

January 22, 2012

"God's Spirit: Are you Hungry for the Bread of Life?"

John 6:63

I. Jesus' great miracle was a mere advertisement for something MUCH BETTER –

1. Jesus' miracle of feeding 5,000+ was extremely impressive –

A. How He did it was impressive –

He used a small amount of food to feed a great number of people –

"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"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. (John 6:9-10 NKJ)

Not only were these people fed, but they were FULL and food was left over –

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. (John 6:11-13 NKJ)

B. Yet, the miracle had a purpose beyond mere feeding –

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:30-31 NKJ)

The purpose is clear –

- The same as all other miracles (signs) that we might believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God
- That we might have life (even eternal life)

II. Note, the people were very IMPRESSED by this miracle of feeding of 5,000+ people and yet few believed –

How impressed were they?

1. They thought Him the Prophet wanted to make Him King –

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."¹⁵ Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. (John 6:14-15 NKJ)

2. When Jesus avoided them, they made great efforts, seeking Him to find Him –

On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone-- (John 6:22 NKJ)

And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?" (John 6:25 NKJ)

3. This EFFORT would seem to fulfill the requirement of Jeremiah 29:13

¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:13 NKJ)

III. Yet, Jesus was not impressed by their seeking, why?

Answer: They were not really SEEKING Him!

1. Jesus confronts them with this immediately –

Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."²⁷ "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." (John 6:26-27 NKJ)

2. He calls them to believe, He calls them to a Higher, more Heavenly Appetite and he calls them to this repeatedly and yet it is beyond them –

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."³⁰ Therefore they said to Him, "What

sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? ³¹ "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³² Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴ Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always." ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:28-35 NKJ)

- A. Note, at first they seem very willing to do whatever Jesus might ask "what shall we do, that we might work ..." :28
- B. Yet, when He calls them simply to believe in Him :29 they reveal their true heart :30-31
 - They ask for a sign ... what was feeding 5,000 plus???
 - They want continued feedings, showing their real ZOMBIE desires – Ephesians 2:1-3
- C. Jesus aims to redirect their appetites toward HIM, He is the BREAD of LIFE - :35

IV. Jesus offering Himself as what they really needed is the repeated them of His most excellent preaching –

1. He is the bread of life - :35
2. He is superior to manna –

"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. ⁵⁰ "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. (John 6:49-50 NKJ)

3. He is the Living Bread, He is the Source of eternal life –
"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 NKJ)

4. He is the REAL, Spiritual Food we MUST EAT, His blood is the drink we MUST drink –

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ "This is the bread which came down from heaven-- not as your fathers ate the

manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." (John 6:53-58 NKJ)

V. Yet, while Jesus was so powerfully preaching these things still most of the people did not understand / they would not believe –

1. They would not, could not believe He was from Heaven –
And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven '?" (John 6:42 NKJ)
2. They could understand His talk about eating His flesh –
The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" (John 6:52 NKJ)
3. They saw His teachings to be hard to understand –
Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" (John 6:60 NKJ)
4. They finally left Him and gave up following Him altogether –
From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. (John 6:66 NKJ)

VI. Why did this happen, did Jesus fail at the work of evangelism?

Jesus tells us, He even had told them –

1. All the Father would give to Jesus would come to Him –
"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. (John 6:37 NKJ)
2. None would come to Him unless the Father "draws" unless that person was "taught by God"
"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. (John 6:44-45 NKJ)
3. In reality there is no coming to Christ or God without God's Spirit and Word –
"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:63 NKJ)

VII. *This is the great theme of this passage, really coming to God, coming to Christ is a result of God's drawing and a work of God's enlivening Spirit –*

1. *Consider those who did come and truly stay with Christ they had an eye toward Heavenly / Eternal things –*

Note the answer Peter gave to Jesus' question –

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:66-68 NKJ)

A. *Peter's insight into the things of God was something He had from God the Father –*

Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 16:16-17 NKJ)

B. *Peter's later preaching, though surely not superior to our Lord Jesus Christ's had a much greater result because of the full power and help of the Holy Spirit –*

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:1-4 NKJ)

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. (Acts 2:41 NKJ)

2. *This Life-giving POWER was due to the Holy Spirit –*

A. *Jesus had promised power from the Holy Spirit –*

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8 NKJ)

B. *The Old Testament had promised this outpouring of the Holy Spirit –*

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:17-18 NKJ)

C. *The Holy Spirit is spoke about throughout the Book of Acts and He I believe is the primary reason the humble followers of Christ, turned the world upside down –*

But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. (Acts 17:6 NKJ)

Application:

1. *There is a kind of evangelism / ministry that is easy, it does what Jesus did not, just give people "bread" to feed their flesh, bread that comes in many forms ...*
2. *Be certain you are truly coming to Christ, feeding on Christ, seeing, knowing and desiring the SPIRITUAL things He offers –*

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 NKJ)

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:1-2 NKJ)

3. *Pray for the presence, power and outpouring of God's Spirit realizing God is sovereign in His giving –*

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."¹⁰ "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."¹¹ "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish?"¹² "Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?"¹³ "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:9-13 NKJ)

January 22, 2012 Evening Worship

Psalm 63

"The Great Restoration of a Heart FAR from God"

David had failed greatly in his sin with Bathsheba and murder of her husband Uriah. God told him, through the prophet Nathan, because of this sin David would suffer and yet ultimately be forgiven.

"Thus says the LORD: Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.¹² For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun."¹³ So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. (2 Samuel 12:11-13 NKJ)

I believe this Psalm records David's thoughts as he had fled his son Absalom and the rebels with him, and even then felt God was forgiving and restoring his heart –

Note in this Psalm:

I. David's restored passion for God –

<A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.> O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.² So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. (Psalm 63:1-2 NKJ)

1. *David's likely physical thirst led to an enlivened / restored spiritual thirst –*

A. *This was not lively when he looked from his roof at Bathsheba*

B. *"God whispers in our pleasures, but shouts in our pains." C.S. Lewis. Sin and Satan were shouting, hip-hooraying in David's sinful pleasures / yet God's grace in David's difficulty would soon drown such demonic revelry.*

2. *David eyes were aimed again at God – Jeremiah 29:13*

See also Isaiah 3:16- 4:2

II. David's revived praise of God –

Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.⁴ Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.⁵ My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. (Psalm 63:3-5 NKJ)

1. *David's lips, hands and mouth were created for praise – 1 Corinthians 10:31*

2. *He would rejoice in the LORD -:5*

"Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

III. David's redirected pursuit of God –

When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.

⁷ Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.⁸ My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me. (Psalm 63:6-8 NKJ)

He had pursued sinful passions; he not only thought but acted according to these, now, far from God:

1. *He remembers*

2. *Mediates*

3. *Considers God's past goodness*

4. *By grace he aims to follow, trusting God to uphold*

IV. David rests because of the protection of God - :6-8 &

But those who seek my life, to destroy it, Shall go into the lower parts of the earth.¹⁰ They shall fall by the sword; They shall be a portion for jackals.¹¹ But the king shall rejoice in God; Everyone who swears by Him shall glory; But the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped. (Psalm 63:9-11 NKJ)

Application:

1. *See in this Psalm the grace of God toward great sinners*

2. *See in this Psalm the path back to God for backsliders*

3. *See in this Psalm the joyous purpose of God for all His people*

4. *See in the Psalm the praise always due to God*

5. *See in this Psalm the protection / salvation we can expect from God!*