

Sermon Series: Book of John
Sermon title: Feeding of the 5000
Scripture reading: John 6:1-15

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church
September 22, 2019
S.C. Brown, Pastor

There's only one miracle, besides the Resurrection of Jesus, that is mentioned in all four gospel accounts. Do you know which one it is? The feeding of the 5000.

It's a familiar story. It's the story that you are sure to find in every children's Bible. What is it about this sign or miracle that makes it so popular and intriguing? What is it about? Why is it important?

Let's pray together.

This story of the feeding of the 5000 is quite long, so like last week, we want read the whole thing again but take a look at it here and there. Keep your Bible open to John 6 so that you can follow along.

The setting is the Sea of Galilee, which is also called the Sea of Tiberius. Jesus had been teaching and healing the sick in the little villages along the shore of the Sea.

Verse 2 says that, "A large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick."

Now, we've already seen in this study in John that there are all kinds of people who follow Jesus and they follow him for various reasons. Many just want to see the miracle man do some tricks. Many just want to be healed of their physical diseases. Still very few actually believe in him and follow him.

But at this point they are following him, lots of them. They've seen him do miracles and they want to see more.

So, Jesus and his disciples went to the 'other side' of the Sea of Galilee to a desolate area..an under-populated area to get some rest, according to the gospel of Mark. Jesus and his disciples got in a boat and went to the 'other side' of the Sea. This refers to the east side...the non-Jewish side...of the Sea. And the people have come on foot all the way around the Sea to find Jesus.

Let's pick it up on **verse 4**. "Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. **5** Lifting up his eyes, then, and

seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?' **6** He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. **7** Philip answered him, 'Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.' **8** One of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, **9** "There is a boy here who has five barely loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" **10** Jesus said, 'Have the people sit down.'"

1. THE PROVISION IN THE WILDERNESS.

Notice that no one mentions anything about being hungry. This is all initiated by Jesus. He might have asked Philip because Philip is from Bethsaida, which is nearby... but clearly Jesus says this to test him. What would he say, "*Lord, you can do anything!*"? Or, "*Lord, you can turn water to wine...you can heal the sick from 20 miles away with a word....you can make a lame man walk....I don't know where they'll get food but I am sure you can do it.*"

No. Philip fails the test. He says, "*200 days wages wouldn't be enough for even a snack for this many people.*"

What about Andrew? Was he really expressing faith?

Doesn't seem so, contrary to what we have often been taught in our children's Bible.

Andrew says, *"Here's a little boy with 5 little cakes of barley bread and 2 sardines, but how in the world will this be enough for so many?"*

Scholars tell us that there could have been 15,000-20,000 people here. The Scripture says 5000 men, not including this little boy and surely many women.

What will Jesus do?

He will provide for them in the wilderness...the desolate place.

Does this remind you of another place in the Bible where there was a great number of people in a desolate place who needed bread?

Turn to **Exodus 16:2-4**

2 And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness,
3 and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go

out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.

Just as God rained down manna from heaven for the people of Israel, so now again Jesus,....rains down bread again to provide for the multitudes.

How is he able to do this?

Because he is....

2. THE POWERFUL CREATOR.

John has already told us in **John 1:1** that Jesus is the Creator of all things.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Now, just think deeply with me for a moment about what is happening in this [true] story.

Jesus is creating bread and fish on the spot.

11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.

12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." **13** So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

15,000-20,000 people on a grassy hillside.

5 little dried unleavened cakes of barley, which was the bread of the poor.

2 small little sardines.

And 20,000 people ate so much they were about to bust. They had their fill.

They picked up 12 baskets of leftovers of bread.

No grain. No kneading. No water. No fire. No fish mating. No fish eggs. No time needed. He instantly created bread and fish....in abundance.

How did he provide this for the people?

Because he is the Creator of all things.

Well, the people realize that Jesus is not just anyone. They seem to know that this is a miracle. They've seen him heal. Now they've seen him provide bread from heaven. And they say that this must be:

3. THE PROPHET WHO IS TO COME.

Look at **verse 14**.

“When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”

What do they mean by this?

We need to turn to the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 18:15-18

15 “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— **16** just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ **17** And the Lord said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. **18** I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

Well, perhaps the people now get who Jesus is! They are right, you know.. in saying that Jesus the prophet like unto Moses that God says we must listen to.

Perhaps the people now believe that he’s the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing they may have life in his name.

But Jesus sees their hearts.
They are thinking something else.

4. THE PERCEIVING OF THE CROWD'S MOTIVES.

What is it that they really want from Jesus?

Verse 15 tells us.

Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

So, there's a pretty good crowd here. John MacArthur points out that this would be a great opportunity for Jesus to gain a nice size army and begin to take over rescue to the Jews from the Romans. It would at least be a good start.

But, Jesus has other plans.

He provides for them in the wilderness to show them who he truly is.

He is the powerful Creator God in human flesh.

He is the prophet who is to come but he's not the king that the crowds want.

Jesus, the Messiah...the Son of God has another mission.

5. THE PASSOVER WHICH IS TO COME.

Did you notice the key phrase back in **John 6:4**?
We have almost in passing these words, "Now the
Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand."

Why does John mention this?

What's the point of even putting that in there?

Well, for one...he gives us a time marker.

There would have been lots of people headed south
toward Jerusalem for the great feast.

What did Passover celebrate?

Passover was a memorial day; a feast celebrating God's
rescuing the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

How did God rescue them?

Death was coming to every house in Egypt.

There is only one way to escape. A lamb is to be killed
and its blood is to be applied to the doorpost of each
house. The lamb will pay the price so that the people
can be spared.

They celebrated this every year to remember what God
had done.

But, there's another Passover coming.

All people are in bondage to sin and Satan.
Death will come to all but there is a way of escape...God has provided a way to be rescued.
A Lamb named Jesus will be slain and his blood poured out and all who believe in him will be passed over in judgment and have eternal life.

There's another Passover coming.

Are you ready? Have you trusted in Christ... that he is the only one who can provide what you mostly need, which is to be rescued from your sin?

I've asked myself all week.... what is the application here in the feeding of the 5000 for Christians?
What are Jesus' disciples to learn from this?

Verse 5, Jesus asked Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to **test** him.

What's the test for Philip.....and for us?

How big is your God?

Is he able to provide what seems impossible?

Will we trust him?