

John Chapter 6:1-21 “Faith to Feed Five Thousand”

I. Jesus Challenges our Faith (Verses 1-9)

1. He wants His disciples to have greater faith than others (1-3)

- a) Especially those whom He will use in leading others. They must have faith in God.

2. He will make opportunities to test our faith (4-6)

- a) Many times these “opportunities” are very serious and involve life challenges.

◆ Like paying rent or buying food. Like not knowing what to do after University, where to get a job. Like dealing with sickness and tragedy. Whenever you come to a place where you say “I don’t know what I am going to do...”

◆ God will only give us what we are able to endure.

✎ *1 Corinthians 10:12-13* “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

- b) Abraham got many of these opportunities to test his faith

✎ *Genesis 22:1-2* “Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” 2 Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

✎ *Genesis 22:8* “And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering...”

✎ *Hebrews 11:17-19* “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,” 19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”

- c) Look forward to these times of testing. They are for our benefit

✎ *James 1:2-4* “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

✎ *1 Peter 1:6-7* “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ”

- d) No matter how we do on the test, Jesus already knows what He is going to do.

◆ This is the great thing about our Lord. He isn’t testing us so that He can know our faith, He is testing us so that we can know our faith.

◆ In the end, Jesus will do the work.

3. We don’t always respond to testing as we should (7-9)

- a) Sometimes we look only at human worldly methods to solve our problems. How big is your God? (8)

◆ Money is usually the thing that we see as a problem solver.

- b) When we do have faith it is usually small and full of doubt. (9)

◆ We have to be real and honest with God. Only when we have a broken and humble spirit will He come to help us.

✎ *Mark 9:23-24* “Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

◆ Even small faith in a big God is powerful.

II. Jesus Changes our Faith (Verses 10-14)

1. God will increase our faith

- a) Jesus used this opportunity to show his disciples that with God all things are possible.

2. God will let us work together with Him

- a) Even though they doubted whether it was possible, Jesus still used them to work a mighty work for the people.

✎ 1 Corinthians 3:9 “For we are God's fellow workers...”

✎ 2 Corinthians 6:1 “We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.”

3. God does more than we could even imagine

- a) Not only did they have enough to feed the five thousand but they also had twelve baskets for takeaway.

✎ Ephesians 3:20 “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us”

- b) How can we increase our faith?

◆ By taking part in works like these

◆ By praying to God

◆ By getting into His word

✎ Romans 10:17 “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Dwight L. Moody on Faith: "I prayed for faith and thought it would strike me like lightning. But faith did not come. One day I read, 'Now faith come by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.' I had closed my Bible and prayed for faith. I now began to study my Bible and faith has been growing ever since."

III. Jesus Cherishes our Faith (Verses 15-21)

1. He comes to us when we are in the storm and our faith is failing

2. He says to us “do not be afraid”

- a) This is because even though we are weak, He is strong. He will never let us go.

3. We willingly receive Him

- a) When we see His love for us we will not run from Him but to Him. Even when our faith is little and failing He still cherishes it.

✎ Matthew 12:20 “A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory”