

Testing and Feeding

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[0 : 00] to God's Word. We can read from the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John, chapter 6. We're carrying on our series throughout John, looking at Jesus meeting certain people.

Or today we're broadening that a wee bit where, in John 6, we're seeing the account of Jesus feeding the 5,000. John 6.

Let's hear the Word of God. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

And this he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, but every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. There was much grass in the place, so the men sat down in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples. And the disciples to them that were set down, and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, but nothing be lost.

Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which remained over, and above unto them that had eaten.

[2 : 20] Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth, that prophets should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. And when even was now come, his disciples went down onto the sea, and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship. And they were afraid.

But he saith unto them, It is I, be not afraid. Then they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land, wherever they went. The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save the one that went into his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone. Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread. After that the Lord had given thanks.

When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus. When they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou thither? Jesus answered and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you, for him have God the Father sealed.

And they said unto him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto him, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. And so on, down to the end of the chapter. We give praise to God for his perfect and his holy word.

Let's again sing to God's praise. This time singing from Psalm 47. Psalm 47. We sing verses 5 down to the end of the psalm. Psalm 47.

[5 : 08] God is with shouts gone up, the Lord with trumpets sounding high. Sing praise to God's praise. Sing praise to God's praise. Sing praise to our King. Sing ye.

Psalm 47. Verse 5 to the end of the psalm. God is with shouts gone up, the Lord with trumpets sounding high. God is with shouts gone up, the Lord with trumpets sounding high.

Sing praise to God. Sing praise to God. God is with shouts gone up, the Lord with trumpets sounding high.

The Lord with christian music, sing praise to God's praise. The Lord with trumpets sounding high. The Lord with trumpets sounding high. For God is here, God is here, God is here, God is here. The Lord with trumpets sounding high.

thinking SONG EN MUZIEK O'er by the shields that could be done, to the earth that only gives, in to the Lord belong ye, exult in three years.

[7 : 39] Amen. Let's turn back for a time to the chapter we had, John chapter 6. John 6, looking at the first 15 or so verses of the chapter.

Just as a recap for perhaps some new faces, and for those perhaps listening in, we are carrying on our series here.

We're actually, as of today, halfway through our series, looking at Jesus encountering various people in John. And we've seen how each person Jesus meets, how he deals with them so differently, so carefully.

He meets them quite literally where they are at times. He goes to them. We saw that even last week with the woman at the well. Jesus travelled miles and miles extra just to meet her, just to find her, just to have an encounter with her, to change her life.

As I said, we're here in John 6 today. We're a wee bit different in that. We're seeing Jesus encounter hundreds, thousands of people.

[8 : 55] So we can look at these verses, verses 1 to 15, just under four very broad headings, and they'll overlap at times. Time to take in the passage as much as we can.

First of all, seeing in verses 1 to 6, we see that Jesus knows. Jesus knows. And then looking at verses 7 down to verse 9, we can see that the disciples don't know.

We see helpless disciples. So Jesus knows helpless disciples. Then verses 10 down to verse 12, we see Jesus provides.

And then time permitting, we can see verses 13 to 14 onwards, and we'll see how his provision gives us our purpose.

First of all, we see that Jesus knows. Verses 1 down to verse 6. In the previous chapter, we see Jesus has gone up.

[10 : 03] He's been teaching, and now he's finished his teaching, and he's gone up to the mountain with his disciples. And we see this again and again, this pattern where Jesus will teach, and then he will retire with his disciples, to spend time with them.

They then ask their questions. He then explains to them what he's just taught. He gives them more detail. He helps them to understand. So although we're looking today at the feeding of the 5,000, we're also looking at Jesus towards his disciples.

Because again and again, throughout all the accounts of Scripture we see, we see the disciples somewhere, don't we? We didn't touch on it last week. We didn't simply have time enough. But last week, we see the disciples that are away when Jesus meets the woman at the well, but then they come back, and he teaches them something also.

And that can be our homework this week. Go back into the account we saw last week and see what Jesus teaches of his disciples at the well with the Samaritan woman, and see what they learn about Jesus.

But here we find Jesus with the disciples. In the first few verses, they are alone, at least they seek to be alone. In verse 3, And Jesus went up to a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

[11 : 22] Jesus goes to this place, a place of rest for him. He has been teaching non-stop. He's just walked, as we saw previously, he's walked miles upon miles to Samaria.

He's now walked miles upon miles to get to where he is now, beside the Sea of Galilee. Physically, he is exhausted. Our Saviour, fully man, fully God, and fully man, he is tired.

He's been teaching non-stop, walking non-stop, healing again and again and again. And here he is, with his disciples, going up to this mountain.

And here we have them in verse 4 and verse 5, they're on the mountain. He's been teaching them, they've been some time on the hill, resting, we can presume.

But then in verse 5, we see that this time of rest for Jesus, this time of peace for Jesus, it's being disturbed. Verse 5, when Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and there's more to that than just him looking up.

[12 : 32] The tone and the wording as such is that he's lifting his head up from his head being down. In other words, Jesus, he is breaking his time of rest to look up, and what does he see?

In verse 5, he lifts up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto them. He looks up from somewhere on a hill, on this mountain, and he sees the crowd in front of him.

This crowd of desperate people who want healing, who want to hear from Jesus, to talk with Jesus, to see Jesus.

He sees this crowd, this huge crowd, that themselves have come a great distance from their own towns, their own villages. They've come all the way to follow Jesus to this place.

We see from the same account in Matthew, Matthew 14, that Jesus begins to heal the crowd. Just out of interest, this account of the feeding of the 5,000, this is the one miracle that Jesus performs towards people that is seen in all the gospel accounts.

[13 : 51] This is the one that's seen in every gospel account. There's something important about this miracle. Of course, there's internal importance of all the miracles. There's something here that all the gospel writers record this taking place.

And in God's providence, we'll see more this evening as to the importance of this as we look to the Lord's Prayer. And we'll see that more later on. We see in Matthew's account of this situation that Jesus begins to heal the crowd.

He sees the crowd. They come to him. He begins to heal them. He has compassion on them, Matthew tells us. So Jesus knows their need, their physical need.

He knows they're there for healing. They're there for miracles. They're there for his help and his support and his life-transforming power. And out of his love, despite his own tiredness, despite his own breaking of his own rest, he heals them.

He spends time with the crowd. But we see he cares. He knows, of course, even more than that. He heals them physically.

[15 : 01] He does his miracles towards them. But then we see something beautiful taking place. The question Jesus asks in verse 5.

He lifts up his eyes. He sees the crowd. And he says to Philip, Where shall we get bread? That these may eat.

Where will we get bread? The crowd will have some food. They've travelled miles to be here. They are tired. Many of them are sick and are looking for healing. How do we feed them?

How do we look after them? Jesus knows the need of the crowd. Of course, he knows their spiritual needs.

He knows them exactly. He knew this crowd before time and creation itself. Jesus and his plan. He planned to meet this crowd at this time.

[15 : 59] He knows their spiritual needs. But he also cares for the physical needs. He cares for the fact that in front of him are hungry people.

Who are physically hungry. who physically need help from Jesus. And in his love and in his care he is ready and he is willing to begin to help them.

So Jesus knows the crowd. But Jesus also knows Philip. He knows his people. So we see Jesus asking Philip in verse 5, Where shall we get bread?

Where shall we buy bread that these may eat? Then we have this interesting point given to us in verse 6. And this he said, Jesus said, to prove him, to prove Philip.

For he, Jesus, himself, knew what he would do. The question of verse 5, as well as reflecting the care and compassion of Jesus towards his crowd, Jesus asks the question to test Philip.

[17 : 10] To test him. That's a strange thing to do. Why is Jesus testing poor Philip? Poor Philip didn't drag the crowd there.

Philip has nothing to do, as it were, with his situation. Why is Jesus now testing Philip? Why is Jesus giving Philip an impossible question to answer? Philip sees these thousands of people and Jesus says quite generally to him, how do we feed them?

How do we feed them? But poor Philip actually answers in verse 7. And you can almost hear and sense Philip's genuine answer, but also his genuine worry.

200 pennyworth, 200 denarii we see, 200 pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them. 200 pennyworth or 200 denarii we see and we know from history and we know from scripture and we know from secular sources that this is half a year's wages for the average man, the average worker at this time.

Philip's saying that half a year's wages wouldn't be enough to feed this crowd, Jesus. We don't have that kind of money. We don't have that to ourselves.

[18 : 34] We only have a small purse. We can't feed the crowd. Now we see here testing, of course testing can have two, at least two connotations.

times those people are tested in a negative sense. People can be tested, you can test someone to catch them out.

I'm sure ourselves are guilty of that in our own lives to our shame. We can test someone or try someone to try and catch them out. But also you can test someone to try and to show them how they can improve or to try and show them how they can grow.

And we all know ourselves that is what good testing is for. We see that in our driving tests. You often, of course, do mock tests.

You're learning to drive and this is still very much clear and a good memory in my brain because how many of them I made a good mess of. You have mock tests and you do the same driving route you'll do on the day.

[19 : 43] And the instructor is watching you for mistakes you make. He is watching you for how you go wrong. Now he's not doing that with badness, quite the opposite. He is watching you and the mistakes you make and the gears you crunch in the wrong place at the wrong time to tell you not to do that again.

Because when the day comes to pass your test or to look to pass your test, you've learnt your lesson. You know how the situation works. And here we see Jesus testing Philip.

Not to catch him out, not to be cruel, but he tests Philip because Jesus knows Philip. And Jesus knows what Philip needs.

Philip is still trusting in himself. When Jesus asks him, Philip, how do we feed these people? Philip's first answer is, we don't have the money, we can't do it, what do we do?

Philip's answer, Philip's response shows why he needed this test. His mind doesn't yet go straight to Jesus for the answer.

[20 : 52] Doesn't yet go straight to Jesus for the answer. Philip, his faith is being tested. The Christians here, I'm sure as we read this, we are in our minds thinking just now of the many times and the many ways our faith has been tested.

Small ways, kind of trivial ways, but also big life-changing situations. And again, you yourselves know your own stories, perhaps public ways and private ways, the ways that, dear brother, dear sister, the Lord has tested you over the years.

The Lord has tested your faith in him, where you've been faced with a situation that you personally cannot deal with, that you cannot understand.

Situations where you can't, by your own power, think or work out what to do. As Christians, we all know those times. We find ourselves saying, Lord, I can't do this.

Lord, I don't understand this. I don't have, like Philip, I don't have the resources in of myself to do what must be done. We have that, don't we, in our own private lives when we find things going wrong, when situations arise, and perhaps quite hard situations, and we say to the Lord, in our honesty, like Philip here, Lord, I can't do this.

[22 : 21] Lord, we can't do this. The resources just aren't in me to to do this. We see what happens when Philip answers quite honestly to Jesus.

But Jesus makes a way. Jesus makes a way. When Jesus tests his people, like he does to Philip here, brothers and sisters, when Jesus tests you and I, it is never a cruel test.

And the Christians here, we know that. We know our saviour is not cruel. He's not, how often the world might portray him at times, and portray God at times, to be some cruel task master, just testing his people.

That's how the Greeks and the Romans viewed their gods. They viewed their gods as somehow always trying to catch the people out all the time.

That is not our God. Our God is a God of grace and of mercy, who cares for his people, Jesus is not trying to catch Philip out. There's no aha moment here.

[23 : 31] Jesus doesn't intercept his answer and show him how wrong he is. No. Jesus listens to his answer and then Jesus shows, he shows him what his answer should have been.

When Jesus tests us, dear brother, dear sister, it is always out of love. love. Same as when the father chastises us, it's always done out of love, it's done carefully, it's done as we heard before last year.

When God is where he prunes us, it's not the amateur hacking away at the tree with an axe, it is the hand of a careful gardener pruning that tree perfectly.

When Jesus tests us, he's not a testing of a cruel Lord. It's the gentle guidance and leadership and push of a saviour who wants us to grow in our love for him, in our trust in him, in assurance of our own faith and place in him.

See, when we're tested and we face times of testing, and those of us who are the Lord's who have gone through time through great testing perhaps, you will know at that time the end feels so uncertain, doesn't it?

[24 : 52] You find yourself, and if you're being honest, speaking perhaps quite, if not bluntly, quite clearly to God, saying, when is the end of this situation?

Lord, when does this end? When does this stop? When does this situation be resolved? When does the answer come? The truth is, when our Saviour tests his people, he never does so unknowingly.

We use the example of the driving instructor. The driving instructor knows the route. He knows every turn on the route, and despite every mistake and line I cross, and despite every wrong gear change, despite every stall that I might do, he knows where we're going, and we will get there eventually.

And same for ourselves, our Saviour, he knows the route that is for us, and in his love and his patience, he will gently test us and push us and help us, all so we would grow in him, grow in our love and our obedience, all so we would worship him more, glorify him more, be more filled with who he is.

Don't fear times of testing, brothers and sisters, because Jesus, here, even in this few verses, he proves to us that he knows the end from the beginning, he knows what he is doing.

[26 : 22] We say it out of respect, he knows exactly what he is doing, even when we feel we do not. So what does the testing of the disciples show?

And here we see our second point, the helpless disciples, verses 7 down to verse 9, where we see that the testing of Jesus, it proves that the poor disciples, they can't do it.

They have a limitation. Their faith is limited, but also their ability as created creatures is limited. We see 200 denarii of bread, as we said, that's half a year's wages, but if we look into it a little bit more, that half a year's wages is half a year of solid work.

as I were with, with no days off. You have to work half a year with no days off to pay for enough food to feed this crowd.

As Jesus begins to test and to question the disciples, we do see the love of our Saviour. He includes them. He includes them in his plan.

[27 : 36] We've seen this before over the weeks. But God has his plan. And God will accomplish his purposes. Our Saviour has his perfect plan for his time on earth.

But out of the love of our God, he uses his people to accomplish his plans. He uses his people. He uses our smallness.

He uses our times, our waywardness. But he uses us to accomplish his plans. He uses the prayers of his people.

He listens to the prayers of his people. We've heard this before. He uses us as we seek to serve him, as we seek to worship him. He uses that. Now, the dynamics and the mechanics of that we don't understand.

And it's not for us to understand. We saw previous weeks that is the secret will of God. But in his revealed will, he tells us and he shows us that he does use us.

[28 : 38] Jesus asked the disciples, what shall we do? And then we see in verse 8 and verse 9 that they find this poor wee boy, this wee boy with his wee lunchbox, as there were, his wee basket full of food.

His parents sent him out that morning with his food, a wee basket. Perhaps he's caught the fish, we don't know. But there he is, a few loaves, some small fish, his wee lunch, his wee dinner.

And the disciples find this boy. And in the face of thousands of people, the disciples are showing some level of faith. And they say to Jesus, well, there's a boy here.

He's got this small portion of food. And we see in verse 9, where Andrew says, he brings the boy to Jesus, or he tells Jesus about the boy, but he says, but what are they among so many?

There is some food here, but it doesn't work, it doesn't make sense, we can't make use of it. Jesus includes the disciples.

[29 : 49] But also Jesus, by asking the question to them, he shows the limitations of the disciples. In a sense, they are doing their level best. They've searched the crowd, they've wandered the crowd, they've spent time to try and find some food, and they've found this wee boy, and they've taken this boy to Jesus.

We know they take him to him, because we see that in the other gospel accounts. You take this wee boy to Jesus, and here he is with his wee basket of food. Jesus, Jesus shows them their own limitations.

Humanly speaking, they can't answer his question. They can't physically change the situation. Philip, indeed, or any of the disciples, they cannot feed the people, they cannot help the people, they cannot help the people, they can't heal the people, and eventually they come back to Jesus himself.

instead of going to him, first of all, they take the long route around, and they come back to Jesus, and wait for him to solve this problem.

It's not the same for us. Jesus gives us many tasks to do, we have many commands to follow, we have a great and glorious gospel to share, and time and time again, and myself very much included, we do what we do in our own strength, and our ways, according to our plans.

[31 : 26] Now this is true for ourselves as individuals, true for congregations, it's true for us as Christians. We will seek to answer the call of God and the plan of God according to our own strength, and like the disciples, very quickly we'll be reminded as to our limitations.

The command to feed the crowd is too much for them. The command is too great for their abilities. The commission that Jesus gives them to feed the hungry people, this commission is so beyond their abilities.

They can't feed the crowd themselves. Just to note, we see here, of course, 5,000, that's 5,000 men, and we see in other accounts, it's clear to us that they haven't actually counted the women or the children.

They counted the men, it's the way they did it at this time, despite how we might think of that, it doesn't matter, that's how they did it. So they counted 5,000 men besides women and children.

There is more than 5,000 people being fed here. It's our fault, we call it the feeding of the 5,000, it's not. It's a feeding of the several thousands. There was women there, there was children there, scripture tells us that.

[32 : 43] Was it double the amount? Was it the feeding of the 10,000, 7,000, 12,000? We don't know. There's thousands of people being fed or looking to be fed.

The disciples, they cannot do it. They can't feed the crowd themselves. They are truly helpless disciples. Dear brothers and dear sisters, how often do you feel helpless?

We have given to us quite simply the commission from God. We know as aware our job. We're told to share the gospel, each one of us as Christians. We're told in our lives to reflect in our words and our actions who Jesus is.

We're told to be salt and to be light. We're told to be his witnesses. We're told to be like him, to follow him. We're told that in every chance, in every way, we should share the good news and share the reality of there's a living saviour who has died for those who as of yet don't know him.

We know our calling. We know our job as it were. But we often not like these poor disciples. We know what it is Jesus asks us to do. But we see the crowd.

[33 : 59] Perhaps for us, there's not 5,000 for us to serve. There's that husband. There's our wife, our son, our daughter, our parents, our friends, whoever else we have in mind just now who need to hear the gospel.

Those who we long to see saved. We think, well, we know what it is we should do. We know we're here to share the gospel with them, to point them to Jesus.

We find ourselves again and again saying this is too much for us. We can't do this. As we see and look around the houses here and think around this district of the many hundreds.

The many hundreds. There's perhaps less than a hundred between ourselves and our brothers and sisters next door. There's less than a hundred gathered here who know the Lord and perhaps there are many others and several others who do know the Lord who aren't here today.

But there are still hundreds in this district. Hundreds who are spiritually starving. Who need the food that Jesus alone can give them.

[35 : 13] And we say what do we do Lord? How can we give that gospel? How can we feed the starving in these villages? Never mind the island. Never mind the nation. We think of our own homes perhaps.

Our neighbours, our families. Lord how do we feed them? Lord we can't do it. They're starving and they're dying and we can't feed them. I can't feed them Lord.

What do I do? Lord. Lord. Let's learn like the disciples had to learn. We can't feed them. We've said this before.

The truth is we could lock these doors just now and I could go through every single sermon of the last 10-12 years I could ever put together. I can't save you. Our brother next door preaching, he can't save you.

He can't save. Your attendance in church, good. Your Bible reading, good. A good God glorifying thing to do. But unless you come to Jesus yourself this day, you will not be saved.

[36 : 21] You will not be saved. You must come. Dear Christians, the gospel has to go out. But the truth is we can't do it. Not we can't save and we can't transform anyone.

But like the disciples, let us go back to Jesus again and again and say we have this small offering. We have these few loaves, these few fish.

We have our own abilities God has given us, our own personalities, our own talents. We take them to him, we say Lord, I don't know how, but please use that for your glory.

Use that for the sake of the kingdom. And the truth is, dear brothers and sisters, God will use that. But pray that prayer understanding when God uses that, it will be perhaps in a way you can't even begin to imagine.

There will be many people, indeed many ministers, who have sat and stood here and preached from here and they will tell you, indeed many elders too, who will tell you that this is the last place they would ever imagine themselves when they prayed that prayer.

[37 : 28] God will use you, he will use you according to his plans. His plans are always good. Even when his plans perhaps go against your own plans and your own thoughts, he will use you to accomplish his plans in a careful way, a way that glorifies him, that helps you to grow as a Christian.

Disciples are helpless, totally helpless, but they come back to Jesus. They take to Jesus what we do have. take to Jesus what you do have and trust your own talents, your own skills, trust them to him.

Note how simply and how quickly and how without comment the miracle actually takes place. Verse 11, And Jesus took the loaves and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples and the disciples to them were sat down.

And the same for all the gospel accounts. The miracle isn't given all that much space, the actual miracle. The question that we have in our minds, if we're honest, how did Jesus do it?

How did Jesus, what did it look like, what was it like to see this small offering being given out to thousands of people? Scripture doesn't give it to us.

[38 : 44] Scripture doesn't tell us that. Because it's not for us to know. It's the same for us. We take what we are to Jesus. We say to our Lord and our Saviour, you have saved me, you know me, you have set your love on me, please use me and the talents and the skills you've given me to serve you.

And God will take what you are and he will make use of the skills and the talents and the personality he's given you. He'll do that for his glory. Now how he does that is not known to us.

The mechanics of it, like the miracle here, is not seen to us. But he will do it. And through his people coming to him, through us, as much as we are these small fish and small barley loaves, he will use these small offerings to a Christian as small as you feel and as useless as a Christian that you might feel.

And if we're honest, most of us feel useless quite often. Quite often. Even this week, even this day, perhaps some of us here are feeling like the most useless and most rubbish of Christians. God will use you.

Come to him genuinely, seeking that he would use you in your home, in your place of work, in this area. Take to him all that you have and he will take that and use that for his glory. Jesus provides.

[40 : 07] This we come to a conclusion, verses 10 to 12. With this wee boy's pack, lunch as I wear in hand. Jesus gives thanks. He provides the food to the crowd. And again, the dynamics, the logistics of that, the miracle itself, it's not known to us.

The reality is we wouldn't understand it, we did see it in our own eyes. It's a miracle. The Lord who created heaven and earth, Jesus whom this whole world, this whole universe was made through and made for, this miracle is a small thing for him to do in terms of his infinite power.

It's a small thing for his infinite power. He does this miracle. Without fanfare, without occasion, without any great, great celebration, he prays and he shares the bread out. He shares the fish out.

Scripture shows us this miracle taking place so simply because this is the reality of our Saviour. it is not hard for him or difficult for him to feed those who come to him.

It's hard for Christians at times and to speak and to those who as of yet don't know Jesus, you might bring your questions to Christians and you have questions about who Jesus is, you have questions of what it is to be a Christian, you have questions about Scripture and you bring these questions to a Christian, you look for answers and our answers will fall so flat at times.

[41 : 43] Our knowledge is so limited. There's so much we don't know and no Christian here will admit, no Christian here will say I should say that we know everything.

In fact, the longer on our journey the less as Christians we seem to think we know the less it feels we know at least. If you're here today and you're saying to yourself there is something in my life that I need, you understand that like these people that you truly need Jesus.

you've looked and you've searched, you've looked everywhere else, you've tried what this world has to give you and you've enjoyed it, it's been good, of course it has.

You've had fun, of course you have. You have a good life perhaps and praise God for that. A good family and so on, praise God for that. But still you realise something is not right.

For all the distraction you do, for all the ways you try and keep yourself busy in your mind, you know there is something not quite right.

[42 : 50] You know, and perhaps you've never said this out loud to anyone perhaps in your own mind, but you know there is something lacking from your life, something serious deep down that is not there.

We come to see how easily and how simply Jesus feeds the people. this is here to show you dear friend, there is no, no difficult thing for the Lord to feed you.

If only you would come. Come and ask for the provision. Now we stop reading at the end of verse 29. This evening we'll actually read on from verse 30 as we look to our evening service and we'll see the reality and we'll see this more this evening that Jesus calls himself what?

The bread of life. That he is there to sustain all who come to him. Come to him. Ask that he would be your Lord and your Saviour.

Follow him. Put your trust in him and you will never be spiritually hungry again. You will never be spiritually hungry again. And the Christians here can testify to that.

[44 : 01] You will waste your life dear friends. We've looked before together at Isaiah. Isaiah 55. Isaiah 55. Why waste your time?

Why waste your money? And go home with you this afternoon and read that chapter together. Read it by yourself. Isaiah 55. Why waste your money? Why waste your time on food and on drink that does not satisfy, that will not fill you up, food and drink that will lead to your death eventually?

Why waste time? Come to the one who is truly the bread of life, who has fed 5,000, 10,000 people, who has fed millions of his own people throughout all time, who sustains continually his people.

You are hungry looking for something. You haven't found it in the world. You haven't found it in your life. You haven't found it in your family, in your money. You haven't found it in yourself because you'll only find it in Jesus.

You'll only find it in Jesus. Come to him. Take your excuses and your reasons. They mean nothing in eternity. They mean nothing at all. Come to him.

[45 : 13] Be like the disciples eventually. Come and say to Jesus that we can't do this. Look to him and see that he can. He can feed you. But more than can, he will feed you.

He's not just able, he is willing to do so. And time has gone for us. We see that. There is extra left over. He doesn't just feed you. He does so in abundance.

Jesus doesn't just do that as a word of respect, the bare minimum. No. Jesus, out of his love for his people, he gives us more than we need, more than we deserve.

He loves us enough to give us all that he gives us again and again. He restores his people. He keeps his people. He feeds his people. Don't waste. And I say this so clearly and the truth is we say this before, we can get so caught up, can't we?

So caught up in our patterns. So comfortable perhaps in our weekly gatherings here. We'll lose sight as to the reality of this. We'll lose sight as to the real life or death nature of this.

[46 : 24] We're not here just to tick off a box. We're not here just to be here for this week. We're here because we believe and we know this is true. And Jesus says that in him and in him alone do we find the bread of life.

In him and in him alone do we find our true eternal provision. The one who can feed those that come to him. If nothing else today please listen to this.

You will find your peace, your satisfaction nowhere else. Just don't waste and the older Christians here those who came to Christ perhaps later in their life will tell you the same thing.

The years they didn't come to Jesus the Lord will bless that to them and it's important for them but these are wasted years. I've not heard yet a Christian who is older who came to Christ perhaps later in their life who doesn't say that they regret they regret coming sooner.

They all say that they wish they listened earlier on that they came to Christ earlier on. Stop searching for something you won't find inside of him. You won't find it in the world.

[47 : 37] You won't find it in yourself. You'll only find that provision in Christ. You'll only find that living bread in Christ. Only he can multiply the food.

Only he can provide for you again and again. Please don't waste any more time. I'm here this evening. Don't waste any more time looking for that which quite simply will not satisfy which will not fill you.

Bread this world gives you tastes good. Tastes good. it won't fill you. It won't give you life. In fact the bread the food this world offers you will lead to your death eternally.

Don't waste any more time. Come and take and eat. Come and take and be fed. Be fed by the saviour who feeds his people who does so abundantly.

Let's bow our heads now. A word of prayer. Lord we thank you for the truth of your word and we find the assurances and the promises that you have a God who cares for your people.

[48 : 50] As we read this day Lord that you have a God out of your love that you sent your son to show yet again that he provides for his people that he cares enough for his people.

He cares enough for them to give them that sustenance. That he cares for our physical needs. He cares for us as people day by day. He cares that we have food in our tables and he cares that we are not hungry.

He cares also for our spiritual needs. He cares that we are not hungry spiritually. We will not starve and die spiritually. He gives the assurance that all who come to him come to one who is living bread.

That he will feed us for all time. We do pray that today for your people here Lord. Help us to again and again not turn to the world but to turn to Jesus to find our sustenance.

We pray for any as of yet who don't know that for themselves in this place that they would come to Jesus even this day even this new week they would come to find in him their only source of sustenance.

[49 : 53] That they would see the miracle in their lives that we saw this day. The miracle that Jesus can take the small thing and use it to feed the many. we pray Lord for this district that as we as your people take and offer our small offerings as we take our at times what feels like our useless offerings that we take and we place these things in the hand of our saviour knowing that he can take the small things that we have he can take our small offering he can take our small efforts and he will use these things to bless and to glorify his own name.

Lord we pray that for our area we pray that for this district there would be many many would come to know you many would come to call Jesus their saviour and to know you as God Lord you forgive anything that was said not in accordance to your word to give you praise as always that the power is not in the jar of clay or the power that stands here the power is in you as you work through your living word.

Help us we ask that we come to sing our final item of praise to do so of hearts and minds full of worship and adoration to you the God who provides for his people. I ask all these things Christ's precious name and for his sake Amen.