

To feed the multitudes we need to  
**LOOK TO HEAVEN**

November 2008

Dear friend,

A quick glance through newspaper headlines can quickly overwhelm the compassionate soul who is looking for an opportunity to help. The enormity and frequency of crises across the world can easily lead one to lift hands in frustration and say "it's too hard!" Besides, this is the responsibility of the United Nations, of our government... or anyone else but me.

The disciples of Jesus seemed to think that way, when a multitude of people gathered to hear Jesus speak. The story can be found in Mark 6:35-44, and I like the personality that comes through the Message Paraphrase best. These people gave no thought to the distance travelled, to the time of day or even how to return home.

The disciples wanted Jesus to end the session and send the crowds away. They seemed to think that it was the crowd's responsibility to find their own food and their own way home. The disciples wanted to wash their hands of the problem and turn their backs on the people. They were hoping the situation would resolve itself. But Jesus had a different perspective. He saw the people's difficulty and had compassion on them.

Then Jesus gave the disciples the most startling command, "**You** give them something to eat."

Jesus placed on the disciples an expectation to meet this need. He gave them an opportunity to rise to the occasion, to step out from the ordinary and do something big for God. Jesus obviously has a higher level of confidence in our abilities, than we do.

The disciples were overwhelmed by the scope of responsibility. They estimated it would take 200 Denarii, a small fortune, to feed this crowd. A quick flick back to Matthew 20:2 will reveal that a Denarii is a reasonable day's pay for a farm labourer. Can you imagine 12 hours of backbreaking work for 200 days, just to pay for the meals of this crowd? With a modern minimum wage of \$15/hr, the disciples are estimating it would cost over \$35,000 to provide lunch for this gathering!

After they dutifully reported their needs, Jesus kept His disciples off balance by another penetrating question, "What do you have?" It seems that Jesus wasn't interested in what was needed, but what they actually **had**.

The disciples, so distracted by the situation, had not even conducted this very fundamental problem-solving step. Once the disciples hurried away to find out, they soon discovered they only had five loaves and two fish. Jesus was not saddened or disappointed by the apparently small resources discovered by the disciples. He accepted the food graciously and instructed the disciples to organise the crowd.

**While the disciples were looking for enough bread to feed the people,  
Jesus was looking for enough seed to sow.**

While the disciples seemed to avoid responsibility for the problem, Jesus took the perspective that any problem we encounter, becomes our obligation to help.

I believe the key to the multiplication of the loaves is found here in verse 41, "...when He had taken the five loaves and two fish, He looked to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, distributing to the disciples..."

Jesus considered it His responsibility to do His best, trusting in God, to add the heavenly and supernatural supply. Jesus looked to Heaven for a partnership in meeting this need.

Matthew 13:31 shows us that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed. Rather than focussing on it's size, as we always do, consider it's organic nature. While Mankind is skilled at manufacture – the combining of two elements into a new design – we have yet, in all our cleverness, to truly create something out of nothing.

The power of a seed is in it's organic growth. That if you plant it, water it and tend to it, it will grow into another seed-producing plant, which in turn produces a multitude of new seeds. The Kingdom of Heaven operates through an exponential growth cycle.

Your monthly donation may seem to you, just like five loaves and two fish compared to the multitude of needs in the world today. However if you treat your donation as a seed and if you give it to the Master, you CAN feed the multitudes!

I encourage you to take your donation to feed the hungry right now and to pray over it. Pray a blessing over it, pray that your amount will stretch further than ordinary, pray for the miraculous multiplication, pray for the divine and heavenly partnership to meet the needs.

There is great need in this world, especially in these troubling times, but Jesus has the same expectation for us, to feed the hungry. We may not be able to do everything - but we can do something. Do your best, and let God take care of the rest.

Voice for the Hungry,



Benjamin Evans  
Operations Manager  
FTH Australia & New Zealand

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