

“What Jesus Christ Can Do, through Me and You!”
John 6:1-14

*I had considered preaching on this passage last week, as it was the next portion of the Gospel of John since we had finished **John 5** two Sundays ago. I did not preach on it last week, because last week we celebrated the Lord’s Supper. Now, some might say, isn’t that passage, speaking of bread, even miracle bread appropriate for the Lord’s Supper?*

I would say, yes, in one way, but NO! in another. Yes, in the sense that both this miracle and the Lord’s Supper point to Christ!

*NO, in the sense, this passage is not pointing to the Lord’s Supper or teaching directly about the Lord’s Supper, nor is the rest of **John 6**, even when Jesus will say later –*

⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”
John 6:51 (NKJV)

*Even in that verse, **John 6:51**, and others like it in **John 6**, Jesus is not talking or teaching about the Lord’s Supper, He is teaching about Himself.*

Now, Jesus’ miracle, the feeding of the 5,000, that we will consider today is recorded in all four Gospels, it was performed before the biggest crowd, and for us, living in 2023, should INSPIRE GREAT FAITH! Great faith and the seeking of God’s power as we also seek to make Jesus known to a lost world.

I. Jesus Christ, God’s Son is not limited by our circumstances –

⁶ After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. John 6:1 (NKJV)

1. Jesus, had been defending Himself, against the accusations of the Jews, who wanted to kill Him –

¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. John 5:18 (NKJV)

*2. About the same time, shortly before this miracle, according to Matthew’s account John the Baptist, Jesus first listed witness in John 5:31-35 had just been beheaded by Herod – **Matthew 14:3-12.***

*Joined by John’s grieving disciples **Matthew 14:12 b**, Jesus was aiming to get away from the crowds, probably to comfort and instruct.*

¹³ When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴ And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. Matthew 14:13–14 (NKJV)

But He (Jesus) and they are not able to “get away” from the crowds ... the needy crowd!

3. *Jesus' apostles who were also not with Him in John 5, where were they during the John 5 time period? They had been sent out by Jesus to heal and preach -*

9 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. ² He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Luke 9:1–2 (NKJV)

- A. *His apostles were also with Him, when He and John the Baptist's grieving disciples were aiming to get AWAY, to a deserted place ... but the don't "get away"*

¹⁰ And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. ¹¹ But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. Luke 9:10–11 (NKJV)

- B. *It is after their own preaching and healing, after a day of Jesus' preaching and healing, shortly after John the Baptist had been beheaded, when all were likely TIRED –*

¹² When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here." ¹³ But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people." ¹⁴ For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty." Luke 9:12–14 (NKJV)

Mark's Gospel also tells us the same things – Mark 6:12-44

4. *Summary –*

- A. *John the Baptist was beheaded, his disciples came to Jesus*
- B. *Jesus's disciples had just returned from their own preaching and healing*
- C. *Jesus had been accused of breaking the sabbath, and blasphemy because the Jews did not believe He was God's Son ...*
- D. *They were aiming to get away to a private place, but crowds followed them to be healed and taught by Jesus ...*
- E. *It was getting LATE in the day and people were likely HUNGRY, and they were away from places where they could EAT!*

Point is, they had trying circumstances, and no automobiles, no microwaves or any electric / gas stoves / ovens and dishwashers ...

Hurricanes, deaths in families, illnesses, relational struggles, people who NEED our help...

5. *Paul was speaking wealth / poverty financial, but all things can be broadened -*

¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:12–13 (NKJV)

- A. *Paul was in prison*
- B. *He just received a wonderful, generous gift from the Philippians*
- C. *All things can go beyond the context!*

II. Jesus Christ, God's Son is not limited by our resources -

⁴ Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, **“Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?”** ⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. ⁷ Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.” ⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, ⁹ “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?”
John 6:4–9 (NKJV)

1. *It seems like an addition (of more people) in this passage, to an already BIG crowd - :5*
2. *Jesus was testing Philip's faith – John 6:5-6*
3. *Philip and Andrew point out the SMALLNESS of resources – John 6:7-9*

A. I think this was generally the case with the early church, they were not wealthy –

⁶ Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” Acts 3:6 (NKJV)

B. But sadly, even in Biblical times there were churches who trusted to much in material wealth –

¹⁴ **“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ ‘I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. ²² ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ ”** Revelation 3:14–22 (NKJV)

Because they had certain resources, they were TRUSTING those resources, and not buying gold (spiritual gold) from Jesus Christ -

⁷ Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God. Psalm 20:7 (NKJV)

III. God is not limited by us –

¹⁰ Then Jesus said, **“Make the people sit down.”** Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹ And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, **“Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.”** ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.” John 6:10–14 (NKJV)

1. *Notice, Jesus' disciples were involved in this miracle! Jesus may have been the Cook, but His disciples were the servers, the waiters and busboys ...*

2. *God uses ordinary, humble people –*

²⁶ For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. ²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹ that no flesh should glory in His presence. ³⁰ But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—³¹ that, as it is written, “*He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.*” 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 2 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV)

3. *John 6:1-14 was the text for my second sermon. It confirmed my call to the ministry. Not ready to preach, but...*

4. *God delights in using people who you would NOT EXPECT –*

¹⁰ Then Moses said to the LORD, “O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I *am* slow of speech and slow of tongue.” ¹¹ So the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have* not I, the LORD? ¹² Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.” Exodus 4:10–12 (NKJV)

When I preached at Anson Community Church in Anson, MO, I had about a 45 minute drive to get there! All the way I often prayed for a car accident ... I was more afraid of preaching than dying! So though I had a much smaller task, I related to Moses!

***“In scenes exalted or depressed,
You are our Joy, and You are Rest;
Your goodness all our hopes shall raise,
Adored through all our changing days.”***

Philip Doddridge

Arnold A. Brevick