

Feeding the 5000

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[0:00] Okay, like I say, we're in John chapter 6, the feeding of the 5,000. It says, sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee, that is the Sea of Tiberias.

A great crowd of people followed Him because they saw the signs He had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went on the mountainside and sat down with His disciples. The Jewish Passover festival was near.

Sometime after this, well, let's go back to chapter 5. But let me tell you, based on the other gospel accounts, what's going on here. Jesus had sent His disciples out.

He had given them power to cast out demons, to heal sick. And they went out to tell about the Messiah. He sent them out in groups of two.

And also, what was going on about this time is John the Baptist had just been beheaded. And Jesus was told about this.

[1:07] So these were the things that happened immediately up to this account that I just read. And sometime after this, those were the things that were happening.

Matthew's account says, the disciples, now this is when, after He had sent them out, says, the disciples returned to Jesus and told Him all that they had done and taught. And He said to them, come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.

For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in a boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now many of them saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from the towns and got there ahead of them.

When He went ashore, He saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. It began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, His disciples came to Him and said, this is a desolate place, and the hour is now late.

Send them away to go to their surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat. But Jesus said, they need not go away.

[2:30] You give them something to eat. Can you imagine the disciples? What, you know, what's He talking about? You give them something to eat.

And as I was thinking about this, I thought about Jesus' conversation with Peter after the resurrection. You know, Jesus says, Peter, do you love me?

And He said, you know what? I love you, Lord. Three times He asked Him, He said, Peter, if you love me, feed my sheep. So what does that mean, feed the sheep?

Here, we know what it means. Give them something to eat. You know, they need something to eat. So how do we feed the sheep today?

You know, the Christians, because we believe that all men are created in the image of God, we have a value for life.

[3:31] So it's the Christians that have spearheaded things like orphanages, spearheaded abolition of slavery.

The Christians are the ones that are the first ones in on a natural disaster to assist.

That's all part of feeding the sheep. Christians are the ones that started, like the Salvation Army, Samaritan's Purse.

These, we also have food banks. We help with things where they build ramps for elderly or infirm, handicapped people.

Taking food to sick people or infirm people. Stuffing chicken boxes to feed the needy.

[4:39] Supplying shoes and school supplies for those who are poor. Building handicap accessible fishing docks. Visiting assisted living homes.

Just to be with the people there that are a lot of times forgotten. We collect food for the needy. Support pregnancy life centers.

Or transporting the elderly to doctor's appointments or grocery stores. There are a number of ways that we feed the sheep.

And I'm sure you can think of others. I was trying to think of some of the things that we do here. One of the biggest ways that I think feeding the sheep is, is we've been mandated by the Great Commission to present the bread of life to people.

Feeding them with the gospel. You know, Jesus told them to feed the sheep. Or feed them.

[5:55] Of course, they didn't know how they were going to do that. They thought it was impossible, I'm sure. but you know one of the things that's true is that Jesus will never request anything of you that he won't equip you for or supply what you need to do it and we're going to see how Jesus supplies the need for these disciples to feed these people Mark's account after that Mark's account says and they said to him shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat and he said to them how many loaves do you have and of course they had nothing I can see the disciples looking at each other how many loaves do we have and it says there Jesus says go and see so they went out and saw what they have

I'm going to jump back into John it says and when Jesus looked up and saw the great crowd he said to Philip where should we buy bread for these people to eat he asked this only to test him for he already had in mind what he was going to do so do you think Philip passed the test because here's what he said Philip answers it would take more than a half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each of them to have one bite a half a year's wages just to have one bite what if Philip had said Lord I know that you are from God that you are the son of God and I know that you fed over a million people every day for years with manna from them so I don't I don't know how we can do it Lord

I don't think there's a place we can go buy food but I trust you what do you want me to do so many times we're tested too and we have the same attitude the disciples had you know two half a year's worth of wages won't do it and while they were talking Andrew came and said in verse 8 of John it says another of his disciples Andrew Simon Peter's brother spoke up here's a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish but how far will they go among so many so we've got Philip saying you know we can't we can't buy enough food even if and by the way I've read one commentary so the reason he asked Philip this John I just messed up your recording because I thought it wasn't recording again so

Philip you know he had a defeated attitude Andrew said well I've got these five loaves you know really what they are is barley biscuits because it was the boys lunch we've got five loaves and two fish but how far will they go you know what are you going to do with it when we're tested do we look see these guys were only looking at what they can do they weren't looking beyond their own abilities or their own thoughts they were instead of looking at God and what God can do you know they they were same way with us so when you're facing a trial maybe you're facing maybe you've got a marriage that's messed up or maybe you've got some employment problems you need a job or you hate your job or you've got problems health problems and instead of just giving it to God and say

God I trust you we fret and we worry about it I've quoted before the the great philosopher and Mark the elder who says God's got this God's got this we don't we don't we just we don't have that attitude we worry about it we've got it I saw or read in one commentator that a guy said well this young lad was the only one there that had you know this food I have to say I doubt it because the Bible tells us and we're going to see it that there were 5,000 men plus women and children so it could have been maybe some say 15 to 20,000 people there and if there are women and children that means that there are mothers there and a mother is going to take care of their kids they're going to have food for their kids and this mother had packed this little boy's lunch and who willingly gave it up

[11:47] I think that God says that Jesus already knew what he was going to do he already knew that that little boy was going to be there and I think that he's there because God orchestrated that he was there for such a time as this God knew that that little boy would be one that was willing to give up his lunch so he made sure that little boy was there I'll guarantee you and this is speculation on my part that there was other food there but people weren't willing to give it up because this is my food if I give it up who's going to do it but this little boy gave what he had so that it could be used by God he had no idea you know what they were going can you imagine oh yeah I'll give it to you and Jesus will feed this whole crowd I'm sure that that didn't cross his mind but he was there he was willing to give it up

God knew he was going to give it up and Jesus knew what he was going to do with it how about you there's a lot of times we might find ourselves in a situation where I think I should do this but I don't know they might look at me like I'm weird they might think I'm some kind of Jesus freak or something if I speak up sometimes you might feel inadequate you know what you know what all of us have been given gifts spiritual gifts that can be used to further God's kingdom but if you look at it as just your own self and not look at it with what God can do with it we're going to see that God took these five loaves and two fish and fed these 15 to 20 thousand people with them with leftovers because it was in

God's hands Matthew's account when they came to Jesus and said well we've got these five loaves and two fish Jesus says bring them to me and he's telling you and me the gifts I'm giving you bring them to me let me have and I'll show you what I can do with it just because you know you think on your own power you can't do it and what's the use why am I doing it but let God if God can feed 15 to 20 thousand people with that little bit what can you do with the gift that you bring but unless you're willing to give it up unless you're willing to take it to Jesus and let him use you then it's not going to happen so maybe you were placed in your situation for such a time as this it's time to step up and do what God says so Jesus said in verse 10 have the people sit down there was plenty of grass in that place and they sat down about 5,000 were there and Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks and distributed it to those who were seated as much as they wanted and he did the same with the fish now the other gospels say that he had them sit down in groups of 50 or hundreds 50 or hundreds that's how it was easy to count how many people were there because you know instead of counting all the people you can say 50 or 100 there's 50 men here all they counted was the men because the women you know no women like I already said praising the mothers you know there's mothers taking care of their children and then they they

Jesus just gave the disciples Jesus blessed the bread and the fish broke it gave it to the disciples and they distributed it and they fed all those people and they had 12 basketfuls left over now I'll guarantee you this is speculation on my part again that somebody took home some doggy bags too you know we've never had a meal here where take home plates didn't get taken and the way food was back then and they're in a distant place and I've got mothers with children that they know those children are going to want to eat again soon they probably took a little extra and put it in well you're giving it I'm taking it I'm taking this bread so they still had 12 basketfuls left over after everyone was satisfied and full there's there are people out there that want to say that this wasn't you know the real miracle was the little boy inspired people to share so they all shared and that's how everybody ate but that makes no sense at all that you could feed that many people

I think if you look at the surrounding area too there wasn't there wasn't that many people living in that area at the time remember John said the Passover festival was near so there was a lot of people in the area that don't normally live there so they probably wouldn't you know it's not like it is here we run down to the grocery store and buy a bunch of food they just didn't have that much stuff there so this was quite a quite a feat can you imagine that little boy when he saw what Jesus did with his lunch how proud he must have been not proud in a way of of I'm sorry not proud I'm sorry I was thinking of some stuff that I should have said earlier not proud in a way of you know look at me [18:14] I'm somebody but honored that God used me to do something like that man I'm glad I did I'm glad I did I was talking to my wife about some mission trips that she had been on one of them particularly in Costa Rica where they they were in a ball field having activities and it was

supposed it was a day that the rains were supposed to be there and they could see the clouds and all that and they actually walked the field and prayed God you know please hold off the rain for us and as they were having their activities the storm got worse and it started coming and they could see and the rains completely there was she said it was all around the field but not on the field where they were God had to to to see that but until you yield you know there's times you're not going to see something like that she was also telling me about time that they had they needed a translator and somebody tapped on her shoulder said you need a translator she said she saw him he was dressed in a black poncho and a black hat and she said yes you know and the person you know ended up getting saved and she turned around to look and to say something to the translator and the translator was gone and it was an area but she could look around and because he was dressed so distinctively with the black hat and the black poncho he should be easy to spot but he was nowhere to be found he was there for that little bit of time and then gone miraculous things that

God can do she honestly believe that that was that was an angel that God sent for that time because she prayed for a translator so I'm proud of that little boy one day when I get to heaven I want to talk to him say hey tell me about it how did you feel can you imagine him going to show and tell time at school and saying what happened yeah took my lunch Jesus took my lunch and fed all these people I'd also like to look up the three Hebrew children when I get to heaven that were thrown in the fiery furnace like what were you thinking you think well this is it this is it guys it's over and what was it like when you you know because the men that bound them and threw them in the furnace died because of the heat it was so hot and they're in the there their ropes got burned off and they're walking around and here's the fourth person with them someone from heaven walking with them what'd you talk about in there what did it look like

I know what a fire looks like from standing outside looking at it but what does it look like when you're in it looking out what was that like I think that would be not I also want to talk to Daniel when he was you know he was thrown in the lion's den you know what did you do what did you do in there did you pet them did you stay away from them you know because you were scared maybe did you use them as a pillow what was that like another one I'd like to talk to is Elijah when Elijah was talking to King Ahab you know and told him you better get back to the palace because the rains are coming you know it hadn't rained for three years you see the rains are coming and King Ahab and his chariot and his horses was outrun by Elijah said Elijah girded up his loins and he ran in front of the horses it was 17 to 20 miles he ran faster than the horses to get back to

Jezebel I'd like to know how that was quarter horse and slow I doubt the king would have a quarter horse but it was a slow horse anyway do you have stories have you yielded your life to God yielded your talents so that you can see him use them he will all you have to do is like Jesus said give it to me give me your talents and I'll show you what I can do with them but he also when he says give it to me he also invites you to bring your hurts and your sorrows come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest all you have to do is trust him give it to him he'll take care of it verse 14 it says after the people saw the sign

Jesus performed they began to say surely this is the prophet who has come to the world Jesus knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force withdrew again by himself so these people were wanting you know of course anybody who could feed us like that we want them to be our king in my passage today I was supposed to go all the way through Jesus walking on water so I'll just tell you about it instead of reading it Jesus sent the disciples away and said okay you guys get in the boat and go to the other side I'm going to send these people away that's something I want to know about too the Bible doesn't give us any indication other than he sent them away if this big crowd of people were wanting to take him by force and make him king what did he do to send them away by himself because he sent his disciples on away

[25:06] I don't know what he did but he sent them on their way and then the Bible tells us that Jesus then was looking out there in the lake and could see the disciples fighting the storm as they were trying to cross and what did he do he walked on the water he walked on out there he walked

on the Bible talks as if he was going to walk past them he was just walking out there going there they thought it was a ghost and they said they were screaming I can imagine you know grown men out there it's a ghost but Jesus told them hey hey hey it's me don't be afraid and that's when Peter said Lord if it's you let me walk out there to you come and Peter of course started walking out there to him walking on the water the only man I know of other than

Jesus that walks on water and we know the story he got to looking around him and the waves and the storm and he began to doubt began to fear and began to sink and Jesus had to take him by the hand to all you of little faith they got back in the boat and immediately they were where they were going to be neat stuff neat stuff but the lessons today is when you're tested by God who knows you might be in a test right now are you going to just look at what you can do with your own strength or are you going to look at the infinite power that God has are you going to yield your talents that you have are you going to decide that you know it's just too little what what's what can

I do I'm nothing song says little as much when God is in it just give it to God and that little can become a lot cast your cares on him he cares for you he'll take care of you just don't doubt him God's got this let's pray father I thank you for today's lesson I thank you Lord for that boy who gave his lunch up Lord you knew you knew he would you had him there because you're the great circumstance engineer you just like you knew Judas was going to betray you so you wanted to make sure Judas was there thank you Lord for working all this it's just mind blowing that you know so much

God how great you are help us to just trust you Lord and love you and obey you in Jesus name amen