

And God's people said, Amen. Amen. You can be seated. Willie Ramirez was 18 years old. 18 years old.

And he was just out enjoying a night with one of his friends. And he had no idea his life would forever be changed.

[6 : 17] They were just hanging out, and Willie started getting a headache. He assumed it was probably because of the fumes from his friend's car, but even though he tried to ignore it, it kept getting worse.

He said it felt like somebody was literally stabbing me in the head. His friend helped him to his car where he drove to his girlfriend's house.

It was closer to go to her house than it was his own. By the time he arrived at her house, he could hardly see. He stumbled out of his car, and he fell into the fence.

And he was then taken by ambulance to a South Florida hospital, now in a comatose state. When Willie, 18 years old, wakes up, he had no idea where he was.

He had no idea that he had just gone through major surgery. And he had no idea that he would be a quadriplegic for the rest of his life. How he got there is a sad and tragic example of misunderstanding.

[7 : 30] You see, when he arrived at the hospital, his family with him, the medical staff started asking his family some questions. They wanted to assess his situation. And his family was Cuban.

They didn't speak any English. And one word that they kept using over and over was intoxicado.

Intoxicado. Now, for Cubans, the word intoxicado, it really translated as more like poison.

It's kind of the idea that you eat or drink something that makes you sick. Kind of like food poisoning.

They assumed that he had eaten something that had put him in this kind of condition.

But the medical team, in hearing the word intoxicado, thought it meant intoxicated. And without running any other test, they immediately started treating him for a drug overdose.

The attending physician didn't even question the diagnosis until after two days when the doctor realized that Willie was no longer moving his arms.

[8 : 45] That's when he called in a neurologist who discovered that Willie was not intoxicated on drugs. He had a brain hemorrhage that had been left to bleed for two straight days.

And as a result, he would be a quadriplegic for the rest of his life.

All because the doctors misunderstood the meaning of a word. Faith family, let me ask you tonight, and those of you watching online, have you ever had a serious misunderstanding before?

Anybody? Were the words coming out of your mouth and the meaning of those words being interpreted by the other person were not connecting at all?

You've experienced that, right? I mean, we experienced that on a lot of small levels, a lot of simple ways. I mean, for example, somebody tells a joke and the other person looks at you like, I have no idea what that joke means.

[9 : 55] You've experienced that. Or maybe somebody gave you directions and even though you tried to follow them, you still couldn't really understand how to get there. You've experienced that.

Or you thought the teacher said the test was next week and you ended up not being prepared. All of us in simple ways have experienced situations where there was a misunderstanding.

Look at the cute dog. You know that look, right?

Like, okay, clearly we're not understanding each other, right? What you're thinking and what's actually true is not the same. All of us have experienced situations like that.

And my guess is that some of you have experienced a misunderstanding that's far more serious.

Some of you have been through a misunderstanding where it ruined a friendship.

[11 : 14] Some of you have had a misunderstanding where it cost you a lot of money. Some of you, like Willie, have gone through a misunderstanding that completely altered your life.

But here's what I know. I think everybody here tonight knows that sometimes when there is a misunderstanding, there can be severe consequences. And that's what happens in John chapter 6. Listen, listen, listen, listen. Jesus is going to do a miracle. One of the most famous miracles recorded in the Gospels. Everybody knows it. But everybody that's there to behold that miracle completely misunderstands the point.

And the consequences are eternal. Let's look first at the miracle. Verse 1, it says, After this, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which was the Sea of Tiberias.

And a large crowd was following Him because they saw the signs He was doing on the sick. So Jesus went up on the mountain and there He sat down with His disciples. Now, this story, very familiar story, is actually recorded in all four Gospels.

[12:34] So even though I'm preaching from John, I'm incorporating other parts that John may not mention that's also included in other accounts. So for example, Mark tells us that the disciples have just returned from doing ministry.

And they are absolutely exhausted. They want a little bit of rest. And Jesus has been teaching. He's been dealing with the crowds. And He wants to rest as well.

Now, add to that, John the Baptist has just been beheaded. Someone very near and dear to them. John the Baptist has just died. And so Jesus, with all this stuff going on, He and the disciples retreat.

Now, while they are retreating, this large crowd begins to form and comes to find Jesus. And Jesus has this fantastic idea.

Why don't we feed them? Verse 5. Lifting up His eyes then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming towards Him, Jesus said to Philip, Where are we to buy bread so these people may eat?

[13:45] Now, one of the reasons I love the Bible is the Bible is just real and raw. And it doesn't hide anything. Because what Mark tells us is that that was not the response of the disciples.

Jesus looks up and He's like, Hey, let's feed everybody. That's not what the disciples want to do. Look at Mark chapter 6 and verse 35 on the screen here. It says, Come on.

Come on. Be honest. You know exactly how that feels. You know exactly how you're tired. You're exhausted. It's been a long day. You're pooped, right?

Closed for business. And the last thing you want to do is have that conversation. The last thing you want to do is see her at the grocery store. The last thing you want to do is deal with your psycho mother-in-law.

The last thing you want to do is hand out a bunch of food to a bunch of people who, let's be honest, they should have brought their own. Amen? Amen.

[15:06] Let's send them away. They can go buy themselves some food. Again, Jesus, we're tired. We don't want to do this.

Not only are we tired, we don't have enough. Verse 7. Philip answered Him, Two hundred denarii. One denarii would be a day's wage, so that's 200 days worth of food. That wouldn't be enough bread for each of them to get a little. And one of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, Well, there's a boy here.

He's got five barley loaves and two fish. That's a poor man's meal. But what are they for so many? Again, can't you resonate with that?

I mean, what's that given the task? What's that given the thing you're asking us to do? It's impossible.

[16:09] You've felt that way before. And I love what verse 6 says is that Jesus is testing them. He's testing them because they should know by now that there's nothing impossible with Jesus.

Amen? You would think, and I can so resonate with this because I'm like this too, you would think that by now you would have learned a little divine math. Here's some divine math. Jesus plus nothing means anything is possible.

Amen? I mean, seriously, disciples, you've seen Jesus turn water into wine. You think bread is where He met His match? Oh my goodness, it's bread.

Well, that goes beyond my abilities. Right? Of course not. Look at all you've seen already in the Gospel of John. And now you're saying, but what's this for so many?

Don't you understand? And yet, this teaches us something very important that I've been trying to teach us through these miracles. Notice it on the screen. Miracles are meant to strengthen our faith, but they are not enough to sustain our faith.

[17:19] They're meant to strengthen your faith, but they're not enough to sustain your faith. If your faith is only based on a miracle rather than the one who performs the miracle, your faith won't last.

And this is a good example of that. It's certainly true in my life. Is it not true in yours? Think about how many times God has come through for you, and yet all it took was another crisis for you to wonder if He cared.

Amen? Don't take your mask off in here, alright? We're being honest here. There are times in my life where even though God has come through so many times before, I wonder, well, are you just

going to leave me out there this time?

Miracles won't sustain your faith. They'll strengthen your faith, but that's not what your faith is based on. And so, Jesus, we know you can turn water into wine. We've seen that. You can heal a sick son from 20 miles away.

We've seen that. You can make a lame man of 38 years get up and walk, but feed thousands? Jesus, that would take a miracle. Verse 10.

[18 : 33] Jesus, I love this. Jesus said, have the people sit down. He already knew what He was going to do anyways, right? And they failed the test, have the people sit down.

And there was much grass in the place. Thanks for mentioning that, John. We needed to know that there was a lot of grass there. So the men, but it's inspired of God. That's what we believe. God inspired that John would write, and there was much grass.

And so the men sat down about 5,000 in number. And then Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated, so all the fish as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, He told the disciples, gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost. So they gathered them up and filled 12 baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

Now, there's so much here, I don't have time to unpack it all, but the phrase, He distributed them, is in the imperfect tense. All you need to know about that is it means it's continual action.

[19 : 36] In other words, I don't know every detail of what Jesus did here, John doesn't tell us, but He doesn't go, boom, baskets. Like, pow, buffet line.

That doesn't happen, okay? He distributed it to them, a continual action, here in the imperfect tense, likely means that the bread and the fish is being multiplied in the hands of Jesus.

So He just keeps giving out some, maybe the disciples joined in as well and they're just, there's always more to give. There's always more to give and there's always more to give and Jesus just keeps feeding everybody there until they can't eat anymore.

And when they're done, there's leftovers in a country that doesn't have leftovers. In the ancient Near East, you don't have a doggy bag. Give us this day our daily bread.

And they collect all of the leftovers and how many baskets are left? Talk to me. Twelve. Is that a random number? You think there's any importance at all with the twelve?

[20 : 47] I think I, or here's my belief, is that I believe there is one basket left for each disciple. To teach them, you thought this was impossible. You thought you didn't have what it takes.

You thought that there wasn't enough strength to do the work. When all the signs say, this is impossible, it's never going to happen, there's no way, here's what you need to know. All you need to do is put your situation to go from impossible to possible is to place it in the hands of Jesus.

Guys, I was testing you. You failed the test. And so here's the lesson. How many baskets are left over? Twelve. One for each of you knuckleheads.

To know that when your situation seems impossible, there's a miracle in the hands of Jesus.

What a miracle. Amen? I mean, there's a reason why this one is so well known. Now, I told you in the introduction to this series that miracles are signs pointing us to who Jesus is.

[21 : 53] And so every time we're asking, what does this teach us about Jesus? Let me hit this quickly because we've got a lot more to cover. Verse number one is this. It shows us something about the compassion of Jesus.

You notice the contrast. That's why I pointed it out where the disciples want to send them away and Jesus wants to serve them. Now listen, if Jesus would have said, you know what, I'm just not feeling up to it, would you have blamed him?

Are you all awake out there, right? You wouldn't blame him. You'd be like, listen, you're tired.

You've been dealing with all of the crowds. John the Baptist died. You're grieving. There's full justification as why you might say, I just don't want to do this right now.

And yet Jesus, purely out of compassion for the crowd, feeds them. Can I tell you something very practically and some of you are here tonight because this is what God wants you to hear.

You are not an annoyance to Jesus. You're not an annoyance to Jesus. Listen, he did not die on the cross, rise from the grave, ascend to heaven and become your high priest so that you could justify not coming to him because you don't think he cares about your situation.

[23 : 09] Jesus, this is just a hunger thing. This is just a small thing. Listen, he cares for every detail of your life.

come to him. Secondly, it's not only his compassion but his generosity. Jesus does not just give them a meal. He gives them the best meal they've ever had. Again, in a culture where there's no such thing as leftovers, Jesus leaves them with baskets.

He did the same thing with wine. Some of you are here tonight because this is specifically what God wanted you to hear. He is going to provide for your needs. It may not be the way you think it's going to be.

Some of you are here tonight and you think, I have no idea how I'm going to eat. I have no idea how I'm going to pay the bills. I have no idea how I'm going to make this relationship work. Jesus will provide for what you need.

Not what you want or not what you think you need but what you need. He will generously supply for you. Amen? Thirdly, is the power of Jesus and we've seen this over and over.

[24 : 16] Peter thinks it's impossible and Jesus is showing them that there is nothing impossible. If you're out of wine, you got a sick son, you haven't walked for 38 years or it's 5,000 plus people and only two fish, there is nothing our Jesus can't do.

That's the miracle. That's the miracle and it is an amazing, amazing miracle but, but, but, but, the text doesn't end there. After beholding this miracle, there is a serious misunderstanding.

The, what Jesus intends for them to receive through this miracle is not what they interpret it to be. Verse 14, when the people saw the sign that he had done, the miracle of the feeding 5,000, they said, this is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.

Likely a reference to Deuteronomy 18. Verse 15, perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

In other words, before Jesus had the opportunity to give an introduction, the crowd has already formed a conclusion and in doing so, they misunderstand who Jesus is and they misunderstand why he has come into the world and those consequences are severe.

[25 : 51] Look at me, look at me, look at me. It's one thing to misunderstand a joke. It's an entirely different thing to misunderstand Jesus. If you don't get him right, the consequences are eternal.

And this misunderstanding, this inability to fully comprehend what he's doing has been happening throughout the gospel of John. Go back to John chapter 2.

Destroy the temple and I'll build it up in three days. What? It took 46 years to build the temple. Or what about in John chapter 3? You must be born again.

What was Nicodemus' response? I don't understand. How do you get back in your mother's womb? Or John chapter 4? Give you living water.

The woman at the well. What does she say? But you don't have a bucket. In other words, over and over and over again, people are misunderstanding what Jesus is saying.

[26 : 56] Why? Why? Why? Here it is. Look at it on the screen. The reason for these individuals' misunderstanding is not that the people are stupid. It's they're spiritually dead.

They don't understand the things of God. They're consumed in their life. They're consumed in their world. And they don't have eyes to see the truth of who Jesus is.

Paul says it this way in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 4. In their case, the God of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is in the image of God.

Let me just point out two misunderstandings that happens here right after this miracle in John 6. And they're very important. This is the essence of the Christian faith.

And so God, give us eyes to see and help us not misunderstand what this is all about. Are you with me, faith family? Number one is this. Here's the first misunderstanding is instead of a Savior, they wanted power.

[28 : 05] Instead of a Savior, they wanted power. Why did they desire to make Him king? Galilee is the headquarters of the zealot movement against Roman authority. 5,000 men, as you may very well know, was the number of a legion of soldiers.

Everyone is likely angry because of the death of John the Baptist. And so here's their thinking. The man who can feed us must also be the man who can lead us and overthrow Rome.

And the very moment that Jesus realizes they don't get it and they're more concerned about what He can do for him rather than who He is, He leaves and retreats back to the mountain.

That's the first misunderstanding. Here's the second one in verse 25. When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, Rabbi, when did you come here? And Jesus answered

them, Truly, truly, I say to you, you're seeking Me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of loaves.

Here's the second misunderstanding is instead of a Savior, they wanted prosperity. Either give us power so we can overtake Rome or give us prosperity so we can have another meal.

[29 : 26] Here they are hungry again and who better to find when you're hungry than the all-you-can-eat food truck named Jesus. Now put this in perspective, faith family.

We don't need to think of this in terms of our society. Think of it in terms of the ancient Near East. For instance, in our culture, if you want food, you go to a grocery store quite easily.

There's a ton within 10 minutes of here, right? But in the ancient Near East, if you want food, you have to grow it. This is an agrarian culture. If there is a drought, prices in our society go up.

If there is a drought in their society, they die. We earn a paycheck and spend roughly 15%, give or take, of our income on food.

Do you realize in the ancient Near East, 85% of their income was spent on food. Jesus is an 85% raise.

[30 : 27] You do the math. Like I can take 85% of my paycheck if Jesus is my friend and I can spend it on camels or surfing in the Sea of Galilee or a little vacation retreat on the mountain because 85% of my life will be taken care of.

In other words, they see Jesus as the ticket to prosperity. And both, I hope you're listening and I hope you have not zoned out, both misunderstand who Jesus is and the consequences are severe. In both cases, notice this on the screen, in both cases, the crowd is more concerned about who Jesus, the crowd is not concerned about who Jesus is but only what he can do.

Jesus is our ticket to overthrow Rome. He's our ticket to prosperity. He can fix my marriage. He can heal me of this disease. He can get me out of hell. Now, do not misunderstand, faith family.

Does Jesus want to meet your physical needs? Yes! That's why he fed them in the first place. This is not an anti-physical need. Jesus wants to meet your physical needs.

[31 : 44] And I did not put this on the screen but I should have. Listen to this. Jesus doesn't mind meeting your physical needs until your physical needs are more important than your need for him.

More than overthrowing Rome, they need a savior. More than another meal, they need a savior. But they misunderstand the miracle and the consequences are severe.

And the moment that we begin to think that Jesus just exists to give us what we want rather than he exists to be our savior and Lord and desire of our heart, we too will misunderstand what Jesus is all about.

Notice this on the screen. Here it is. Jesus didn't come to give you a better life. He came to be your life. And I'm afraid there's a lot of Christians that may not understand this point.

He didn't come to give you a better life. He came to be your life. He didn't come to give you the desires of your heart, but to be the desire of your heart.

[33 : 00] That's what Jesus meant. And that gets us to the meaning of the miracle. This is the last point we'll go through. Now pick it up in verse 27. Do not labor.

He's going to start unpacking what he meant in the miracle. Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life. Faith family, please listen, which the Son of Man will give you, for on Him God the Father has set His seal.

And they said to Him, what must we do to be doing the works of God? And Jesus said to them, this is the work of God that you believe in Him who He has sent.

And they said to Him, well, then what sign do you do? I mean, you know, so that we can see and believe you. What work do you perform? I mean, our fathers ate manna in the wilderness as it is written.

He gave them bread from heaven to eat. And then Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses that gave you bread from heaven, but my Father gives you true bread from heaven for the bread of God is He, He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

[34 : 08] And they said to Him, well, sir, give us this bread always. And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me shall not hunger and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst.

that's the point of the miracle. That's what Jesus was driving at in the feeding of the multitudes. I do not have time to unpack everything in the verses that we just read.

I'm going to jump right to the point and here it is. Jesus is saying, I didn't come to give you bread, I came to be your bread. I am the bread of life.

What you need is not another meal. Listen, you know I'm not against you having another meal. I just fed you. I want you to have another meal. I want your physical needs to be met.

But you have a far greater need than physical needs. And His name is Jesus. The bread of life.

[35 : 17] That's the point of this miracle. Jesus did not come to subdue armies. He came to satisfy souls.

Remember, faith family, miracles are signs. They are pointing you to something greater than the miracle itself. The point is not bread.

It's someone greater than bread. Did you hear that? The point is not, oh, that's really cool. He fed 5,000. That's awesome. The point is not the bread. It's the one greater than bread.

And I'm going to, as I begin to land the plane here, I'm going to give you three quick reasons why Jesus is greater than bread. Why the bread of life, Jesus, is greater than worldly bread.

Three quick things that are all in the text. Number one is this. Bread goes stale. Jesus satisfies. Do not work for food that perishes.

[36 : 20] The problem with worldly bread is that it does not last. You've heard me preach this a thousand times. The reason why love, money, fame, success, all of those things are fine, but they all eventually get stale.

They do not last. They are not eternal things. Look at me, look at me, look at me. And if you're online, please listen. The deepest desire of your heart can only be met by Jesus.

Whatever it is that you're looking for in that bread, that relationship, that job, that paycheck, whatever, whatever it is that you're desiring to get from that, only Jesus can be that for you.

All other bread goes stale, Jesus says. So don't work for food that perishes. Secondly, bread is earned, Jesus is received.

Do not work for food that perishes, but work for food that endures to eternal life, that the Son of Man, are you listening, will give you.

[37 : 32] The difference between worldly bread and Jesus is that you have to work for worldly bread. You have to earn worldly bread. With Jesus, all you have to do is receive the bread of life.

That's good news. That's the gospel. Worldly bread comes from buying. True bread comes from believing.

It is faith alone in Jesus Christ. So why, why, why would you work? You're working for food that's perishing when you could receive eternal bread.

There's no decision at all, faith family. And yet, if we don't have our eyes opened to see this, we too might walk out of here and misunderstand.

Thirdly, finally, bread fills the stomach. Jesus saves the soul. Bread fills the stomach. Jesus saves the soul.

[38 : 50] Trivia. When did the miracle take place? If you know it, you can just shout it out.

We don't really do that much at church, but you can just shout it out. When did this miracle take place? John just happens to throw a random little detail in there. Not the grass, not that one.

The miracle took place based on verse 4 during Passover. Do you think John just randomly said, oh, and it was Passover and then went on about the story?

There's something important. And by the way, let me add to that. When the crowd asked for a sign, what sign did they make reference to? You know, when our fathers were in the wilderness and manna came down from heaven.

Passover. Passover. Exodus. What is going on here? The miracle is a sign pointing you to the greater Passover.

[39 : 53] To the greater provision. To a greater salvation. You think the one in the wilderness was something. You think deliverance from Exodus was something.

You have no idea how something greater is here. Bread will fill your stomach. Jesus will save your soul.

He brings in an Exodus unlike your forefathers couldn't dream of. True and eternal salvation.

And so you know how this story is going to end, right? And they all fell on their knees and cried holy. Right? And this is the birth of 5,000 devoted disciples for Jesus, right?

Yeah, you remember the story as a kid. It's so sad. And it's devastating to think it might be true tonight.

[40 : 57] Verse 66. After this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

That's devastating. And it teaches us a very, very important lesson and it's this. I hope you hear this. When you're only following Jesus to get what you want, the moment you don't get what you want, you'll quit following Jesus.

When you are only following Jesus to get what you want, the moment you don't get what you want, he's not the king we wanted him to be. He didn't give us that other meal.

And I was hungry Jesus. You'll quit following him. But notice the response, I've got to wrap it up, notice the response of the others, I can't leave you without this.

This is awesome. So Jesus said to the twelve, do you want to go away as well? And Simon Peter said to him, Lord, to whom shall we go?

[42 : 12] You have the words of eternal life. Yes, Peter! Good job, Peter! You mess it up a lot.

You got that one right, big boy. Where else are we going to go? You, not another meal. You, the person, the bread of life, have the words of eternal life.

Oh no, we are not going anywhere. And that's Christianity, faith family. That is Christianity.

Jesus is not interested in consumers. He's interested in followers who are after him, not just what he can do for you.

I'll close with this. How many of you like music? Any of you all like music? Show of hands. How many of you like music? I'm not asking what style. I know it's country, but how many of you just like music? Why do you love music?

[43 : 21] Why do you love music? Is it because you grew up in a home of a musician and it's all you've ever known? Is it because you're currently taking a class on music and you don't want to fail the class?

Is it because music just has a way of putting you in a good mood? Or is it because you love I leave you tonight with the same question.

Why do you follow Jesus? Why do you follow Jesus? Do you follow Jesus because you grew up in a Christian home and that's all you've ever known? Do you follow Jesus because you want him to get you out of hell?

Do you follow Jesus because you know he just kind of makes me feel better and just kind of puts me in a good mood? No. We follow Jesus because we love Jesus.

Faith family Willie Ramirez suffered serious consequences because of a misunderstanding but there is a far greater consequence if like the crowd in John 6 we misunderstand Jesus.

[44 : 34] He did not come to fill your stomach with bread He came to satisfy your soul as your bread and all God's people said Amen.

Pray with me. Pray with me. God please help us understand this. I'm praying for spiritual understanding. The small g God of this world would not blind our eyes to what we have seen tonight in your word.

Oh that we would not be like that crowd and see all of the signs and turn and walk away. Help us be like Peter and say where else would we go?

You have the words of life. God will love. If there is somebody here tonight and they're consumed in physical needs that's important.

It's really important and it's important to Jesus. But right now in this moment it's about our greatest need the spiritual need of having a relationship with God through Jesus Christ by faith.

[45 : 52] And the good news tonight is that we can come and eat for free. For Jesus paid it all that we could be satisfied in Him forever.

Help us remember that now as we look at the elements of communion in Christ's name. Amen.