

# The Feeding of the 5,000

John 6:1-14

- A. Where is our story recorded? Recorded by Matthew Mark, Luke & John.
1. Matthew 14:13-21
  2. Mark 6:30-44
  3. Luke 9:10-17
  4. John 6:1-15
- B. Lesson Text: **John 6:1-14**
- C. Where did it take place? On one of the mountains near the Sea of Galilee. Why is Jesus going up into the mountain on this occasion? . . . Two thoughts!
1. Matthew tells us He had just received news about the death of John the Baptist. **Sometimes people need to grieve alone.**
  2. Mark tells us the disciples had just returned from their mission trip. Rest and sharing of information would be necessary.
  3. When did this story occur? Near the time of the Passover one year before the crucifixion of Christ
    1. John mentions three Passovers in this Gospel account:
      - a. The first in **2:13** (when Jesus was in Jerusalem),
      - b. The second here in **6:4** (when Jesus remained in Galilee)
      - c. and the third in **12:12** (when Jesus went to Jerusalem and was crucified shortly thereafter).
    2. One year prior to His becoming our Passover.
- D. Why were the great crowds following Him? **John 6:2** – “And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.” Three reasons why Jesus performed miracles:
1. As a sign of His identity.
  2. To teach important lessons.
  3. Out of compassion . . . As He is doing in our lesson text.

## LESSONS TO BE GLEANED FROM THE FEEDING OF THE 5,000

- A. Why would Jesus ask Philip such a question . . . Judas was the treasurer?”
1. **John 6:5-6** – “Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, ‘Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?’ <sup>6</sup> He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.”
  2. That was Philip’s home area. Bethsaida was some nine miles away.
  3. Philip’s vision was overwhelmed by the size of the need . . . As is ours sometimes.
  4. Sometimes we need to refocus and instead of seeing the size of a need, we need to focus on the size and power of our God.

- B. **John 6:7** - "Philip answered him, 'Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.'"
1. 200 denarii . . . A denarius = 1 day laborer's pay.
  2. 200 denarii would equal about 8 months wages.
  3. Financial resources, while important, are not the most important consideration . . . A situation that seems impossible with human resources is simply an opportunity for God.
  4. Listening friends . . . Man cannot buy what God provides for free.
    - a. Salvation cannot be bought.
    - b. Church membership cannot be bought.
    - c. Forgiveness of sins cannot be bought.
    - d. God's favor cannot be bought.
    - e. God's power cannot be bought. Example: Acts 8:18-20 - Simon, the Sorcerer in Samaria.
  5. Sometimes there is no human solution . . .
    - a. But that does not mean that there is not a God-provided one.
    - b. When man provides what he can. God will provide what he can't.
    - c. When man does what he can, God will do what man can't.
  6. Don't let your estimate of what can't be done keep you from the task that God will be done.
    - a. We don't see as God sees.
    - b. Where there is God's will . . . There will be God's resources.
    - c. Trust God to provide the resources for the carrying out of His will.
  7. **Luke 9:13** - "You give them something to eat . . ." ("You feed them.")
    - a. The disciples focused their attention on what they did not have (enough money) rather than what they did have, the Son of God . . . The "Bread of Life."
    - b. Do you think God would ask you to do something that you and He together couldn't handle? . . . Absolutely not!
- C. **John 6:8-9** - "One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?'"
1. It seems that Andrew is always bringing someone or some thing to Jesus . . . you can as well.
  2. Your part may make all the difference between success and failure.
  3. God can take what little we have and turn it into something great.
  4. "There is a little boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish (From the Sea of Galilee, no doubt) . . . .
    - a. Age is no barrier to Christ.
    - b. Never are you too young, or too old, to be of service to Christ.
- D. **John 6:10** - "Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number."

1. They prepared themselves to receive the Lord's provision
    - a. That is obedience.
    - b. That is preparation.
    - c. That is participation.
    - d. That is faithfulness.
  2. 5,000 men plus women and children could be between 5,000 – 15,000.
    - a. In Jewish culture, men and women did not eat together in public. Children ate with the women.
    - b. Large numbers and large tasks do not deter God.
    - c. The whole world is His desire.
    - d. The whole world is the task of the church.
      1. **Matthew 28:19-20** – “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.
      2. **2 Peter 3:9** – “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
- E. **John 6:11-12** - “Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill . . .”
1. God will never leave one with a half-fulfilled promise.
  2. God will never leave one with a half-fulfilled blessing.
  3. God will never leave one with a half-met need.
  4. Where God begins . . . God will see it through completely.

## CONCLUSION:

- A. God will never ask something of us that we cannot possibly do.
  - a. Sometimes people think God's demands are unreasonable.
  - b. The disciples must have been stymied by Jesus' demand that may have seemed unreasonable to them.
  - c. Jesus would not issue a command without making it possible for you to obey.
- B. No gift is insignificant in the hands of Jesus.
  - a. God's ability to use a gift is in no way hindered by the size of the gift.
  - b. It is not the greatness of the gift that counts but rather the greatness of the God to Whom it is given.
  - c. God takes the sacrificial and often “insignificant” gifts of people who give faithfully and He multiplies them to accomplish monumental things.
  - d. Little is big when God is in it.
  - e. The little boy gave all that he had . . . And that made all the difference.

C. The word “impossible” is not in God’s vocabulary for His children.

D. Why did Jesus bother to feed these people?

1. He could just as easily sent them on their way . . . But Jesus does not ignore needs
2. He is concerned with every aspect of life . . . The physical as well as the spiritual.
3. As we work to bring wholeness to people’s lives, we must never ignore the fact that all of us have both physical and spiritual needs.
4. God is waiting to help you will your spiritual needs.
5. God is waiting for you to make your obedient move toward Him.

E. **GOD’S PLAN FOR MAN’S SALVATION**