

# Feeding the 4,000

Matthew 15:29-38

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## INTRODUCTION:

A. Lesson Text: **Matthew 15:29-38**

B. What immediately stands out to you in this story? The feeding of the 4,000 is perhaps the most obvious. The 5,000 had been previously fed in Mark 6:14-30

C. Children can tell this story . . . Christians need to live its life-changing principles.

## BACKGROUND & . . . .

A. The great crowd that came to Him was filled with sick people **30**

1. The lame who could not walk
2. The blind who could not see
3. The crippled who could no get around very easily slowing down those trying to assist them. Over the terrain.
4. The mute who could not speak and ask for help.
5. "Many others"

B. They did not come there to eat . . . They came there to be healed.

1. Can you see them? . . . . . These disabled people have followed Jesus around a lake and up onto a mountain . . . . . Are you following them with your spiritual eyes? . . . . They were indeed fulfilling **Matthew 5:16** – "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Dig down into the depths of your heart and place yourself in the scene . . . Place yourself in the story.
  - a. Who among your family and friends would you have brought.
  - b. Who loves and cares enough about you that they would have led carried or carted to Jesus?
2. They don't give up! Great effort has been put forth by healthy people in order to bring the unhealthy ones to Jesus.

C. **These people are being changed!**

1. Watch as Jesus heals each one.
2. Be amazed along with everyone else.
3. Again, let us be challenged to dig down into the depths of our hearts and place ourselves in the scene . . . Place yourself in the story . . . . . There is much to see here.
  - a. Are you the lame?
  - b. Are you the blind?
  - c. Are you the crippled?

- d. Are you the mute?
  - e. Are you one of the “many others”?
  - f. Not now, you’re not . . . You are healed!
- D. They brought them to the right place, right source, and right power. “Laid them at His feet.” **30** There is no better place you can assist in taking a soul to than the feet of Jesus . . . And He will lift them up.
- 1. These in the story for physical healing.
  - 2. The ones you bring to Him are for spiritual healing.
- E. Two marvelous things transpired . . .
- 1. The people were **AMAZED** when they saw healing (real healing) take place. **31**
    - a. The lame were standing on new strengthened legs and were walking.
    - b. The blind were seeing Jesus, those who brought them, and the beautiful creation of God that surrounded them. They were seeing the beautiful Sea of Galilee nearby where they were assembled.
    - c. The crippled no longer needed anyone to assist them along. No more mandatory slow paces.
    - d. The mute who could not speak and ask for help could now talk.
    - e. “Many others” received their healings as well. “And He healed them” included them. **30**
  - 2. “They **PRAISED** the God of Israel.” **31**
    - a. They looked all around and saw the result and then looked up and praised the source.
    - b. God was working through His Son.
    - c. Jesus was doing what a few miles from that place He has asked all of us to do . . .

**Matthew 5:16** – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Jesus was doing that and so should we.
- F. Now picture the same people on the streets of our local towns and communities.
- 1. Watch as people avoid them.
  - 2. Watch as people stare at them as they pass by.
  - 3. Watch as the world looks away what God may have placed right before their eyes
  - 4. See them as they drive down the street.
- G. What the difference between these two scenes . . . The one in Matthew 15 and the one we just described?
- 1. Here is the difference . . . You are the compassion of Jesus today! You and I, me and we . . . All Christians.
  - 2. You are His touch!
  - 3. You are His love!

4. You are His caring!
- H. You are an open Bible study with everyone you come in contact with. They see you and draw conclusions.
5. You are His ministering servants/helpers!
  - a. **ILLUSTRATION:** “I Have No Hands but Yours!”
  - b. **Matthew 15:32** – “Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, ‘I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.’” NOTE: This begins the transition from the healing to the feeding.
  - c. **1 Peter 3:21** – “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.”

### CONCLUSION:

- A. Come to worship . . . Sing the songs . . . Pray the prayers . . . Listen to God’s Word . . . Commune that the Lord’s Table . . . Share with God as you have been prospered . . . Then go out and change a life today. You will be the one that is filled.
  1. Jesus is still able to heal people who are suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually, and we can be the ones who bring suffering people to Him.
  2. The Great Physician is still on duty and at work,
  3. Whom do you know that needs Christ’s healing touch in their lives.
- B. Congregations can be guided by principles found in this story.
  1. Saw a need. **32** . . . Now what do you do? Something or nothing . . . Respond or ignore?
  2. Communication of the need . . . discussing/Assessment **33-34**
  3. Inventory **35** Seven loaves and a few fish
  4. Initiated action **35**
  5. Gathered together what was available **36** . . . They had to do what they could before God would do what He would.
  6. Prayed and gave thanks. **36** . . . Acknowledged God in the matter
  7. He put the solution into a format that could be used “He broke them.” **37**
  8. He worked through His followers (the disciples) **36**
  9. His disciples cooperated and did what they could **36**
  10. The need was met **37** . . . The mission was accomplished
  11. The outcome was greater than the beginning **37** . . . Began with 7 loaves and a “few fish”

C. Not told just how big the task was until it was met . . . 4000 besides women and children (38). Jesus and His disciples saw just how big the task was before they began . . . And they tackled it anyway. We are told only after God's power has been wrought. They did not back off . . . And neither should be.

1. Example of David facing Goliath . . . Perhaps it is time to **STOP TELLING YOUR GOD HOW BIG YOUR GIANT IS AND START TELLING YOU GIANT HOW BIG YOUR GOD IS!**
2. Regardless of how big the task is, our God is greater!
3. The word is not bigger than our God . . . Its needs are not greater than His resources.
4. His workers are selected through the shed blood of Christ.
5. His desire for its good is still etched on the pages of Holy writ . . . **2 Peter 3:9** – “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that nay should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

D. **God's Plan for Man's Salvation**