

Staying On The Right Path

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[0 : 0 0] John chapter 6. John chapter 6. We started here last week, we started talking about more than a name.

We're going to talk about people in the Bible who did things for the Lord, but we don't know their name. It doesn't mean God couldn't use them. It doesn't mean God didn't use them in mighty ways.

We just don't know who they are. And that probably applies well for us because none of us are famous, none of us are powerful, none of us are, most people don't know our name, but it doesn't mean we can't be used of God.

And God can use us in so many different mighty ways to influence people's lives. So, John chapter 6 was the beginning, verses 1 through 9 was the beginning of getting ready for the feeding of the 5,000, as we call it.

More like probably 20,000 because there were women and children there, but it's 5,000 men. And look with me beginning at verse 5 today. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes and saw a great company come unto him, he said unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

[1 : 2 4] And this he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred penny worth of bread is sufficient for them, for every one of them, that every one of them may take a little.

One of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes. But what are they among so many?

We were talking about there's a lad here. And we were talking about the names that we have and how those names are given to us by our parents. And we have those names throughout our life.

Those names mean something even after we're gone. But what about these people with no names? But our names, we need to make sure, are what God wants them to be. In Proverbs 22, 1, it says, A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.

It says, Ecclesiastes 7, 1, A good name is better than precious ointment in the day of death than the day of one's birth. And we talked about the importance of the day of our death.

[2 : 3 1] We have a reputation. We have characters that people know about. Our name has meaning to it. And then we talked about Proverbs 10, 7. The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.

So we talked about people in history whose names are not well received. So we also talked about how our life plays out and what we do with our life speaks volumes.

We talked about back in Hebrews, we just finished up in Hebrews chapter 11, verse 4, said, Abel was talking about him and said, he being dead, yet speaketh. His life was a testimony.

We understand things about God and who he is and what he wants by looking at the life of Abel. So here's this lad. When he says lad, I'm thinking 10, 11, 12.

And he says, he comes with his lunch. And let's read between the lines a little bit and we'll look at the boy's character, which we were doing last week. The first thing we learned about his character was he had the right preparation.

[3 : 36] He says, there's a lad here, he's got five barley, those two fishes. We're looking for food. He's got food. Doesn't have much. He says, what is that among so many? But he has it. He's prepared.

We talked about coming prepared to do the things that God has us to do. We talked about the fact that when the Jews were coming back to Jerusalem after being in captivity in Babylon, Ezra held a service there.

And Ezra 7, 10 says this. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to do it and to teach in Israel's statutes and judgment.

He prepared himself to do that. And so he's talking about the importance of us being prepared. Then we talked about the importance of being in the right place. Verse 9, again, of John 6.

He says, there's a lad here. He is here where he needs to be. He's in the right place to be used of God. And we talked about us being in the right place, doing what God wants us to do.

[4 : 38] We talked about the fact that Joshua, when he took over for Moses, he said in Joshua 24, 15, he said, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

They were together and they were going to do the job together. In Hebrews chapter 10, verse 25, for us, not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, exhorting one another and so much more as you see the day approaching.

Being in the right place. Being in God's house on Sunday. Being in God's house, hearing God's word and hearing, having the fellowship with other people that we should have. So being in the right place.

Be prepared all throughout the week. Be in the Bible. Have devotion times and things. Then he says, you come, be in the right place. And then he was around the right people.

Verse 8 says, one of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, says, this boy has all of this. So he was near them. He was near the disciples.

[5 : 44] He was close by. And whether he heard everything that was going to take place or whatever, but he was there. He was there hanging out with Jesus and his disciples.

Here's this little boy, like I said, 10, 11, 12 years old. And he's hanging out with these older men, learning things. And the thing about him being there, look back at verse 6.

And this he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do. Jesus knew that little boy was there. Jesus knew that little boy had his lunch with him.

Jesus knew that little boy was going to be willing to share. He knew all of these different things. The little boy was definitely hanging out with the right person. Because Jesus knew all about him and what was going to take place.

And then we talked about the fact that we need to have the right patience. The right patience. We talked about the fact that this little boy, this typical little boy, his lunch never would have made it to lunch.

[6 : 47] He would have eaten it before then. He would have had it and there's, you know, bearing all throughout the morning probably. But this little boy had his lunch. And from what we know about this incident, it took place a little later in the afternoon.

Jesus is getting ready to send them away. And he said, we need to feed them before they go home. And so this little boy still had his lunch there. You know, the having patience to do things and be ready when God is ready to do what he wants to do.

You probably noticed in scripture that God is always right on time. He always has things ready to go. Ecclesiastes 3.1 says, To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.

In Isaiah 55, 8 and 9, he talks about, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways. We need to be prepared to serve God. Psalm 37.7 says, Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.

We wait on God and see what he's going to do and how he's going to take care of things. We have a tendency to jump ahead. So that's the boy's character. That's what he was like. Now the boy's charity.

[8 : 01] The boy's charity. You've all heard the saying, The way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Right? Well, somebody has said, The way to know a little boy's heart is to see what he does with his lunch.

He was ready to use his lunch. And again, think about this. A little boy, five loaves, two fishes, is going to make an impact on the hearts and minds of over 5,000 men plus women and children.

You say, I don't have anything to give. I don't have anything special. I don't know how God can use me. I don't see anything. You know, what's he going to do with me?

Well, he took five loaves and two fishes. And a little boy's name, not name, but a little boy is mentioned in all four Gospels. Only miracle that's mentioned in all four Gospels is this little boy.

Think about that. Could God use him? Yes, he did. Can God use us? Yes, he can. Why was this little boy so special?

[9 : 11] Well, first of all, he gave willingly. He gave willingly. We don't know from the conversation here. All we know is Andrew said there's a boy here. He's got five loaves and two fishes.

Doesn't say whether Andrew asked him for his lunch. Doesn't say whether the boy heard the conversation was going on and he offered his lunch. But the one thing we do know, there was no resistance.

He didn't put up a fuss about giving his lunch. He didn't say, well, you know, let's negotiate here. I'll give you my lunch. What do I get out of it?

That would be today, wouldn't it? If I'm going to do something, what do I get out of it? And that was not the case here. He said he gave.

Suppose he hadn't given his lunch. Well, he wouldn't be mentioned in the Bible. We wouldn't know about him at all. Suppose he had negotiated a little bit.

[10 : 11] And all those different things would have turned out a whole lot differently than they did. But he willingly gave. There's a guy by the name of Jim Elliott. Most of you have probably heard of him.

He was an evangelist, you know, husband, father, missionary. Jim Elliott was a good example of demonstrating how much God can use us if we just love him.

And let ourselves be used by him. And even sometimes if it's a sacrificial type thing. I have a book at home I'm getting ready to read again. I read it once years ago and been thinking about reading it for a little while now.

It's called The Shadow of the Almighty. And it's the story of Jim Elliott and his life. And it's a fantastic book. It made an impression on me that I remembered it from years ago.

And I had been looking for a copy and could not find one. It is finally back in print again. And so I got a copy so I could read it again. The goal of Jim Elliott's life was basically to know God, to tell others about Jesus Christ, and to obey Christ.

- [11 : 23] That sums up his goal in life. Everything was about Christ. He was inspired as a young boy, reading missionary stories in his home. He'd read about David Brainerd.
- He'd read about William Carey. David Brainerd was a missionary back in the time of the Revolutionary War. He went to the Indians and shared the gospel with them. He was William Carey.
- He was in India, Burma. And he's basically called the father of modern missions. And he would read the biographies of these guys and learn about them. He committed his life to doing God's work.
- He went to Christian college. He majored in linguistics so he could be able to translate and do things in languages and stuff. And he met his future wife there, a girl by the name of Elizabeth Howard.
- And together they went off. She became Elizabeth Elliott. I'm sure some of you have read some of her books. Elizabeth Elliott. And he went to Ecuador as missionaries.
- [12 : 23] On January 8, 1956, that was before I was born, he was attempting to make contact with the Wodani Indians in Ecuador.
- And he and four others were killed, speared to death, by the people that they were trying to take the gospel to. But, and you all who know him know the story, people went back and tried again, including his wife.
- And they were able to get into that tribe, share the gospel with them. Hundreds of them got saved. He gave his life. And one of his most famous quotes, he kept a journal.
- In his journal, October 28, 1949, he wrote, He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.
- He says you're no fool if you give your life to Christ to gain a heavenly eternity. Something you can't lose. He says it's just so great what God will do in your life.
- [13 : 32] Now, the question is, what are we withholding from God? What are we trying to negotiate with God? What are we trying to, you know, are we willing to just give and see what God does with it?
- Paul was talking about churches in Macedonia. Macedonia was going through really hard persecution. And they were really poor because of all this persecution and stuff.
- And yet in 2 Corinthians 8, verses 1 through 3, he says this, Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.
- For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves. What is he saying? They gave. They sent an offering to Paul to help him with his missionary work.
- He says they're going through tough times. They're facing real trials. They don't have any money. They're going through poverty. And yet they gave to see the work of Christ go forward.
- [14 : 53] That is just an amazing testimony to these people. And Paul recognized it. You know, the goodness and blessing of God will come on us if we're willing to give.
- We have a willing heart. When we get stingy and stubborn and things like that, that doesn't work out well for us, does it? Isaiah 119.
- If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. Verse 20. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
- He says be willing to give. Be willing to give of yourself, your money, your talents, your time. Just be willing to give and see what God does with it.

Not only was he willing, he gave wholly, wholly. He could have given, he had five loaves and two fishes. He could have given three loaves and one fish.

[15 : 57] Would God have been able to use that? Yeah. God would have taken that and used it. You think about it. He's going to feed 5,000 people with this.

And you're like, how in the world is he going to do that? Well, he created the universe out of nothing. So three loaves and one fish would have been plenty. He could have done the same work that he did.

But the boy didn't do that. He gave everything that he had. He said, here, take it. Use it. Do it. Use it all. You know, does God have all of us?

Does God have everything we have to give? Are we focused on him? Focused on him, his work, what he wants to do, and his keeping us?

You remember King Solomon? There were two women. Women of ill repute. One night, both had children a few days apart.

[16 : 58] And you remember one of them, one night, they were sleeping with the children. And then one child wound up dying, being suffocated. And the woman woke up, found the child dead, swapped the babies.

And the other woman woke up and took care of her child and realized, that dead one is not mine. She's got mine. It goes all the way up through to King Solomon. And King Solomon says, I've got the answer.

Just divide it in half. Give half to each. And what happened? You know, the mom, the real mom said, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a minute. No, no, just let her have it.

And he knew who was the real mom. The other one didn't care. But the real mom cared. She was willing to give it up in order to keep it alive.

You know, a divided baby is no baby. A little boy standing here, a group of disciples, he knew that if he offered that, hold it, his need for the next day.

[18 : 13] Yep. Yep. He knew from being around those guys, being around the right people, that if he gave it all, his need would be met as well. We'll talk about that in a minute.

So a divided baby is no baby. Divided life is no life. Am I going to be for God or am I going to be for the world? Trying to walk the middle line never works.

Can't do both. It doesn't work out well at all. We can't just be in God's house for a few hours on Sunday and think, okay, I'm good. I've done it.

What God wants me to do. Remember Deuteronomy 6, 5? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. You know, love God with everything you have.

So he gave willingly. He gave wholly. He gave wisely. He gave wisely. Look down at verse 12. You're still there in John 6. Look down at verse 12 where it says, Then when they were filled, he said unto his disciples, gather up the fragments that remain, and nothing be lost.

[19 : 25] When they were filled. He gave it to God just like God use it in God's way. And when God does it, it's going to be magnificent.

You remember how they started out? Twelve baskets. And he put a little bit in each basket. And he says, okay, go feed them. Can you imagine being a disciple? Really? I'm not going to get past the first person.

Or maybe two. But as they go out, it just keeps resupplying and resupplying and resupplying. And they feed everybody. And he says, when they were filled.

It wasn't just a little bit. When they were filled. And then what did they do? He says, okay, go back and take the baskets and pick up anything that's left over.

- And he filled 12 baskets full. See, this little boy did something that was just outstanding.
- [20 : 25] Just by being willing to give. You know, think of little boys. You send them to school with a school lunch. Okay? How many of you had kids that went to school, you send them with a lunch.
- And they wind up swapping with somebody else. Yeah? Oh, I got. What are those little fishes?
- Sardines. I got a sardine sandwich. I got peanut butter and jelly. You want to swap? That would have been me. Sardines? Ugh. But he gave.
- And he's, because he gave, instead of just having this little lunch, he now has all of this. This being out there. And he's just standing in amazement while he's eating away.
- Wow. Look at all this. Wow. And as he does that. Yeah? Yep. And God's still doing that. We had unexpected company that more than doubled.
- [21 : 31] It was just about double their family size. And I only had a pot of food that would normally just be the six of us. And I prayed over it and made a few biscuits.
- And we not only fed everybody to the fold, but we had leftovers. Yep. But God takes care of you. He meets the needs that we have. So. This little boy.
- You can have your lunch. Or you can have a buffet. Any little boys that are not going to pick the buffet? Might have been the same food, but he had a whole lot more of it.
- They picked up 12 baskets left over. I'm sure that little boy went home with some of that. He started with five loaves and two fish. I'm sure he took some lunch home with him afterwards. I've seen a little video of a school classroom lunchtime.
- A little boy opens a lunch box. There's nothing in it. So he gets up. He goes out. Sprinkled water. He hangs out. All the kids in the class kind of look at each other.
- [22 : 39] When he comes back, it focuses every child in that classroom and gives part of their lunch to that little boy and gives part of their lunch. Yep.
- Giving. Such a great thing. Matter of fact, Jesus talked about it. Luke chapter 6, verse 38. Give. And it shall be given unto you. Good measure.
- Pressed down. Shaken together. Running over. Shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye meet withal, it shall be measured to you again.
- Again. He says, give. And when you give, he says, it's going to be good measure. Pressed down. Shaken together. You ever see the things, probably YouTube or something like that?
- I've seen somewhere. I've heard of, you know, this guy comes into his class and he brings like a mason jar, one of the big mason jars. And he fills it up with rocks. And he puts it out there in the classes all watching what he's doing.
- [23 : 39] And he said, there. Is that jar full now? Yeah. He hauls out some sand. Some gravel.
- Sand. Hauls out some sand. And he starts pouring the sand in. And it goes all around the rocks. That jar full now? Oh, yeah.
- It definitely is now. Pulls up a thing of water. See, God says, you give, and it shall be given unto you.
- Good measure. Pressed down. Shaken together. Running over. God says, you give, and I will meet your need and take care of you. My family is a demonstration of that.
- God has taken care of us in so many ways. Jared? 638. Let me double check that. Yeah. Yep. 638. See, all of us have a lunch.
- [24 : 42] All of us have something we can give. All of us have something that we can do for the Lord. What are we going to do with what we have? Some think about this. Here's a boy.

No name. We don't know who he is. Don't have a clue what his name was. But what lessons have we learned from this little boy over the last two weeks? We've learned, first of all, prepare to be used of God.

Are we in God's word? Are we studying God's word? Are we making it a part of our life so that God can use us to give out his word to others? We need to invest our time. Reading God's word, being in prayer, doing all those things.

Second thing we learned, be in the right place. Are we faithful in our homes? Are we faithful in our church? Are we faithful to doing what God's asked us to do?

He says, be in the right place. And then third, seek fellowship with people who are already close to the Lord. He hung out with the disciples.

[25 : 45] He was next to Andrew. Andrew had had a conversation with him. They knew what was going on, and he knew what the little boy had. He was hanging out with the right people.

Fourth, patiently trust God's plan and God's timing. Trust God's plan and God's timing. I think I'll mention that again in the morning service about the timing thing.

And then the fifth thing, prepare to give willingly, wholly, and wisely. Prepare to give willingly, wholly, and wisely. This little boy, whose name we do not know, who is probably only, like I said, 10, 11, 12 years old, taught us a whole lot.

Yes, by being willing. Sometimes we get searching for the big things. What's the big thing I can do for God? What can I do that makes an impact?

What can I do that's going to really affect others? When we fail to do the little things that God has asked us to do. I'm always reminded. We all know who D.L.

[26 : 57] Moody is. We've heard D.L. Moody's name. We know that he preached to over 100 million people. Back in the 1800s, when there was no microphones and TVs and radios.

He preached to over 100 million people. Had a very limited education. But God was able to use him because he was willing to give of himself. We all know about him. How many people know about the shoe salesman that he worked with at a shoe shop?

Who was the one who led him to the Lord? We do know his name. I can't remember it at the moment. But we do know his name. But this man, he really didn't have any really claim to fame or anything.

He just went about doing his job and loving the Lord while he was at it. And D.L. Moody was a result of that. I want to do something big. Well, maybe you're something big as being a testimony to somebody that God's going to use in another way.

Just being there, being a testimony to them and leading them to the Lord. Are we withholding something? Be like the little boy. Just give it all. Are you trusting God to take what you're giving and you can expand it and make it bigger?

[28 : 14] He can. Do we pray and we ask God to take my little thing and use it for something big, for his honor and for his glory?

It doesn't matter if I get the recognition. You know the old thing, the hardest instrument in the world to play is second fiddle. The first violinist, they get all the glory.

They're the concert master. They're the one who shakes the conductor hand. What about the person sitting next to them? Who? There's somebody else there? Be willing to say, you know what?

It doesn't matter about me. Only what matters is what happens for God. And next week, we'll look at another person with no name.

Okay? Let's have a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we just thank you for this time, Lord, to stop and think. Lord, we thank you for the example of this little boy. Willing.

[29 : 18] To give. What he had. Lord, may we be like that. May we be willing to give what we have. Amen. So that you may take it. Grow it.

Expand it. Use it for your honor and for your glory. In ways that we could never have imagined. I'm sure this little boy, when he gave his five loaves and two fishes, had no idea.

That it was going to feed that many people. But you did marvelous thing. Just because he was willing. Lord, may we be willing to be used of you.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.