JESUS CHRIST:
The God of the Impossible

Matthew 14:14-21
4/15/2018

INTRODUCTION:

***Limited resources don't limit Jesus Christ one bit!**

Six truths to realize:

I. Realize: TURNING PEOPLE AWAY IS <u>NOT THE ANSWER</u> (v. 16a)

II. Realize: WE ARE <u>NOT ADEQUATE</u> IN OURSELVES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE MULTITUDES (v. 16b)

III. Realize: WITH JESUS NOTHING IS <u>INSIGNIFICANT</u> (v. 17)

IV. Realize: LITTLE BECOMES <u>MUCH</u> WHEN GIVEN TO JESUS (v. 18)

V. Realize: WHAT JESUS DOES FOR PEOPLE, HE OFTEN DOES <u>THROUGH HIS SERVANTS</u> (v. 19)

VI. Realize: THE INCREDIBLE IS <u>NOT IMPOSSIBLE</u> FOR JESUS (v. 20-21)

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The fact that Christ's feeding of the 5,000 occurs in all four Gospels shows its unique importance and its relevance to all people.

On two occasions, the Lord Jesus produced a miraculous feast (here, 5,000 men are fed with 5 loaves and 2 fish; and in 15:34-38, 4,000 men are fed with 7 loaves and a few sardines).

V. 14

What Jesus saw with His eye affected His heart.

The needs of the people stirred the compassion of Christ (His compassion today remains the same).

When Jeremiah saw the plight of his own Jewish people, he said, *"Mine eye affecteth mine heart"* (Lam. 3:51).

"Compassion" - (*splanchnizomai)* - one's insides; Christ's emotions and feelings were stirred!

There is something desperately wrong with us when our hearts are not moved at the plight of the multitudes around us. Jesus felt an intense compassion because of His perfect perception of hell and the torment those would face who did not receive Him (MacARthur, p. 428).

V. 15

"Jesus and His disciples desperately needed rest (Mark 6:31); yet the needs of the multitude touched His heart" (Wiersbe, p. 50).

"Evening" - (the Jews had 2 times of the day they called evening - cp. Exod. 12:6). This is a reference to the first part of "evening" (3:00 p.m.); the second evening (6:00 p.m.) occurred in verse 23 (the second evening was sundown).

The disciples--perhaps weary because of the activities and ministry of the busy day--recommend that Jesus dismiss the multitude so that they could have dinner and be on their way home.

The disciples give three reasons for such a request:

1) The location was inconvenient and incondusive.

The area where they were gathered was a *"desert place"* (a deserted, remote, "out in the middle of nowhere"). There was no answer to the need at hand where they were located. . . I should say, there appeared to be no provision in sight! God specializes in turning barren deserts into banqueting tables!

2) The time was getting late.

"The time is now past" **-** the hour was past for dismissal so that the men, women, and children could at a reasonable time make it to the villages for food and lodging.

Remember, God is not bound by the lock! He is not strapped by the timetable that straps us. His provision is always on time. God can do more in five minutes than we could do in a lifetime! No, make that a trillion lifetimes!

3) Their limited resources were inadequate to meet the needs of the multitude.

They looked at their limited earthly, human resources and saw no answer (five barley loaves and two fish).

"How easy it is for us to send people away, to make excuses, to plead a lack of resources" (Wiersbe, p. 51).

***Limited resources don't limit Jesus Christ one bit!**

Six truths to realize:

I. Realize: TURNING PEOPLE AWAY IS NOT THE ANSWER (v. 16a)

The disciples' answer to the multitudes' problem was to turn them away. This was too often their solution (EX: the little children [Mt. 19:13], the Syrophoenician women).

This was not Jesus' solution, however. He had an undying, untiring compassion toward them (Mt. 9:36).

"They need not depart" **-** It is not necessary for them to go away. All that they need is present with Christ. he is the *El Shaddai* - the all-sufficient God!

II. Realize: WE ARE <u>NOT ADEQUATE</u> IN OURSELVES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE MULTITUDES (v. 16b)

"Give ye them to eat" - Their eyes must have popped out as this statement came!

Can you imagine being put on the spot to produce a banquet (to become an instant caterer) for 10-20,000 people! And to have next to nothing to do it with?

When Jesus told His disciples to feed them, He knew <u>they</u> couldn't. He wanted them to learn a valuable lesson: What they could not do, He could. It was impossible for them to meet the needs of the multitudes, just like it is impossible for us. But He can! We are not adequate in ourselves, but He is!

No doubt as Jesus made this statement, He was testing their faith to see if they would say, "We don't have the resources, Lord, but <u>You do</u>! You can do it!"

"Give ye them to eat" - Jesus watched His frustrated disciples as they tried to solve the problem, but *"He Himself knew what He was intending to do"* (Wiersbe, p. 50) (SEE: John 6:5-9)

III. Realize: WITH JESUS NOTHING IS <u>INSIGNIFICANT</u> (v. 17)

"We have here <u>but</u>. . ." - If they had said this without the "*but*" they would have shown faith. They saw Christ perform the miraculous that day (v. 14); would providing food be impossible for such a One? Five loaves and two fish is more than enough substance for the Master.

God specializes in using small things, little things, insignificant things, or nothings! (I Cor. 1:27-29).

EXAMPLES:

--God had nothing, and from it he made the worlds (Heb. 11:3).

--From dust He made a man; from a rib He made a woman (Gen. 2).

--Abraham who had <u>no</u> children, God made the father of many nations.

--Gideon had an army of 32,000 going against the Midianites, who had 120,000. This was still too big, so God had him reduce his army to 300 (making it 400 to 1) -- and God won the victory (Jud. 7).

--Samson had the jawbone of a donkey, God used him to slay 1,000 Philistines with it (Jud. 15:15).

--David was a little boy, God empowered him to slay a 9'9'' giant Goliath.

--Jonathon said to his armor bearer, *"There is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or few"* (I Sam. 14:6), and God defeated multitudes.

--The widow of Zarephath gave Elijah her last piece of bread and God provided meal and oil for 3-1/2

When we are totally dependent upon Him, we don't have a lot. Jesus will take whatever you offer Him and use it.

The short-sighted disciples, having walked with the Lord for two years, should have known that Jesus could feed the multitude. "But they were like a person who stands in front of Niagara Falls and asks where he can find a drink" (MacArthur, p. 429).

IV. Realize: LITTLE BECOMES <u>MUCH</u> WHEN GIVEN TO JESUS (v. 18)

The presence of Jesus is the place of provision.

The miracle of multiplication is in His hands" (Wiersbe, p. 50).

"Little is much when God is in it."

"Little becomes much in the Master's hand."

However, much becomes little when it is stingily and selfishly kept from Christ (Hag. 1:6, 9).

V. Realize: WHAT JESUS DOES FOR PEOPLE, HE OFTEN DOES <u>THROUGH HIS SERVANTS</u> (v. 19)

The multitude would have to do what Christ said (*"Sit down")* in order to receive the blessing! There is blessing in obedience!

When ever anyone did what Jesus said, they were blessed!

***"Looking up to Heaven"* -** So as to identify with God the Father, and to cause the people to recognize the source of the provision, Jesus looks up.

***"He blessed"* -** He said a "good word" about the Father.

Our times of thanksgiving must praise God sincerely.

***"Brake"* -** the loaves and fish were broken (each of the 12 disciples having a basket, received perhaps 1/3 or 1/2 of a loaf of bread and 1/8 to 1/4 of a fish).

The disciples were the bridge between Jesus and the multitudes. Jesus gave to the disciples, and they gave to the multitudes.

We are the bridge to the lost and dying world! Jesus has chosen to not meet their needs independently. His program is to use His people.

We have nothing of real value to give to the multitudes in our city until we get it from Christ! Don't minister without His power! Don't witness without bathing it in prayer.

Like the disciples, all we amount to are <u>channels</u>. Channels through which Christ can pour out His provision to others.

Remember as servants of Christ we are "distributors" not "manufacturers." (Wiersbe, p. 51).

Just as Christ used His disciples to dispense this food to the multitude, He uses you and me to dispense His Gospel to the spiritually hungry world we live in.

"The disciples to the multitude" - Although they had less than enough food to start with to feed one person, they were able to feed a multitude. Each time they reached their hands into the basket, more food appeared. God gave in proportion to the need, and more!

2 Corinthians 5 shows that we are God's tools which He uses to evangelize the lost. God "beseeches through us" for others to be "reconciled to God"

VI. Realize: THE INCREDIBLE IS <u>NOT IMPOSSIBLE</u> FOR JESUS (v. 20-21)

V. 20

"They did <u>all</u> eat" - Not one went away hungry. Each enjoyed perhaps the best bread and fish dinner they ever had (just as Jesus turned water into the <u>best</u> unfermented wine ever tasted, so this food was no doubt top choice!

"Were filled" - They ate until they were fully satisfied. Each had enough to the point that they couldn't eat another bite. They had so much that they had 12 baskets full left over!

"They took up of the fragments that remained" - John adds, *"that nothing be lost."* (Jn. 6:12). The Lord does not desire for us to waste or be bad stewards of what He gives to us.

"Twelve baskets" - each of the twelve disciples had more than enough food for themselves. *"The laborer is worthy of his hire".* God takes care of His servants.

Whatever we give to Jesus, He blesses and uses and gives back to us! (Prov. 3:9-10 - *"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.")*

V. 21

Together with the women and children there could have been perhaps 10-15,000 (maybe 25,000) people gathered.

What started out as perhaps 5 lbs. of food was multiplied to perhaps 10 thousand pounds of food to feed such a multitude!

CONCLUSION:

Can this Jesus who satisfied that hungry crowd . . .

--satisfy your hungry soul?
(He is the *"bread of life"*)

Did you know that the next day after this miracle Jesus gave a sermon about how He was "*the bread of life"*? (Jn. 6:22 ff).

"A hungry world is feeding on empty substitutes while we deprive them of the bread of life" (Wiersbe, p. 51).

--meet your every need?
(*"My God shall supply all your need"*)

--use you and use what you give to Him to bless others?

Faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains!

Not because of the "faith" but because of the object of the faith. . . Jesus Christ, the God of the impossible!