusion of how totally dependent we are upon God by not having any other hope beyond Him. By the way when we come to this conclusion God is just beginning.

V- Andrew's Solution:

Joh 6:8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, 9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

The solution offered by Andrew was not of seemingly any value. What was one lunch for so many people? But at least Andrew offered a solution. He brought all he could find and then was willing to trust Jesus would know what to do.

We see through the New Testament that every time there was an increase in the church it was because God gave the increase. Notice *Act 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

Act 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Act 5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

Act 11:24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

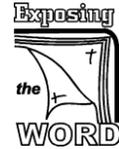
Andrew's solution may have seemed trivial for so many. Perhaps others thought he was foolish for even coming up with the idea. But none the less it was all he could find and the lad was willing to share. It was little in the hands of man but huge in the hands of God.



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VI- Jesus' Solution:

Though Jesus was in a controversy with the rulers in Jerusalem He was at what was probably the peak of His popularity with the people at large. Remember we are north of Jerusalem in Galilee. His popularity as we will see soon was great as long as He fed them.

The solution Jesus offers is a supernatural event that John chose as one of the sign miracles. Jesus knew, even before He asked the question of Philip what was going to take place. Remember **Joh 6: 6** *And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.*

So now is the time for Jesus' solution.

Joh 6:10 *And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.*

Jesus began by have a method of organization to the chaos. We know that God is a God of order because the universe runs so precisely. The disciples carried out His instructions.

Joh 6:11 *And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.*

Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks. We are told again in **John 6:23** that He gave thanks. Other gospels tell us Jesus looked toward Heaven. **Mark 6:41** *And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves...*

Remember all good and perfect gifts come from God. **James 1:17** *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of*

lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

We also know that not all of these people would become followers of Jesus but as it says in **Matthew 5:45** *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

We know that the lunch was not a great amount as well. It was not tow 60 pound catfish but were more like a couple of sardines. The bread was a cake about like a small pancake and was made of barley which was used by the poor for subsistence.

We also know that the miracle was not wrought at the hands of the disciples. They were merely the conduit through which the blessing flowed.

Now notice what happened. **Joh 6:12** *When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. 13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.*

This shows us again the abundance of God's provision. God has a vast storehouse.

VII- Was He Verified?

We see the reaction of the crowd. They said He must be the prophet that Moses spoke of. They did not understand that He was the Suffering Savior. They wanted to make Him king so they could be fed again.

Joh 6:14 *Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. 15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.*