

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 19TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

### FEEDING 5000 (JOHN 6:1-15)

#### SETTING THE STAGE

This is now the third reference in John to a Passover, so not only has some time passed, but Jesus is growing in popularity among the Jewish people. The massive crowd following Jesus is likely due to the mass population honoring Passover in this central location.

- More people started following Jesus for an opportunity to witness a miracle.

#### CALM IN THE STORM

Even as the crowd grew larger, and followed closely to Jesus and His disciples, **Jesus found a place to sit with them for a moment.**

- In the midst of the frenzy, Jesus still took the opportunity to teach. **No amount of confusion and disorganization was going to prevent Jesus from spending time with His disciples.**

#### JESUS RESPONDS TO THOSE IN NEED

Once Jesus saw that the crowd had found Him and His disciples, He identified their need and searched for a solution. Jesus even invited His disciples along to remedy the situation!

- Jesus didn't see these people as an inconvenience to His time with the disciples; **He saw them as sheep without a shepherd** (Mark 6:34).

#### JESUS ASKS A QUESTION

Philip was most likely asked this question, not because Jesus lacked the answer, but because he was a native of the area. Philip's answer revealed his, and the disciples', ignorance regarding the power of Jesus.

- We tend to respond in the same manner; **we have seen God move in our lives but are flustered amid our next struggle.**
- Philip went as far to say that it would cost two hundred denarii (≈200 days' wages) which is not only an enormous amount, but also "impossible" to find that amount of bread.
- Once again, Jesus was aware of the plan to feed the crowd, but **He wanted to test their faith and understanding of exactly who He is** (Matthew 16:13-16; Mark 8:27-29)!

#### BELIEVING IS SEEING

It is easy for us to point the finger at people in the Bible and claim, "how easy it is to see who Jesus truly is." There were those who were with Jesus in the flesh and still didn't have faith in who He is.

- "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (John 20:29).

#### WE SERVE A MIGHTY GOD!

Many times, we see the disciples' doubt turn to amazement at Jesus overcoming seemingly "impossible" tasks and performing miracles.

- Matthew 8:23-27 **Jesus calms the storm.**
- Matthew 15:32-39, Mark 8:1-9 **Jesus feeds 4,000 soon after the 5,000.**
- **We must never be enticed to limit the power and capability of our God!**
- He is not bound to our understanding and the confines in which we, as humans, function. God has created many complex systems, organisms, and the universe in which we exist!
- **Through knowledge and wisdom, we may better understand, even though we will never fully comprehend.**

#### TAKE A MOMENT TO MARVEL

Jesus could have performed this miracle without the help of his disciples. He chose for them to be a part of this event and have a front row seat at what He was doing.

- **The only part that we have in the gospel is the distribution!** All we have is the knowledge of where the bread is made and then invite others to the table.

#### "WHEN THE PEOPLE SAW THE SIGN..."

Because the people were seeking a savior from their worldly bondage by assuming that Jesus was here to overthrow the government, **they missed who Jesus truly is.**

- As Christians, we cannot be so fixated on the short-term issues that we miss the real reason Jesus came and sacrificed Himself. **He came to rescue souls, not to fill bellies.**

#### DON'T BE AFRAID (JOHN 6:16-21)

##### A FAMILIAR ROUTE

Seeing as several of the disciples were fishermen, this would have been a familiar place for them.

Even so, we see in Matthew and Mark that Jesus sent them away, probably to escape some of the crazed attitudes of the ever-growing crowd.

- According to the Gospel of Mark, Jesus was even watching them the entire time they labored across the lake.

#### HE KNOWS YOUR HEART

Jesus knew the level of faith and the fears of His disciples, and revealing Himself in this way was a barometer of their trust in Him.

- **Before any of us can accept help from Jesus, we first must recognize our need for Him in our lives.** Often, we will reach out for help from Jesus as a last resort rather than a first response.

#### "IT IS I"

Notice that when Jesus presents Himself to the disciples, He does so in the present tense. Not only is this eluding to the fact that Jesus is eternal, but that He is perfect and sufficient in who He is.

- It is also a precursor to the many "I am" statements that will occur in John. **This is a divine designation and declaration that He is God in flesh!**

#### "DON'T BE AFRAID"

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment" (2 Timothy 1:7). We do not resist fear, obtain power, love well, or have sufficient wisdom without the Holy Spirit! Likewise, as we see in verse 21, "they were willing to take him on board."

- **Calamity in our lives cannot be subdued by anything but the help of the Holy Spirit.**

#### ANOTHER REMARKABLE MIRACLE

The danger of the storm was seemingly imminent, but there was an immediate deliverance once Jesus had boarded the ship. The frustrating work of crossing the sea had suddenly and perfectly been accomplished.

- We are intended to work hard, but never in futility. **Only through Jesus are we overcomers!**

#### LOVE LIKE JESUS

- Even though there were those around Him who were worried more about the feast than the Father, Jesus was still available for those who were spiritually hungry.
- In the midst of our busy lives, are our eyes open to those who are hungry? **Are we willing to be "inconvenienced" for the gospel?**

#### GOD IS MIGHTY

- So often, we limit, or even doubt, God's ability by imposing the constraints of the creation on the Creator.
- What is it that you are going through that you feel is too big for God?
- **When posed with a problem that has a seemingly impossible solution, are you seeking Jesus above all else?**

#### HE IS PERFECTLY SUFFICIENT

- Jesus understood that providing for physical needs without providing for the spiritual needs was pointless.
- **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness.' Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may reside in me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).**