

A Lifetime Response

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[0:00] if you would please take your Bibles and go to Matthew's Gospel Matthew chapter 15 if you're visiting with us there's a black Bible in the chair in front of you go underneath that chair and pull out that black Bible go to the back of that black Bible excuse me and find page 13 page 13 you'll find Matthew chapter 15 we're going to read verses 29 to 39 15, 29 to 39 Matthew chapter 15 verses 29 to 39 let's read together and departing from there Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee and having gone up to the mountain he was sitting there great multitudes came to him bringing with them lame crippled blind dumb and many others and they laid them down at his feet and he healed them so the multitude marveled as they saw the dumb speaking the crippled healthy and the lame walking and the blind seeing and they glorified the God of Israel and calling his disciples to him

Jesus said I feel compassion for the multitude because they've remained with me now three days and have nothing to eat and I do not wish to send them away hungry lest they collapse on the way and the disciples said to him where will we get so many loaves in a desolate desert to satisfy a great multitude and Jesus said to them how many loaves do you have and they said seven and a few small fish and directing the multitude to sit down on the ground taking the seven loaves and fish and giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples and the disciples to the multitudes and they all ate were satisfied they picked up what was left over of the basket excuse me of the broken pieces seven large baskets full and those who ate were four thousand men besides women and children and said in a way the multitudes he got into the boat and came to the region of Magadan for someone who struggles with alcohol abuse or even drug abuse it just doesn't cut it to stop for a specific amount of time like I'm just gonna stop for a couple months or I'm just gonna stop for X amount of time whichever just put in a time it's a lifetime decision you have to decide to stop completely done

I have a friend brother in Christ that's what he did I mean he was he would smoke pot did speed heroin cocaine you name it he did it acid dropped acid shrooms everything and he came to a point he said you know alcohol too I didn't mention he would drink drink drink drink drink and he just stopped he said I can't do this anymore I'm done and he stopped he had enough he made a life long decision a lifetime decision and stopped and that's the way it needs to be with us when it comes to response to the gospel it's a lifetime response like Levi today it's a lifetime response a one time act to show this is gonna be my life if you've been baptized that's what you did too if you haven't been baptized talk with me after the service this is or should be a lifetime response to Jesus I follow you and as you see this glaring theme in Matthew's gospel bow down and worship Jesus the Messiah King of Israel in this passage specifically he's gonna tell us this is a lifetime response it's a lifetime response couple statements a lifetime response throughout our lives God displays his merciful power to increase our faith worship response to him a response we should have our whole lives as he shows his mercy worship should increase and the great part about it is he takes our weak resources and our feeble faith and displays his mercy and his power anyways which is what you see from the passage he will faithfully provide for his people calling them to respond to him in deeper worshipful trust that's what he does and yet too many times we get tunnel vision and easily forget the power of God when our lives seem to unravel before our eyes when life seems impossible that's when

God shows his mercy and power when it's seemingly unbearable and hopeless Jesus is merciful and faithful and that's what you see from the passage today here we come to this part in Matthew's gospel where Jesus heals all these people like he's done before and then he feeds 4,000 people which the numbers are probably 16,000 or more with women and children there once again by these very actions real historical events that took place not just imaginations not just little stories these real things that happen Jesus displayed who he was who he is the Messiah King of Israel and

he continued Jesus continued to challenge the faith worship of his disciples remember we talked about this a few weeks ago embarking on this section of Matthew's gospel where opposition will arise but Jesus is going to take the time to challenge the faith of his disciples to challenge their trustful worship of him and he does it again here and he does it to us as well because God will bring situations and events into our lives to test our trust in Jesus who truly is the

[7:52] Messiah King to trust him not our circumstances we talked about this a couple weeks ago the truth is laid out before us he calls us to trust him in these circumstances in these different events of our lives he puts us through these how far will we trust him not in our circumstances and you see in the feeding of the 4,000 by the way you have the same main points as the feeding of the 5,000 but the 4,000 is very similar Jesus withdrew crowds approached him he heals them it's hard to feed them disciples are inadequate resources oh what's going on he sees the crowd takes the loaves he gives thanks distributes disciples gifts of crowd crowd satisfied leftovers and then the numbers given but two separate events he starts the same thing he feeds 5,000 about 20,000 or more people and then here he feeds 4,000 16,000 more people two different events historical events real events happen so notice first though how Jesus displayed compassionate power look at verse 29 departing from there

Jesus went along by the sea of Galilee and having gone up to the mountain he was sitting there now it's hard to determine where exactly Jesus went and to whom he ministered now some believe he came into Gentile territory northeast part of the sea of Galilee so some believe this was a ministry toward Gentiles and so these healings and the feeding was for 4,000 or more whatever Gentiles especially when you see which we'll look at in a second when it says they glorified the God of Israel and then the desert wilderness area so it's hard to determine because Matthew doesn't really tell us he's silent but either way it challenges the disciples trust in Jesus once again because look what happens verse 30 great multitudes came to him bring him with them lame crippled blind dumb many others and they laid them down at his feet all these people lame crippled blind dumb and they laid them at his feet and Jesus healed their diseases very similar to what he did in the other times in

Matthew's gospel and then notice verse 31 so that the multitude marveled as they saw the dumb speaking the crippled healthy the lame walking the blind scene and they glorified the God of Israel so notice it's a response of worship this is the reason why many people believe this is in Gentile region Gentile territory whether this was the Gentiles or not here's the point Jesus is the Messiah king of Israel only the Messiah could perform such things this was prophesied in the Old Testament all all these different diseases dumb speaking the crippled healthy the lame walking the blind seeing only the Messiah was going to be able to do those things it's only him and they responded by glorifying Israel's God it was a response of worship do you see that when notice

Jesus he displayed his compassionate power again now verses 32 to 39 and notice what what's said here in verse 32 calling his disciples to him Jesus said I feel compassion for the multitude the striking part is Jesus says he felt compassion for the hungry multitude who had been with him for three days he goes through the process explaining for three days have nothing to eat I do not want to send them away hungry lest they collapse on the way it's amazing Jesus felt compassion mercy it's where you get the word splanchna from the Greek splanchna from your gut from your bowels that's how he felt he had such pity for them it's a good thing Jesus has pity for us he has such mercy for us

Jesus feels compassion for us and for these people notice they've been with them for three days how did they do this you ever thought about this where did the people sleep did they bring their food did they bring their rolled up mattresses or something like that their phone memory foam or something like that maybe there was a memory foam in that day I don't know but most likely Jesus was teaching them too and actually he usually did when he was healing people he was teaching them as well here was a vivid display of the kingdom of God power healing teaching and compassion that's a display of God's kingdom he didn't want to send them away have them collapse on the way since they'd be so hungry evidently the resources ran out Christ wanted to help he presented the challenge to the disciples where was their faith and where was their compassion because notice here's a middle point in between this notice the lack of worship verse 33 the disciple said to him where would we get so many loaves in a desolate desert to satisfy a great multitude such great crowd of people a lack of worship once again the disciples prove to be unaware of the power of their master and display such cranky insensitivity as to what can be done for the people

it's striking to see their dullness after they just saw all these healings by Jesus after they just saw the

[14:32] Canaanites woman her daughter remember that last week that Jesus healed from a distance it's interesting to see the dullness of back over here earlier in Jesus ministry a day couple weeks couple months ago whichever Jesus fed over 20,000 people it's striking to see their dullness all they focused on was the problem of their lack of supply had they already forgotten didn't they just see these miracles oh Christian have you already forgotten have you forgotten your God have you forgotten the God that you serve that's why I said earlier too many times we get tunnel vision and we easily forget the power of God when our lives seem to unravel before our eyes we do that don't we when life seems impossible that's when

God shows his mercy that's when God shows his compassion and his power when it's unbearable seemingly unbearable and hopeless Jesus is compassionate even when we're lacking in that faith he still shows us compassion that's a good thing because remember we'll celebrate it in just a moment you're going to celebrate the fact that even though there's been times of your unbelief that's why Jesus had to die because of our doubt and our lack of faith in what he's doing and we remind ourselves of this gospel truth once again too many times we forget what God has done for us as his people in the past it's so easy to allow our circumstances to take over and overwhelm us instead of stopping seeing God's great mercy and faithfulness his promise kept in Christ and trust him we talked about this on Wednesday in our study of the book Real Change I mean the greatest of the greatest of promises that God could keep was to bring Messiah right he brought his son who died and physically died and physically rose from the dead he kept his promise so if he kept his promise to bring his son why do we lack such faith why does our trust in him teeter we should stop we should see God's great mercy and faithfulness that he's shown us in the past he's kept his promise in his son and trust him here I go the disciples where we're going to get all this in this desolate desert verse 34 and Jesus said to them how many loaves do you have they said seven and a few small fish admitting their inadequate resources

Jesus asked what they had and he would use it to multiply their supply where you see Jesus takes us we're weak and uses us to display his glory when we humble ourselves he uses weaklings to show his power doesn't he it's a good because he uses nobodies weaklings this is who we are we're weak in our faith and he still takes us and still uses us for his glory takes our one writer put it like that inadequate resources that's a great way to put it our resources are so inadequate unfortunately the disciples had forgotten unfortunately the disciples did not respond in worshipful faith they allow what they saw circumstances to take over which is the reason why as Paul says we walk by faith right well notice his compassion continues praise God 35 to 39 took the multitude sit down took the resources given to him by the disciples seven loaves three small fish gave thanks broke the bread gave it to the disciples gave it to the people interesting the food was literally being multiplied in his hands out of thin air that's just an amazing sight to think about 37 all eight satisfied picked up was left over the broken pieces seven large baskets full and then verse 38 those who ate 4,000 sized women and children plenty of carbs plenty of protein more protein that was there you'll be fine and that's what God does he provides for the needs of his people and more now we're not talking about prosperity gospel type ridiculous nonsense no those who teach such things are false teachers and heretics do this and God will make you rich that's not true when anyone tells you that they're lying no it's this focus on Jesus and his kingdom and he will care for us as people for those who trust him even those of us who have small faith he'll still show compassion to you he'll still show you his grace he'll still show you mercy the disciples lacked faith but Jesus did it anyways remember we said this earlier just a few moments ago and then weeks ago

Jesus is doing these things he's displaying who he is and challenging the faith of his disciples how much are they going to trust him though our faith is weak and feeble Jesus still shows us his grace but he'll take weak faith and show mercy and if you're here today and you don't know Jesus he'll still take your weak faith and give you grace he will save you turn from sin and trust Christ turn from sin and trust Christ he will save you he will show you his compassion notice verse 39 sending away the multitude multitudes he got into the boat came into the region of Magadan obscure town like Dalmanutha that's mentioned in Mark's Gospel chapter 8 but it seems like now Jesus was definitely in Jewish territory because as we'll see next week he gets talked to by those religious leaders again next week so why would Matthew put a second meal miracle in his

[22:35] Gospel we've looked at this why would Matthew do this well his readers would remember God's faithfulness in the past in the Old Testament remember he took care of his people remember he had give the show bread that's why they had the show bread there inside the tabernacle that God is always providing for his people like he did during the time of their wilderness when they're in the wilderness wandering God was providing for them even for those who were dying in the wilderness God provided for them plus he does this it will remind his readers of God's future blessing in the coming kingdom where God would wish they supply for all the needs of his people they will live in paradise with him as their king Jesus as their king when they celebrate that final banquet with him what's called the eschatological banquet the last banquet it will be celebrated

Jesus talked about this in chapter 8 verse 11 with the centurion Matthew's trying to communicate something to us he shows us once again Jesus was the fulfiller of the law and the prophets by his Messiah revealing miracles and feeding the 4,000 God faithfully kept his promise by sending his Messiah son since Moses and Elisha all said two feety miracles in the Old Testament Exodus chapter 16 Numbers 11 2 Kings chapter 4 Matthew showed that someone greater than Moses is here someone greater than Elisha was here so God and his power supersedes us he takes our weak resources and turns into something amazing to display his glory he's in the habit of doing things like that he will always provide for his people for those who seek and trust him do we trust Jesus to use us and our inadequate resources to meet our needs here's Jesus our compassionate miracle worker and patient teacher he works his providential sovereignty teaching us to trust him do we trust Jesus to use us do we trust Jesus in the midst of circumstances when it seems like everything is just caving in another lesson to learn as well do we show compassion toward others or become insensitive cranky and closed off like the disciples we learn from Jesus to show compassion and mercy to each other just as he has shown mercy toward us we give the same gentleness mindful of the fact that we're all frail and weak why do you show that same gentleness to me why do I show that same gentleness to you because guess what

I'm weak and frail just like you you're weak and frail just like me we're all in this together but too many times we get that tunnel vision when life seems impossible that's when God's going to show his mercy toward you and his compassion when it's seemingly unbearable and hopeless Jesus is merciful and faithful God will bring situations and events into our lives to test our trust in Jesus who truly is the Messiah King to trust him not our circumstances the truth is laid before you we need to trust him yet he takes our weak resources and feeble faith and displays his merciful power anyways he will faithfully provide for his people calling them to respond to him in deeper worshipful trust that's what he does throughout our lives

God displays his merciful power to increase our faith worship response to him a response we have our whole lives as he shows his mercy worship should increase because it's a lifetime response it's a response we have our whole lives always trusting things come we trust things come we trust and we're going to celebrate the Lord's Supper together it's another reminder to us of God's faithfulness in the past bringing his Messiah forgiveness of all our sins reconciled to God because of Jesus death and resurrection that's why we celebrate that and if you're here and you're a follower of Jesus a Christian you might say well I'm not a member of this church if you come from a church of like faith and practice and you've been baptized by immersion like Levi was partake of the

[27:51] Lord's Supper with us by all means if you're not a Christian you should not partake of the Lord's Supper it's not for you let it be a testimony so as you see us a vivid physical tangible display of the gospel the bread representing the body of Jesus the blood representing excuse me the juice representing his blood shedding his blood his life okay also if you're a Christian and you have something against another Christian you've not gone to reconcile with that person or even a non-Christian for that matter I want to encourage you first don't partake of the Lord's Supper first go and reconcile with that person as best as you can and then come the next time to partake of the Lord's Supper with us so this is going to be a reminder for us to remember the gospel to remember God's faithfulness and his mercy to us in the past so in the past he's going to fulfill his promise in the future so we have present hope now would you pray with me thank you Jesus that in spite of the the events uncertain unsure surprising events that take place in our lives you still show your faithfulness and your compassion so we once again renew once again renew our hope and trust and love for you in this gospel truth we once again remind ourselves of how you by your person and work

Lord Jesus have drawn us brought us to the father in fellowship with him through our repentance and trusting you you being our very substitute on the cross thank you help us in our unbelief remind us that it's those times of unbelief and doubt that's why you had to die encourage us with the gospel truth this morning again we pray so I ask take some time to think through ponder let your your mind dwell upon these things that we've seen from God's word speak to yourself the gospel again the truth of the gospel remind yourself of the truth of the gospel examining your heart remind yourself of how you've turned from sin you put all your hope and trust in Jesus Christ alone after a few moments of that we'll I'll have the men come and they'll hand out the bread to us but take these moments and do that please if you would and take these comments I'll see you Thank you.