

Bread for the Famished

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #17)

John 6:1-15

A. Jesus gives us real bread and then gives us Real Bread

B. Jesus' attempt to "get away" for time alone is thwarted by "a large crowd"

1. "Signs" are meant to draw people toward Jesus
2. This chapter reminds us sometimes God's mission goes forward by going downward (Think "Cross")
3. Jesus has been teaching his disciples (cf. John 5:16-47); after teaching comes the test ("*Jesus asked this only to test him.*" 6:6)

THE MEN

A. First, there is Philip (6:5-7)

1. Jesus loves to find faith in his disciples - and so periodically he tests them
 - a. But all Philip saw is the overwhelming problem
 - b. Philip's good at statistics; not so good solutions
2. "*What are you doing to provide bread for all these people?*"

B. Then there is Andrew (6:8-9)

"If you have the faith the size of just a little mustard seed, you can say to this mountain here, 'Move over' and it will move over and there will be nothing impossible for you."
(Matthew 17:20)

1. If we can't provide for all these famished people, can we provide for some?
2. Andrew saw the possibility and gave Jesus what he had found

C. The other ten disciples (Where are they?)

1. The other disciples are nowhere; their silence is disturbing
2. This is not the disciples' faith Jesus wants to teach here

D. Finally, there is a little boy (6:9)

1. Throughout Scripture, God uses people's small contributions in great ways
2. When asked, he gives everything he has to Jesus

"Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like children you shall never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3)

3. "*Father, this is all I have; but all I have is yours*"

E. Who are you most like: Philip, Andrew, the ten disciples or the little boy?

THE MIRACLE

A. The Miracle by the Numbers

1. When you read a number in the Bible, ask, "Why is this number here?"
 - a. Two (fish) - think of two tablets: e.g. the law
 - b. Five (loaves) - five brings to mind the five books of Moses
 - c. Twelve (baskets) - twelve tribes and disciples; this represents God's people
 - d. Five Thousand - the size of a Roman Legion
2. Jesus is reflecting on the first Exodus (the exodus from the bondage of Egypt)

B. The Miracle by Jesus

1. Jesus tells his disciples to get the people seated...
 - a. Jesus' disciples are invited to do little things to prepare for God's big things
 - b. Where the disciples didn't pray; Jesus did
2. Jesus gives thanks, lit. "he eucharisted;" John is preparing us for the end of Jesus life...

THE MEANING

A. As the Church, we often look at our world and we're overwhelmed

B. The Crowd doesn't understand who Jesus is

"Moses said to the Lord 'May the Lord appoint a man over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.'" (Numbers 27:15-17)

1. Moses asked God to appoint someone to take his place; God appoints Joshua
2. Then God appoints his Son, Yeshua (Joshua is the Hebrew for Jesus)

C. Once again Jesus is trying to establish his identity

1. Jesus is greater than Moses (cf. Numbers 11:22)
2. Jesus is greater than Elisha (cf. 2 Kings 4:42-44)
3. Jesus is greater than the Romans

D. The disciples didn't understand about the loaves; Jesus will explain it

1. Jesus performs this miracle to proclaim Himself the leader of the New Exodus (an exodus from our bondage to sin)
2. Nothing short of Jesus' resurrection will open the eyes of Jesus' disciples to know him and share his work
3. It's time to sit down...at the feet of Jesus and be fed