

## The Feeding of the 5,000...I mean 4,000 Mark 8:1-10

### **Announcements:**

1. Bible study Monday night at 6:30pm going through Hosea
2. AWANA meeting at 11am in the house
3. Mission Aid this Tuesday at 9am
4. Big card of appreciation to our Sheriff
  1. Sign, maybe write short note
5. Back inside Sept. 6
6. Prayer for Associate Pastor of Families search
7. Church Picnic to follow
  1. Seating inside for some
  2. Seating outside under canopies
  3. Water slide for kids (has water; coming at 11am)

In his book called "America on Six Rubles a Day", comedian Yakov Smirnoff writes: "Coming from the Soviet Union, I was not prepared for the incredible variety of products available in American grocery stores. While on my first shopping trip, I saw powdered milk you just add water, and you get milk. Then I saw powdered orange juice you just add water, and you get orange juice. And then I saw baby powder I thought to myself, 'What a country!'"

If we only look at each part separately, we may draw the wrong conclusion. We must see the big picture. To understand what God is doing in our lives, we must first understand what God is after. In most of what God is doing, He is trying to teach us a lesson of faith. What He is after is that we learn to live by faith in the daily affairs of life. God wants us to learn how to trust Him:

Hebrews 11:6 (NASB) And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Our God is trustworthy. Jesus is faithful to accomplish what He began. Jesus is able to meet our very needs and He doesn't just meet them to a

satisfactory level that is 'good enough'. But, He goes above and beyond to 'more than enough'. Because, that is who He is. His grace is sufficient. His love is sufficient. The idea in scripture of sufficient is not 'just enough.' His grace [also could be said His undeserved favor] is 'more than enough.' His love for us is 'more than enough.' That is who He is.

We are going to look at a passage this morning that resembles the feeding of the 5,000 very closely. Some people have never noticed that Jesus fed two different large crowds or have confused it for the same event. Some critics have commented that maybe Mark repeated the same story. Maybe he made this one up to make a spiritual point. Maybe there is contradiction in the Bible.

Why does Mark put this in here twice? What was the point?

1. Jesus is the bread of life—for all, the Jew and the non-Jew
2. Jesus has great compassion upon both the Jew and the non-Jew
  - His compassion moved Him to act, all the way to the cross for all of mankind—brother, sister, friend or foe

Let's read our passage:

Mark 8:1-10

Verse 1

-Large crowd

-Jesus's was in a mainly Gentile region. Remember again, this region had many descendants from many of the enemies of the Israelites. This is said to be a mainly Gentile area, [Mark 5: casting demons into pigs], there were Jews too

-At this point, Jesus was probably in that region 6-9 months

-Jesus fame had grown.

-Matthew 15:29-31 says, "Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee and climbed a hill and sat down. A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn't speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all. The crowd was amazed! Those who hadn't been able to speak were talking, the crippled were made well, the lame were walking, and the blind could see again! And they praised the God of Israel.

## Verse 2 and 3

1. -Already, we can see the first difference between this and the feeding of the 5,000. Here are some more differences:
  - The feeding of the 5,000 men was in Jewish context; feeding of the 4,000 men was mainly in a Gentile context.
  - The feeding of 5,000 was near Bethsaida [a Jewish location]; feeding of 4,000 was in Decapolis a Gentile location].
  - The feeding of 5,000 used five loaves; feeding of 4,000 used seven loaves.
  - The feeding of 5,000 resulted in twelve baskets left over; feeding of 4,000 left seven baskets.
  - With the feeding of 5,000, the crowd was with Jesus one day; with the feeding of 4,000, the crowd was with Him three days.
  - The feeding of 5,000 was in spring; feeding of 4,000 in summer.
  - Those at the feeding of 5,000 tried to make Jesus King; feeding of 4,000 saw no response like that.

-These differences in detail reveal two different events. And Jesus clears this up in **Mark 8:19-20** **“When I fed the 5,000 with five loaves of bread, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up afterward?” “Twelve,” they said. “And when I fed the 4,000 with seven loaves, how many large baskets of leftovers did you pick up?” “Seven,” they said.”**

-Scripture is trustworthy
2. “They were with Him 3 days and had nothing left.”
  - They wanted to be with Him, to experience Him, glean from Him all that He is. They were enamored with Him [7:27]
  - Often times we are not enamored with Jesus because we don’t believe He is all that scripture says He is. Or maybe we right off something great happening just as coincidence instead of recognizing it as a gift from God. Or maybe we don’t believe He provides so we do it on our own and then when all else fails we pray to God.
  - Are we so enamored with Jesus that our hunger for food is second to our hunger to know Him; our thirst for water is second to thirsting for knowledge of God’s Word; our very need to fill our lungs with air is second to filling our lives with His presence.
3. Jesus has compassion on the crowd
  - means to feel such compassion to the point of being moved to do something about it.
  - the only place where Jesus says, “I have compassion”

-the rest of the time His compassion is observed and experienced  
-Jesus is a God of compassion. Jesus is the representation of God. He is making a clear statement that God is a God of compassion. He sees our needs and those times of struggle and meets them according to His good and perfect purpose.

-Matthew 6:32 says that our 'Heavenly Father already knows all your needs'.

-Some may be thinking, I have needs that He hasn't met. There are people all over the world with needs. He is not meeting those!

That's the point! The needs of this world are small in comparison to our need for a savior, that need to have someone to step in our place because of our sin. That need is not just temporal, it's forever.

It is life or death, meaning eternal life or eternal damnation and separation from God. Life, where you get to experience the fullness of God's blessing, redemption, restoration, and healing. Eternal separation where you no longer experience some degree of God's grace as we do now in this world. Eternal damnation you experience the full power and weight of God's judgment for the rest of this life and the next.

What is the answer? Verse 33 tell us. It's to 'Seek first the Kingdom of God.' To surrender to Jesus. His compassion is so great, that He didn't just see our need for saving, but He was and is compelled to meet that need because that is the kind of God that He is. No one else had to be the guinea pig. He stepped in to save the day by bearing the full weight of God's judgment upon Himself so you and I don't have to experience it. Instead we get to experience peace, hope, abundance and overflowing joy.

We no longer have to be fixated upon the 'Here and Now' of this world consumed with making something of it, or feeling the burdens we of this world. Jesus is compassionate. He will walk us through them. He will give us what we need. Just seek first the Kingdom. Live according to God's economy, principles, and structure and watch how that freedom transforms your life into something so much better. It isn't fairy tale, it is real life.

If you're hurting, He wants to heal. If you're lonely, He is a companion. If you're scared, He gives strength. If you're lost, He wants to lead. If you're burdened down, He lightens the load. If you're confused, He wants to bring clarity. If you're worried, He wants to reveal to you a wonderful plan. If you feel broken, He wants to help put you back together. If you're sad, He will wipe away the tears and listen. We are told to 'Seek first the Kingdom of God'. Listen to all of Matthew 6:33: "Seek first the Kingdom of God *above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.*"  
But, I don't know if I can do that?

#### Verse 4

- Verse 4 asks the impossible. It reveals the problem. The problem we all experience. We don't have the resources we need for our spiritual problem and really the problems of this life. Because the physical and spiritual are connected.
- "How are we supposed to find enough food to feed them out here in the wilderness?" There isn't a liquor store, 7-Eleven, Dollar General, or even Fred Meyer close by.
- Spiritual Amnesia has plagued them. You would think they would have remember the last time this was a problem. I mean, how would you forget such an amazing miracle as providing enough food to feed 5,000 men...probably a total of 10-15,000 including woman and children...with leftovers!
  - But don't we do this? God does something amazing and as we get farther and farther from God stepping into our world, it was an event that we can smell and feel that becomes just a full memory, then a distant, emotionless, and detail-less thought and we begin to doubt what God really did...to the point we have to trust in our own estimation of how to fix the problem.
- It's almost like Jesus is baiting them when He asks them "How much bread do you have?" I can just imagine it, the lightbulbs going off in their heads. Ooh! Ooh! We have seen this before, remember what He did last time we were with a large crowd and how He kept making food enough for everyone. We just kept coming back and there was more.

#### Verse 8

- "They ate as much as they wanted." Other translations say it better: "the people ate and were satisfied"...some say, "were filled". In

other words, this was a complete act, they were not left wanting, they were not in need.

-Catch what is next—“the disciples picked up seven large baskets of leftover food.” Jesus provided more than enough. This wasn’t 7 lunch sized baskets, this is a different basket than the baskets mentioned in the 5,000. In the original language, this world used for basket spoke of a basket big enough to fit a man.  
This is our God. He isn’t stingy with His resources. He gives more than enough!

-Jesus is making a point here. Just a few verses later He says, “Don’t you know or understand even yet? Are your hearts too hard to take it in? You have eyes—can’t you see? You have ears—can’t you hear? Don’t you remember anything at all? When I fed the 5,000 with five loaves of bread, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up afterward?”

Just a few chapters before we saw the Pharisees coming to Jesus and making a big deal about the disciples not washing their hands before they ate, and Jesus tells them it isn’t what is on the outside that makes a man unclean [spiritually lacking or dead] it is what is on the inside—his heart.

He is giving them an experience that reveals a spiritual truth. He is the Bread of Life. He is their very need. This and the feeding of the 5,000 is about a spiritual need, being revealed through a physical need.

John 6:35 says, “What sign then are You going to do so we may see and believe You?” they asked. “What are You going to perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.” Jesus said to them, “I assure you: Moses didn’t give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the real bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” Then they said, “Sir, give us this bread always!” “I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to Me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Me will ever be thirsty again. But as I told you, you’ve seen Me, and yet you do not believe.”

Seeking Jesus, seeking God’s Kingdom, fills our spiritual need which in turn gives understanding, direction, and purpose to our life which brings clarity and right priority to our physical needs. It sets everything else straight.

There are two truths for us today.

1. Jesus is the Bread of Life.
2. Jesus is full of compassion.

His compassion took Him all the way to the cross. It's a compassion that isn't lazy or partial, but is fervent and complete. It doesn't acknowledge a need, pat someone on the back, and then send them on their way. His compassion has understanding, love, and action. It seeks to meet the need. His compassion becomes evident in the picture of Him as the Bread of Life.

Psalm 111:4 says, "The Lord is gracious and compassionate." Jesus is compassionate. Their compassion gives us great comfort. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter.

Psalm 78:35-38 says, "They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God, their Redeemer. But they deceived Him with their mouths, they lied to Him with their tongues, their hearts were insincere toward Him, and they were unfaithful to His covenant. Yet He was compassionate; He atoned for their guilt [forgave them] and did not destroy them. He often turned His anger aside and did not unleash all His wrath."

This compassion is tied to pointing towards Christ. It's selfless. It's motivated by love wrapped in the motivation of building others up. It's intentional and aware, looking for ways to unveil the need and then aiming to help meet that need.

We are to reflect this kind of compassion. Do we feel deep within for those around us that are going to spend eternity in Hell? Do we feel deep within for those that have physical need?

Maybe you don't have that kind of compassion? Pray for it. Ask God to give you that kind of love for others.

Maybe you have compassion, but it is the lazy kind, it doesn't have any action to it. Pray for it. Ask God to give you that kind of love for others and for tangible ways to do it.