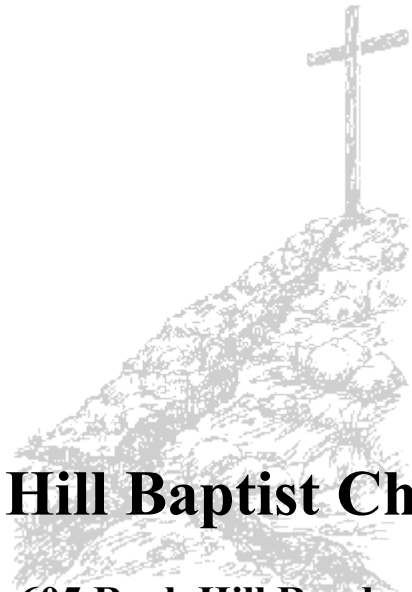


True Bread From Heaven

John 6:1-14, 26-33



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FOCAL John 6:1-14 ^{KJV} "After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. (2) And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. (3) And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. (4) And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. (5) When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (6) And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. (7) Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. (8) One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, (9) There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? (10) And Jesus said, Make the men 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 to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. (12) When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. (13) Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. (14) Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

Responsive Reading John 6:26-33 ^{KJV} Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. (27) Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. (28) Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? (29) Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (30) They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? (31) Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. (32) Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. (33) For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

If I had to describe our Scripture text today in one word, that word would be "*great*". When we look up the word "*great*" in my *1828 Webster's Dictionary* we find the following definition for this word:

"Great: 1. Large in bulk or dimensions; a term of comparison, denoting more magnitude or extension than something else, or beyond what is usual; as a great body; a great house; a great farm. 2. Being of extended length or breadth; as a great distance; a great lake. 3. Large in number; as a great many; a great multitude. 4. Expressing a large, extensive or unusual degree of any thing; as great fear; great love; great strength; great wealth; great power; great influence; great folly. 5. Long

continued; as a great while. 6. Important; weighty; as a great argument; a great truth; a great event; a thing of no great consequence; it is no great matter. 7. Chief; principal; as the great seal of England. 8. Chief; of vast power and excellence; supreme; illustrious; as the great God; the great Creator. 9. Vast; extensive; wonderful; admirable. Great are thy works, Jehovah."

You can tell this is an older dictionary, because Webster could only define the word "*great*" by referring to God.. Most of our works today would exclude God! But God is *great*. As that old song says:

**Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.**

Refrain

**Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!¹**

1. There Was A Great Crowd With A Great Need

¹ cyberhymnal.org states: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1923. According to Chisholm, there were no special circumstances which caused its writing—just his experience and Bible truth. The hymn first appeared in *Songs of Salvation and Service*, 1923, compiled by William M. Runyan. It is the unofficial "school hymn" of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, with which Runyan was associated for a number of years. Music: "Faithfulness (Runyan)," William M. Runyan, 1923 (MIDI, score). Runyan wrote the music specifically for these words; it appeared in the 1956 Baptist Hymnal: This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry its message in a worthy way, and the subsequent history of its use indicates that God answered prayer.

I don't know what you need from God today, nor why you came to our services. But I do know this: God is great, and God can fill your life with blessing. The Bible tells us:

FOCAL John 6:2-5 ^{KJV} "... a **great multitude**² followed [Jesus], because they saw his miracles³ which he did on them that were diseased. (3) And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. (4) And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. (5) When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a **great company**² come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

The words **great multitude** in verses 2 and 5 means a *great riot, a throng, a large rabble of people.*

The Holman Christian Standard (HCSB) renders the text

2 G4183 + G3793 (Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries) *πολύς, πολλός* polus polos {pronounced *pol-oos*} + *ὄχλος* ochlos {pronounced *okh'-los*} = Including the forms from the alternate "pollos"; (singular) *much* (in any respect) or (plural) *many*; neuter (singular) as adverb *largely*; neuter (plural) as adverb or noun *often, mostly, largely*: - abundant, + altogether, common, + far (passed, spent), (+ be of a) great (age, deal, -ly, while), long, many, much, oft (-en [-times]), plenteous, sore, straitly. Compare G4118, G4119.; From a derivative of G2192 (meaning a *vehicle*); a *throng* (as *borne* along); by implication the *rabble*; by extension a *class* of people; figuratively a *riot*: - company, multitude, number (of people), people, press.

3 G4592 (Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries) *σημείον, sēmeion* {pronounced *say-mi'-on*} Neuter of a presumed derivative of the base of G4591; an *indication*, especially ceremonially or supernaturally: - miracle, sign, token, wonder.

as **huge crowd**, whereas the New International Version (NIV) gives us the words **great crowd**. There were many, many people from all walks of life following after Jesus because, the text tells us, **they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.**

Some of the people followed after Jesus merely out of curiosity. Humans are curious creatures, and we often pass accidents on the road and "rubber neck", looking to see what we can see. We want to see the hidden. What a great curiosity this Jesus was! Let's go see if what we have heard is true. Let's see if it's true that:

Luke 7:22 ^{NIV} "... The **blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.**"

Others came not just out of curiosity, but because they suffered and wanted to find relief. They *were* the blind, the lame, the leprous, the deaf, the poor. They came not to hear Jesus preach the Gospel, but to be relieved of their aches and pains. There's nothing wrong with going to God for relief from pain. As a matter of fact,

God often uses affliction - pain and suffering, loneliness and deprivation - to draw us close to Jesus.

King David under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit wrote:

Psalms 119:67, 71, 75 ^{KJV} ".. **Before I was afflicted**

I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. ... I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

Many times we are angered at God as we go through affliction and suffering, barely understanding that God uses affliction to draw us to Jesus. It is easy to be proud when you have enough money, plenty of food, and a good strong body. But when poverty comes and hunger gnaws at your stomach, when your body encounters a disease that neither doctors nor family can cure, it is at those times that you turn your eyes upward and look for God. It is hard to praise God when we suffer, but would you rather suffer *for all eternity*? Would you rather remain in that condition you naturally were born to, a place where Christ is nothing to you? If you were to stay that way then God has promised you nothing but eternal punishment in a place where there is only suffering⁴, a place where **their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched**. Praise the Lord for the suffering! Praise Him for His abundant love, a love that sends the affliction so

4 Matthew 13:40-42 ^{KJV} As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. (41) The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; (42) And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Mark 9:44-48 ^{KJV} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (45) And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: (46) Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (47) And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: (48) Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

we, His hard hearted creatures, will draw close to Him. Our hearts sing:

Lamentations 3:22-26 ^{KJV} "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (23) They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (24) The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. (25) The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. (26) It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. "

The great crowd also contained people who were there *for a free lunch from God*. They just wanted to be fed. The Church fills up with many of that sort when we have special days like *homecoming* or *dinner on the ground*. Jesus addressed these people the following day when He said:

FOCAL John 6:26-27 ^{KJV} "... Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.** (27) **Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. "**

There will always be those people who hang around the Church to just to use the Church.

I probably have more contact with them than you do, and I assure you, they're out there. Just last week a young lady came into the Church while I was working and thrust a bill in my hands that she wanted the Church to pay. Now those who preach a *social Gospel* may feel that I should have paid that bill without question - but instead I felt compelled to ask her about her relationship with Jesus Christ. You see, Jesus told these people "ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled". The Lord then commanded that these people cease focusing on their own bellies, and begin to focus on *Jesus Christ the only Savior of this world*. A funny thing happened right after Jesus did that. The Bible says:

FOCAL John 6:41-42 ^{KJV} The **Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.**

(42) And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

once Jesus made it clear that His *primary ministry was not to fill their bellies, but to save their souls and thereby draw them closer to God, then they rejected Him.*

It is not the mission of this or any Church to merely feed the crowds. It is the mission of this Church to *lead people to Christ so they can draw closer to God.*

This is even emphasized in our text. Look at **John 6:2-5** one more time:

FOCAL John 6:2-5 ^{KJV} "... a great multitude followed [Jesus], because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. (3) And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. (4) And **the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.** (5) When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company² come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

You may have - in your reading of this text - skipped over those words "**the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh** [at hand]". These words are *very important* to the application of this text. The *Passover* was a meal that commemorated Israel's salvation from Egypt. On the night that Israel was to be saved from Egypt God told all the believers there to *mark their door posts* with the *blood of the Lamb* of atonement. God told the Israelites:

Exodus 12:13-15 ^{NIV} "The **blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.** (14) "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come **you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD -a lasting ordinance.** (15) **For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for **whoever eats anything with****

yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel."

That makes perfect sense. The "Passover" celebration was a time to remember that God "passed over" the Israelite believers and brought death to the unbelievers. The Jew who failed to keep this celebration was exiled from Israel. The Jew who ate *yeast risen bread* during the feast was exiled from Israel. In order to be obedient to God to keep the feast the Jew *had to have unleavened bread*.⁵

Jesus provided bread to the crowd not just to fill their bellies, but to help them to fulfill God's commandment. We are not saved *merely to be saved, and that's all there is to it*. We are brought to Christ so that Christ can enable us to do the works of God. What a wonderful illustration we have here of the relationship between Christ, the Law, and the Believer. The Passover was near, but these people had no bread to eat. The Passover

⁵ The *International Standard Bible Dictionary* states: Unleavened bread was eaten with the Passover meal, just as with all sacrificial meals of later times (Exodus 23:18; Exodus 34:25; Leviticus 7:12), independently perhaps of the fact that the Passover came in such close proximity with the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:8). Jewish tradition distinguishes, at any rate, between the first night and the rest of the festival in that the eating of maccōth is an obligation on the first night and optional during the rest of the week (Peṣaḥim 120a), although the eating of unleavened bread is commanded in general terms (Exodus 12:15, Exodus 12:18; Exodus 13:6, Exodus 13:7; Exodus 23:15; Exodus 34:18; Leviticus 23:6; Numbers 28:17). The eating of leavened bread is strictly prohibited, however, during the entire week under the penalty of kārēth, "excision" (Exodus 12:15, Exodus 12:19 ff; Exodus 13:3; Deuteronomy 16:3), and this prohibition has been observed traditionally with great care. The 1st and 7th days are holy convocations, days on which no labor could be done except such as was necessary in the preparation of food. The festival of maccōth is reckoned as one of the three pilgrimage festivals, though strictly the pilgrimage was connected with the Passover portion and the first day of the festival.

commanded the eating of unleavened bread - yet the crowd had no bread. Jesus Christ takes a few loaves of bread and multiplies it so that all have bread. The bread, now received, not only fills the belly but also enables those in the crowd to keep the feast.

When you come to Christ, Beloved, you are not saved merely to be saved: you are saved so that you can serve God. You are saved so that you can be enabled to do the will of God.

There was a great crowd with a great need before Jesus this day. Their need was not that their bellies be filled. Their need was not that they be given sight, be relieved of leprosy, nor that they have their lameness taken away. Their great need was that they be saved so they could serve God. Their great need was that they be saved.

Our text ties the Feast of the Passover, the Unleavened Bread, and the fact that Jesus Christ is the *Bread of Life* together. Throughout chapter six we see over and over:

John 6:32-35, 48-51^{NIV} Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who 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) "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread." (35) Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. I am the

bread of life. (49) Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. (50) But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. (51) **I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."**

What was Jesus telling this **great crowd**? He was telling them that their **great need** was to come to Him and accept Him as the Savior of the world. To believe that Jesus Christ is our Passover - it is He Who has taken us from the shadow of death and into a state of eternal life. It is our faith in Jesus that saves us from the fate of Egypt - the world - a fate of death and eternal burning.

Those who refused to put the Blood of the Lamb on the door posts of their houses saw their firstborn children die under the touch of the death angel. Those who refused to eat the unleavened bread were *cut off* from Israel, and thus cut off from the people of God. Those who ignored God's warning through Moses lost their families and even their own lives. He is our Savior. Jesus is the **Bread of Life**. Whosoever eats of Him shall never die.

And whosoever eats of Him is *expected to serve with Him*. Let's look further at our text.

2. The Great Crowd Was Given Great Grace

FOCAL John 6:5-9 ^{KJV} "When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he

saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (6) And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. (7) Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. (8) One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, (9) There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"

Those who belong to Christ are expected to *work with Christ* in this present age. When we get to Heaven, our works will be judged - the Bible is clear on this point⁶. This is why the Bible warns the believer,

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 KJV "... let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. ... Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; (13) Every man's work shall be made manifest ... If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. (15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

⁶ 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 ^{KJV} According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. (11) For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (12) Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; (13) Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (14) If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. (15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

If you know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, you are *required* to serve Him. Notice that Jesus Himself *gave no one bread or fish*, nor did He go out and *gather the bread or fish*. Jesus commanded, created, and then allocated - but He never provided His Grace *apart from His disciples*.

Now I want to be clear on this: Jesus Christ *does not inherently need anyone* to provide the bread for this crowd! *Even Satan knows* that Jesus could have turned the stones into bread (**Matthew 4:3**). Jesus Christ is Almighty God, Creator of all things - surely He could have made bread out of thin air, if He so desired, for these people. But that is not His way.

God has always bestowed His Grace through mere mortals. **God used Noah** to build an ark by which He saved humanity from total destruction. **Could God have built the ark Himself?** Absolutely! But that is not God's way. **God used Moses** to bring the Law to us. **Could God have just given the Law to all of Israel at once?** Absolutely! But that is not God's way. **God used the Prophets and the Apostles** to give us a written Word of God. Could God have written the Word on the sky, in the heavens, and on the mountains? Absolutely! But that is not God's way. God uses believers in mighty ways.

God created the heavens and the earth without you, but God wants to use you to bring others to a state of *new creation*.

Could God have killed all in Jericho without a marching army and a blowing horn? Yes, He could have done this. He who sent the death angel could certainly destroy a village, a town, or a mighty city. Yet God ordered to march around that city for seven days blowing a horn. Each time they compassed round about that city they passed a window where a scarlet thread was hung. I doubt the marching army saw that scarlet thread, but that thin line was all that protected the life of Rahab the harlot. For seven days they marched around that place, a mighty fortress, and God watched. God watched the obedience of His people, and watched the scarlet thread that hung out of that window⁷. **C.H. Spurgeon** said of this miracle:

"Why, it is ridiculous. It were quite a new thing in warfare to hear of men taking a city by blowing rams' horns." That was the first day; probably the next day Rahab thought they would come with scaling-ladders and mount the walls; but no, rams' horns again, up to the seventh day; and this woman kept the scarlet thread in the window all the time, kept her father and mother, and brothers and sisters in the house, and would not let them go out; and on the seventh day, when the people made a great shout, the wall of the city fell flat to the ground; but her faith overcame her womanly timidity, and she remained within, although the wall was tumbling to the ground. Rahab's house stood alone upon the wall, a solitary fragment amid a universal wreck, and she and her household were all saved."⁸

⁷ Joshua 2:21 ^{KJV} And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

⁸ from *Rahab's Faith*, (No. 119), Delivered on Sabbath Morning, March 1, 1857, by the REV. C. H. Spurgeon At The Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens

The Bible tells us:

Hebrews 11:30-31 ^{KJV} "By faith **the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.** (31) **By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.**"

God always brings His Grace through the believing few. God always works His miracles through the obedient mortal man. Had Israel refused to march around Jericho, do you believe the walls would have fallen?

If Rahab had refused to believe that a single scarlet thread would protect her - if she removed that thread after the first day of that foolish marching - do you believe she would have been saved? If the disciples had not brought the few fish and few loaves of bread to Jesus, would the crowd have been fed?

Jesus asked Philip:

FOCAL **John 6:5** ^{KJV} "... **Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?** (6) **And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.** "

where the bread would come from to test Philip. Beloved, just as God often brings affliction to us to draw us closer to Jesus, He often *deprives us* so as to strengthen our faith. The disciples were in a hopeless and

helpless situation. Here is a great crowd of people, and they all need bread. **We looked around and all we can find to eat is five barley loaves, and two small fishes.** We don't even have two BIG fishes - we have two SMALL fishes! What can we do with so little?

We can take the little to Jesus and have Him make it into something great!

This story, the feeding of the five thousand, is told by all four writers of the Gospels⁹. What is the first thing that the disciples were told to do to feed this immense crowd? We read where Jesus said of the five loaves and two SMALL fishes:

Matthew 14:18 ^{NIV} "**Bring them here to me,**"

When you're working with God, you let God do His part and you do your part. The disciples couldn't do anything to feed these people.

They couldn't come up with a program that would provide the need of five thousand. Oh, form a committee, start a fund raiser, and in time we might be able to get to that point. But Beloved, this is not how the mortal works with the immortal! What can the mortal do? We can obey the immortal! We can obey Almighty God. If I am **Noah I can start cutting wood for an ark.** If I am **Moses I can go up in the mountain of God and receive the**

⁹ see Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:331-44; Luke 9:11-17 for the parallel accounts of this story

tablets of stone. If I were a **prophet or an apostle** I could have written the words that God had given me to write. If I am **Israel** I could cross the Jordan or march around Jericho seven times while tooting my horn. And if I am a disciple standing before Jesus and a crowd of five thousand hungry men I can take **five loaves and two small fishes** to Jesus.

I do what the mortal can, and leave the immortal to Almighty God!

I can listen to God's commands, draw close to Jesus, and do what He says. Only when I do this will God's Grace be released to those around me.

What was the next command that Jesus gave? Look and read with me:

FOCAL John 6:10 ^{KJV} "**Make the men sit down.** Now there was much grass in the place."

Again, here's something the disciples can do. **Make the men sit down ... in the grass.** Tell the people that they can neither earn nor deserve their sustenance. If they want to be fed they must cease doing things their own way. Sit down, trust in Jesus - He will give thee rest. When you sit down in the grass you humble yourselves. Some do not sit at a table, and others in a chair or a place of prominence. All sit in the grass. All wait to be fed. If you are too good to trust Him, then get up and go home. If you are too proud to sit in the grass with the other

mortals then you will not be fed.

In **Exodus 33** Moses asked God "Where are we going, Lord? I have been leading these people, but I don't even know where we are going". The Lord told Moses:

Exodus 33:14 ^{HCSB} ... "**My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.**"

Sit down, cease your labors, trust Me. I will go with you, I will give you rest. How close are these words to the words of our Master Who said:

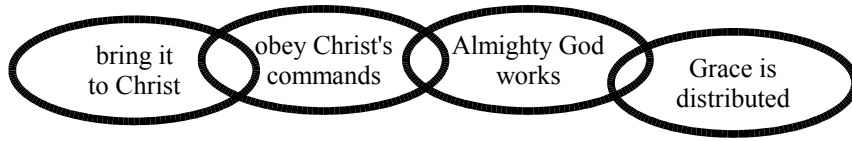
Matthew 11:28 ^{HCSB} "**Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**"

You've done what you were commanded - now trust Me! Sit down, and do what I tell you. Now Beloved, I want you to notice what happens next.

FOCAL John 6:11 ^{KJV} "... and Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, **he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down;** and likewise of the fishes **as much as they would.**

Jesus took the five loaves and two fish and multiplying them, gave them **to the disciples.** The disciples, in turn, gave **those who were seated all they could eat.** These people didn't just get a taste of fish and bread - they were

at an "all you can eat" banquet - and they ate all they could or, as the King James says, **as much as they would**. Again, we see a number of principles taught in these passages. Again, **Jesus Christ *did not* give the food that was multiplied directly to the people. He gave the food to His disciples who, in turn, gave it to those who were sitting down.** Look at the progression:



This is a chain that, if any link is broken, the blessing is not given. If you do not bring the two fish and five loaves to Christ, He will not multiply them. If the people do not obey Christ's commands, if they do not sit when He says sit, they are not blessed. If we do not carry Christ's provision out into the world, then Grace cannot be distributed. Though God knocked **one Saul** down on **Damascus Road** we need to remember that it was an obedient **Peter** who preached to a crowd on the **Day of Pentecost** who saw (**Acts 2:31**) about three thousand souls added to the Church. God may have called **one Moses** to follow Him at the *burning bush*, but it was **Israel** that God commanded to cross the **Jordan**. God may have called **one Noah** to build the ark, but He saved *all humanity* through that single ship.

Jesus' people must be obedient to Jesus.

The last command that Jesus gave related to *stewardship*. God told His people:

FOCAL John 6:12-13 ^{KJV} "... When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, **Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. (13) Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. "**

The Lord calls His disciples to be good stewards of what they have been given. If God has given you life - and I hope that's the case, because I hope there's no corpses in this place today - then He expects you to use that life to honor Him.

Where Christ has blessed you, He expects you to gather up the fragments that you aren't using and use them to bless someone else.

Let your life be a blessing to someone today, dearly Beloved. This world needs Jesus. Do they see Him through the overflow of your life?