

## JESUS FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

John 6:1-15

**(John 6:1-15)**, “After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. {2} And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. {3} And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. {4} And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. {5} 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? {6} And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. {7} Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. {8} One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, {9} There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? {10} And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. {11} 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. {12} When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. {13} 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. {14} Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. {15} 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.”



**S IN THE DAYS OF MOSES, ISRAEL HAD BEEN LED BY GOD INTO THE WILDERNESS AFTER HAVING LIVED 400 YEARS IN EGYPT.** Counting only the men, Israel’s population in the wilderness was **600,000**. Counting the women and children, it could have easily exceeded two million. After leading such a large population into the wilderness, **THE LOGICAL QUESTION** would be, “How can two million people survive in a desert with little food and water?” Well, **hindsight** is perfect. God provided for them in miraculous ways for forty years. For the entire wilderness journey, God provided them with **MANNA**. They never went without food all those forty years.

**S THE NAME “MANNA” MEANT, “WHAT IS THAT?”** It was described as **“a small round thing”** that looked like **“like coriander seed”** and **tasted “like wafers made with**

**honey.”** Israel tasted manna for the first time at their **eighth encampment** in the desert. From that point on God sent manna every day, except for the Sabbath. God continued to provide manna until Israel crossed the Jordan river and camped at **Gilgal**. It stopped because Israel ate “the old corn of the land” (Josh 5:12).

**S WHERE DID THAT MANNA COME FROM THOSE FORTY YEARS?** It came from God. It was a miracle of God that sustained Israel for forty long years.

**S In today’s text, Jesus performed A MIRACLE THAT REMINDED THE JEWS OF MOSES** providing manna in the wilderness. The miracle of John 6 caused the Jews to conclude that Jesus was **“THAT PROPHET”** that Moses foretold would come.

**C (John 6:14)**, “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, ‘This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.’”

**C (Deu 18:15)**, “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;”

**S JESUS’ MIRACLE IN JOHN 6 IS THE ONLY MIRACLE THAT IS RECORDED IN ALL FOUR GOSPELS** other than the resurrection. The Holy Spirit’s **fourfold repetition** in the Gospels focuses special attention on this particular miracle.

**S MANY DETAILS REGARDING THE SETTING** for this miracle **CAN BE ESTABLISHED** when the accounts in the four Gospels are compared. Consider **FOUR FACTS**:

**FACT #1 – “THE PASSOVER WAS NEAR”** (V. 4). That means the miracle took place in the **SPRINGTIME**, sometime during the month of **March or April**. **ONE YEAR REMAINED UNTIL** Jesus would be crucified.

**FACT #2 –** According to Dr. A. T Robertson, **THIS PASSAGE MARKS THE FIRST OF FOUR SEPARATE RETREATS** Jesus took with His disciples (Mark 6:31; 7:24; 7:31; 8:13). Jesus used retreats to take His disciples away from the crowds so they could have personal **teaching** and **rest**.

MARK GIVES ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST RETREAT:

**(Mark 6:31)**, “And he said unto them, ‘Come ye yourselves apart into **a desert place**, and rest a while:’ for there were many coming and going, and they had **no leisure** so much as to eat.”

**JOHN, TOO,** DESCRIBED **THAT FIRST RETREAT** IN OUR TEXT:

**(John 6:1-3)**, “After these things Jesus **WENT OVER** the sea of **Galilee**, which is the sea of **Tiberias**. {2} And a **great multitude** followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. {3} And Jesus **WENT UP INTO A MOUNTAIN**, and there **HE SAT WITH HIS DISCIPLES**.”

C **“WENT OVER THE SEA OF GALILEE”** meant that Jesus got on a boat and crossed from one point on the shore of the Sea of Galilee to another point. Jesus’ purpose for crossing Galilee was to get alone with His disciples to **teach** them and to give them some **rest**. The retreat plans were **interrupted** because the crowd watched to see where Jesus’ boat landed and then they ran to meet Him in that new location.

C **THE TRADITIONAL SITE** IN ISRAEL where Jesus fed the FIVE THOUSAND IS NAMED **TABGHA**. The name comes from THE GREEK WORD **“HEPTAPEGON”** MEANING **“SEVEN SPRINGS.”** It was named such because it was near an abundant water supply. TWO SUCCESSIVE **BYZANTINE CHURCHES** were built on that site in the **4th & 5th centuries**. **IN 1932**, the remains of the Byzantine church were discovered with a **WELL-PRESERVED MOSAIC** on the stone that served as the altar. That mosaic is a picture of a basket of loaves with two fish beside it. The location of those early churches has caused some to conclude the miracle of feeding the five thousand took place in that area.

**FACT #3 – THE SIZE OF THE CROWD** NUMBERED **FIVE THOUSAND MEN** (V. 10).

**MATTHEW’S GOSPEL** MAKES CLEAR THAT **THE CROWD-COUNT** IN JOHN did not include **women** and **children**:

**(Mat 14:21)**, “And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, **beside women and children**.”

**ADD THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN** and it is possible that as many as **EIGHT TO TEN THOUSAND** hungry people were present that day.

**FACT #4 – THE MIRACLE TOOK PLACE IN THE EVENING**

**(Mat 14:15)**, “And when it was **EVENING**, . . . ”

**(Luke 9:12)**, “And when **THE DAY BEGAN TO WEAR AWAY**, . . . ”

THE MIRACLE PROBABLY TOOK PLACE SOMETIME **AROUND 6:00 P.M.** Considering the **distribution** of the food would have **taken some time** to complete with so many people, it is safe to conclude it must have been **late evening** before the events related to that miracle were completed.

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Taking all those facts into account, we can conclude it was **LATE EVENING**, and the crowd was **LARGE** and **HUNGRY**. The crowd is **TIRED**. They ran all that way to be with Jesus. At least from THE **DISCIPLES’ PERSPECTIVE**, they were face to face with a **HUGE, INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEM**.

**S QUESTION –** What were the disciples to do seeing they were face to face with five to ten thousand hungry people?

**S** Perhaps we should ask, **“WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE COME TO FACE TO FACE WITH SOME SITUATION WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO HANDLE?”**

- I. THEY **ACKNOWLEDGED** THE PROBLEM
- II. THEY **ADDRESSED** THE POSSIBILITIES
- III. THEY **ADVANCED** WITH **GOD’S PROVISION**
- IV. THEY **STOOD IN AWE** AT **GOD’S PERSON**

**I. THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THE PROBLEM**  
**(V. 5),**

**(V. 5)**, “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?’”

- S** Rather than calling their situation a *problem*, it might be good to refer to it as an *opportunity*. Every problem, from a heavenly perspective, can be considered to be an opportunity. **JESUS** lifted up His eyes and saw a great company and He saw a wonderful opportunity. **WISDOM** has been defined as *a heavenly perspective on an earthly situation*. **THE DISCIPLES LOOKED** at that great company of folks that had **TRAVELED** a long distance to be with Jesus and concluded they had A **PROBLEM**. The crowd was **HUNGRY**, the hour was **LATE** and those folks were **WEARY**. What do you do with **MORE THAN FIVE THOUSAND HUNGRY and WEARY PEOPLE** who have come to hear the Word of Life? How does one handle a problem like that?
- S** Whether or not a difficulty is considered a problem, or an opportunity, is often **DEPENDENT ENTIRELY UPON ONE’S PERSPECTIVE**. It is logical to conclude that the disciples looked upon that hungry crowd from an **earthly perspective** and called it a *problem*. Jesus looked upon that same crowd from a **heavenly perspective** and called understood it to be **A DOOR TO OPPORTUNITY**.
- S** **PERSPECTIVE** is often the difference between being an **optimist** and a **pessimist**. Some people look at the partially filled **GLASS OF WATER** and call it **half empty**; others call it **half full**. Some people look at life from a **purely earthly perspective** and every difficulty is considered a problem. Other people look at life with a **heavenly perspective** and every problem is considered an opportunity. The difference between the two is the difference between being a **spiritual pessimist** and a **spiritual optimist**.
- S** I READ A HUMOROUS STORY THIS PAST WEEK OF **TWO FARMERS**: one was **negative**, always down and gloomy, while the other farmer was always happy and full of joy.  
The positive farmer would get up in the morning and say, “The sun is so bright, it is going to be a wonderful day.” The negative farmer would say, “It is going to burn up the crops.”  
The optimistic farmer said, “Oh, it is raining today. God is watering our crops.” The pessimistic farmer said, “If it doesn’t quit raining it is going to flood the crops.”

Well, one day the positive farmer decided he was going to cheer the other guy up and prove to him that it was all right to be an optimist. He got a bird dog and trained his dog to do things no other dog on earth could do. He invites his farmer friend to a duck hunt so he could watch his wonder-dog at work. They got in the boat and went and hid in a duck blind. The ducks flew over and they knocked several ducks out of the sky. Once the ducks hit the water the farmer told his dog, “Sick ‘em.” That wonder-dog jumped out of the boat and walked on the water over to the ducks and picked them up and brought them back to the boat.

That positive farmer looked at the negative farmer and said, “Well, what did you think of that?” The pessimistic farmer exclaimed, “Well, he must not be able to swim.” (Chuck Swindoll, *Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Back* (pgs. 67-68).

- S** **SOME FOLKS** are just that way – always negative. The disciples looked at their circumstances that day and considered them a problem. Jesus looked at it as a door of opportunity.
- S** **JACK TAYLOR** WRITES IN HIS BOOK, *GOD’S MIRACULOUS PLAN OF ECONOMY* (pgs. 86-87).  
“I remind you that every miracle began upon a platform of a *problem*. I dare you to find a miracle that did not begin in a problem. If we could ever see that, we would have an entirely different attitude toward our problems. Problems are those situations engineered of God to bring us face to face with our deficiencies so we might view His sufficiency as our only alternative. . . . We should learn to love our problems. Every problem is an opportunity to trust the Lord and watch him step into circumstances to reveal his glory. . . . **YOU HAVE A PROBLEM. Good!**”
- S** **CHUCK SWINDOLL**  
“We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations” (*Three Steps Forward Two Steps Back*, pg 74)
- S** **NOW, ONE THING WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON IS PROBLEMS.** Or, depending on your perspective, we all have **OPPORTUNITIES**. Sometimes those opportunities come disguised as
- C** **Relationship** problems. (friends, family, conflicts)
  - C** **Financial** problems. (*outgo* may exceed your *income*)
  - C** **Health** problems. (emotional, low on patience, physical)

**S** **WHAT ARE WE TO DO WHEN WE** COME FACE TO FACE WITH SOME SITUATION THAT WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO HANDLE? What they did was simply admit, “We have a problem” (or “an opportunity”).

**C** (**Psa 94:18**), “When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.”

**C** (**Psa 119:92**), “Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.”

#### I. THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THE PROBLEM

## II. THEY ADDRESSED THE POSSIBILITIES

**S** WHEN **ALL FOUR GOSPELS** ARE COMPARED, **FOUR DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS** WERE OFFERED REGARDING THE PROBLEM (or “opportunity”):

### SOLUTION #1 – OFFERED BY THE TWELVE

(**Luke 9:12**), “And when the day began to wear away, THEN CAME THE TWELVE, AND SAID UNTO HIM, **SEND THE MULTITUDE AWAY**, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.”

**S** The corporate body of twelve disciples seemed first to offer the simplest solution. They told Jesus He ought to **SIMPLY MAKE THE PROBLEM GO AWAY**. Matthew, Mark and Luke all three indicate that was the line of reasoning for the twelve disciples (Matt 14:15; Mark 6:35-36; Luke 9:12).

**S** SO OFTEN **OUR FIRST PRAYER IS**, “Dear God, please make this difficulty **go away**.” We ask God, “**Please remove** this pressure from my life”

**S** Asking God to remove a problem is a **VERY COMMON** human reaction. **THE APOSTLE PAUL** made such a request. (**2 Cor 12:7-9**), “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me **A THORN** in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. {8} For this thing I **BESOUGHT THE LORD THRICE**, that it might depart from me. {9} And **HE SAID UNTO ME**, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

### SOLUTION #2 – OFFERED BY PHILIP

(**V. 5-6**), “**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? {6} And this he said **TO PROVE** him: for **HE HIMSELF KNEW WHAT HE WOULD DO**.”

**S** **JESUS MAY HAVE ASKED PHILIP BECAUSE** he was from the town of **BETHSAIDA** on the northern side of the Sea of Galilee (1:44). Philip would have been **familiar with the local resources**. He would have been familiar with the places where food could have been purchased.

**S** **CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE EXACT WORDING** – “**THIS HE SAID TO PROVE HIM**.” God **never tempts** a person to sin, but God **DOES TEST his children** (James 1:13). That is why the Scripture tells us to **rejoice** in times of trial (James 1:2-5; 1 Pet 4:12-13).

**S** God tests us in order **TO REFINE OUR FAITH**. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that without faith we cannot please God. Jesus tested **PHILIP THAT DAY**. **LISTEN TO PHILIP’S RESPONSE**:

(**V. 7**), “**PHILIP ANSWERED HIM**, ‘Two hundred **PENNYWORTH** of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.’”

**S** THE GREEK WORD FOR “PENNYWORTH” IS “**DENARION**” (day-nar'-ee-on). One denarius was the amount paid a laborer for one day's work. Taking into account the fact that Jews did not work on the Sabbath, two hundred denarion was the equivalent of **eight months wages** for a laborer. It would have taken **two-thirds of a man’s yearly salary** to have purchased enough food just for them to have had a *little*.

**S** **PHILIP’S ANSWER BOILED DOWN** said: “**TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SO MANY PEOPLE IS IMPOSSIBLE**.” Philip concluded that **HIS PERSONAL RESOURCES WERE INADEQUATE**, and the solution to the problem was **not obtainable**.

### SOLUTION #3 – OFFERED BY ANDREW

**(V. 8-9)**, “One of his disciples, **ANDREW**, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, {9} ‘There is **A LAD** here, which hath **FIVE BARLEY LOAVES**, and **TWO SMALL FISHES**: but **what are they among so many?**’”

**S** DON'T YOU WONDER **HOW ANDREW KNEW** about that little boy's sack lunch? Andrew must have been out meeting people and getting to know them. Perhaps he found this little boy and played with him in the grass. It was Andrew's regular habit to get to know people and bring them to Jesus. Here Andrew is again introducing someone else to Jesus. It was Andrew that told Jesus about the little boy and his food.

**S** **THE TWO FISH** the boy had were described as **“SMALL.”** **BARLEY BREAD** was **the cheapest bread** on the market. Andrew seems to summarize everyone's attitude when it comes to impossible circumstances:

“**What are they among so many?**”

**S** In Andrew's defense, at least He offered to Jesus the little he was aware of, even though he felt it was inadequate to meet the needs in the face of such a big demand. Even at that, Andrew's answer at least contained a glimmer of faith.

### SOLUTION #4 – OFFERED BY JESUS

**(V. 10)**, “And Jesus said, **MAKE THE MEN SIT DOWN.** Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.”

**S** **JESUS SAID, “MAKE THE MEN SIT DOWN.”** Jesus' words were 180 degrees the opposite to what the disciples had originally recommended. The disciples had recommended that Jesus **“SEND THE MULTITUDE AWAY, . . . ”** (Luke 9:12) Rather than send the multitude away, Jesus wanted them to stay for a period of time.

(1) WE DISCOVER FROM **MARK 6:40** that the multitude was organized by the disciples into groups of **50 and 100.** **FOUR ADVANTAGES** WERE ACHIEVED by organizing the crowd in such a manner:

- 1) **FIRST**, IT KEPT **CHAOS AWAY** from the crowd. If you have watched **relief organizations** distribute food to hungry people on TV, you are aware that hungry multitudes can easily overwhelm the distributors.
- 2) **SECOND**, ORGANIZATION **MADE COUNTING THE CROWD EASIER.**
- 3) **THIRD**, EVERYONE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO **OBSERVE** the miracle firsthand. The bread was handed to them personally.

**HOW MANY TIMES** in your walk with the Lord has God **SINGLED YOU OUT** of the multitude and handed you something personally? You were not just another number among the masses without a name. God singles His children out for personal blessing.

- 4) **FOURTH**, IT DEMONSTRATED THE **IMPORTANCE OF OBEDIENCE** TO GOD'S WORD (Heb 11:6)

THE DISCIPLES PROBABLY **DID NOT HAVE A CLUE WHY** Jesus would have required them to divide the crowd and have them sit down when the logical action seemed to be to disperse them and have them all go home.

IN LIKE MANNER, **WE MAY NOT ALWAYS UNDERSTAND WHY** GOD TELLS **US** to do what He tells us to do, but we best always trust and obey Him. **IF WE DON'T OBEY HIM**, we might well miss the greatest blessing of our lives.

- (1) DO YOU REALIZE THAT **DAVID** BECAME KING of Israel because he obeyed his father when he told him to take some **bread** and **corn** to his brothers (1 Sam 17:17)? David's brothers were in Israel's army that was fighting the Philistines and the giant named Goliath. **BECAUSE David was faithful** to deliver some bread to his brothers, He fought a giant named Goliath and was made public in Israel. His obedience led to his eventual kingship.

**WHAT IF** David had decided not to obey his father because his father's command didn't make sense to him?

(2) **NAAMAN**, THE SYRIAN GENERAL, went to Israel to find healing for his leprosy at the hand of THE PROPHET **ELISHA**. He was furious when Elisha would not even come out and talk to him. All the prophet did was tell Naaman to go and dip seven times in the Jordan river (2 Kings 5:10). Out of anger, Naaman almost disobeyed the Lord. It is a wonderful testimony of the importance of obedience when you read that Naaman was healed by the Lord God when he came up out of the water of the Jordan the seventh time.

**WHAT IF** Naaman had decided not to obey the prophet because it didn't make sense to him? Naaman would not have been healed of his leprosy.

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**WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE COME TO FACE TO FACE WITH SOME SITUATION WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO HANDLE?**

- I. THEY **ACKNOWLEDGED** THE **PROBLEM**
- II. THEY **ADDRESSED** THE **POSSIBILITIES**

### **III. THEY ADVANCED WITH GOD'S PROVISION**

**(V. 11)**, "And Jesus **TOOK THE LOAVES**; and **WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS**, . . . "

**S** It would be **EASY TO PASS OVER** the fact that Jesus gave thanks. It would be wrong to do so considering that John, the human author of the Gospel of John mentioned the fact twice (John 6:11,23). **Matthew, Mark, and Luke** ALL THREE reveal that Jesus looked up to heaven and gave thanks to the Father (Matt 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16). Jesus was demonstrating in word and deed that God is **THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE** and blessing.

**(V. 11-13)**, "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. {12} **WHEN THEY WERE FILLED**, . . . "

- S** "**THEY WERE FILLED**" and they **had not even gone into town** to buy bread. All they had done was sit down in obedience to the voice of God. All they had done was sit down on the grass in obedience to Jesus and "they were filled."
- S** Have you learned to trust God to *fill you*? Have you learned to trust

God to meet all your needs? Do you remember what Jesus said?

**C** **(Mat 6:33)**, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

**C** Someone says, "Not me! You don't understand all the problems I have. I have too many difficulties." God said, "Put Me first and I will take care of you."

(1) **ISRAEL** went into the wilderness for forty years where there was little food and water. In that place God provided food in abundance called **MANNA**.

(2) **ELIJAH** called for a drought that lasted three and one half years. The king was so upset with him that he sent out bounty hunters to get him. They never found him.

God told Elijah to go down to the Brook Cheirith and I will take care of you. Do you remember how God took care of him? God sent ravens and they took food to Elijah. That means that if God is going to take care of you, that even if you have to have a bird deliver the food, then a bird will do it.

Well the brook ran dry and God told Elijah to go to Zarephath and a poor widow will take care of you there. He goes and finds **THE POOR WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH** (1 Kings 17:10). She was looking for sticks to cook her last meal. Her cupboard was empty except for one remaining meal for herself and her son.

Elijah tells her to prepare a meal for him. Do you know what she did? She prepared the meal. She made her last meal for the prophet. Do you remember what God did for her? Her cruise of oil and container of meal never ran out through the length of the entire drought.

(3) That reminds me of **CORRIE TEN BOOM** when she was in **RAVENSBROOK** concentration camp during WWII. In her book *The Hiding Place*, she tells of an unending supply of vitamins.

**S** Not only did God provide for the five thousand, He also provided for the disciples. Listen to what Jesus told the disciples to do when everyone was full.

**(V. 12-13)**, "When **they were filled**, he said unto his disciples, **Gather up the fragments** that remain, that nothing be lost. {13} 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."

**S** After everyone was filled, the disciples gathered up the leftovers and filled **TWELVE BASKETS**. The Greek word for "**BASKET**" (**kophinos**) usually denotes **a large basket** rather than a small basket. They had enough leftovers to fill twelve baskets. Why twelve baskets? One basket was full was available for each of the twelve disciples. Jesus not only met the needs of the multitude, he met the needs of those who served the multitude.

**S** Jesus' provision that day spoke of GOD'S **ABUNDANCE** and **SUFFICIENCY**. When you serve God, He gives you as much as you need.

**S** **WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE COME TO FACE TO FACE WITH SOME SITUATION WE DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO HANDLE?**

- I. THEY **ACKNOWLEDGED** THE **PROBLEM**
- II. THEY **ADDRESSED** THE **POSSIBILITIES**
- III. THEY **ADVANCED** WITH GOD'S **PROVISION**

#### **IV. THEY STOOD IN AWE AT GOD'S PERSON**

**(V. 14)**, "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

**S** They stood in awe of Jesus Christ, who is **THE BREAD OF LIFE**. When we look at the rest of John 6, we will see Jesus presenting Himself as the Bread of Life. Jesus was setting the stage to say that just as Moses provided manna in the wilderness, Jesus provided the bread of life in Israel.

**S** When they saw Jesus perform that miracle, they concluded that Jesus was "**THAT PROPHET**" that Moses had talked about.

**(Deu 18:15)**, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;"

They were so overwhelmed with what Jesus did that they wanted to

declare Him king right on the spot. Jesus knew their intent and so we read:

**(V. 15)**, "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."

**WHY** did Jesus go get alone? Wasn't that what Jesus wanted? Didn't He want the people to follow Him? Yes, but He wanted them to follow Him for the right reason, not the wrong reason. They wanted to make Him king and shortcut the cross. That is what Satan wanted to do when Jesus was tempted forty days and nights in the wilderness in Matthew 4. Satan told Jesus that if He would bow down to Satan that he would give Jesus the kingdoms of the world. Jesus' said to Satan:

**(Mat 4:10)**, ". . . Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

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With these verses in mind, let's conclude with **THREE PRACTICAL TRUTHS THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO OUR LIVES:**

#### **#1. GOD CAN MAKE BIG THINGS OUT OF LITTLE THINGS WHEN WE GIVE THE LITTLE THINGS TO GOD!**

**S** **HOW OFTEN HAVE WE CONCLUDED:** "I don't have anything to give to God? I don't have big enough gifts? I am just so small?"

**S** These verses teach us to give the little things to God and He can make big things out of them.

1) **A LITTLE BOY** GAVE HIS **FIVE PIECES OF BREAD & TWO LITTLE FISH** to Jesus and Jesus fed five thousand people with it. That is amazing.

2) GOD TOLD **MOSES** to go tell Pharaoh to let my people go. Moses said, "God, I can't talk. You can't use me." God told Moses to throw his stick on the ground and it became a serpent. God told Moses to take his staff and use it to deliver His people. God took Moses' stick and delivered Israel. With that staff he divided the Red Sea.

- 3) **A POOR WOMAN GAVE HER TWO MITES** to Jesus and as a result had her deeds recorded for all time in the Word of God. What if she had said, “O, it is so small, I just will not give it.”

(Mark 12:42-44), “And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. {43} And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow **HATH CAST MORE IN, THAN ALL** they which have cast into the treasury: {44} For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.”

- S God took a little staff; He took a little stone; He took a little sack lunch and He used it in His kingdom. I hear God saying to us, “Trust Me with what you have regardless of its size.” We **WOULD BE AMAZED** what God might do if we would just quit saying, “I don’t have anything to give,” and by faith give what we have to God. It would be amazing what God might do with our lives if we would take our hands off and give all we are to Him.

## #2. GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU WHEN YOU SEEK HIM FIRST

(Mat 6:33), “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

- S **JESUS MAJORS IN THINGS THOUGHT IMPOSSIBLE.** Their stomachs were “**WERE FILLED.**”
- S There is a wonderful book titled **UNSOLVED MIRACLES** that has a story in it titled **A SMALL GIRL’S PRAYER** (pgs. 50-52). It is a story that speaks of God’s ability to provide. The author, **HELEN ROSEVEARE**, served as a missionary doctor in Zaire, Central Africa, for twenty years.

She told how **ONE NIGHT** she was delivering a premature baby when the mother died. That mother left behind that baby and a crying two-year-old little daughter.

In order for the little premature little baby to survive in the cold night breezes it would have to be kept warm. There was no incubator in the jungle, and even if there had been one, there was no electricity. The missionary asked an aide to go fill the hot water bottle with hot water. While she was filling it, it burst open because rubber does not last long in tropical climates.

Under those circumstances it looked like the baby might die not being able to stay warm in the cold night air. Their plan was to start a fire and keep the baby as close to the fire as they could so that it might stay warm. That all took place during the night.

The next day during **THE NOON HOUR** the missionary lady met with the children to pray with them as she did every day. She told them of the story of the mother who had died, the little premature baby that had no way of staying warm and also of the little two-year-old girl who was crying for her mother.

Well, there was a little ten-year-old girl in that group by the name of Ruth. When it came her time, she said to God. “Please, God, send us a water bottle. It’ll be no good tomorrow, God, as the baby will be dead, so please send it this afternoon.” In addition she prayed, “And God, will also give the little sister a baby doll so she’ll know You love her?”

The missionary lady admitted that she believed God could do anything He wanted, but this particular prayer seemed to be a really steep order. She had been in Central Africa for almost four years and she had not yet received one package from her homeland. Not one!

Halfway through that **AFTERNOON** the mission was teaching a class when word came to her that a car was outside to deliver a package. She told how she got tears in her eyes. When her class was over, she called for the little kids and they gathered around to watch her open the box. It was a twenty-two-pound parcel. She untied the string while all the little eyes were glued on the parcel. She undid the paper wrapping and folded it neatly away. Inside that box were knitted jerseys, bandages, raisins and sultanas. She reached in the box and there was a new rubber hot water bottle. When the little girl saw the hot water bottle, she said, “If God sent a hot water bottle, then He must have sent a dolly, too.” She reached in the box and sure enough in the bottom of the box was a neatly dressed baby doll.

What is neat was she had lived there almost four years and had never received one single box from her homeland. Not one! That parcel she received that day had been mailed by boat mail **FIVE MONTHS EARLIER.** Five months before the little girl asked God for a hot water bottle and a baby doll, God had already packaged them up by a Sunday school class and mailed to the jungle in Central Africa. It arrived on the very day the little ten-year-old girl prayed her prayer. You talk about God’s timing. WOW!

- S **THAT BRINGS A VERSE TO MIND:**

(Isa 65:24), “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”

- #1. **GIVE LITTLE THINGS TO GOD** AND HE CAN MAKE THEM BIG  
#2. **SEEK GOD FIRST** AND HE WILL MEET YOUR NEEDS

## #3. JESUS REALLY IS THE BREAD OF LIFE

- S** Jesus is the bread of life! OUR **BANK ACCOUNT** is not the supply. OUR **DOCTOR** is not the supply. OUR **PARENTS** are not our supply. **JESUS IS OUR SUPPLY!** Until we learn that, we will always come up short.
- S** **JESUS IS OUR SUFFICIENCY**, our **hope** and our **LIFE!** Without Him we will always come up short.
- S** **DO YOU HAVE JESUS IN YOUR LIFE?** God wants all of us to come to the place where we trust God with all that we are.

**(Mat 6:33)**, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”