

***SMALL THINGS* LEAD TO GREAT BLESSINGS**

John 6:1-14

- **The *Feeding of the 5000* is in all 4 Gospels; but John adds the detail that Jesus used a boy's lunch to feed the people (John 6:1-14).**
- **There are many lessons we can learn from this story - one being that our greatest blessings come from sharing what God has given us with others.**
- *"You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"* (Acts 20:35)
- **Everyone wants to experience God's blessings, but many are not willing to take the steps they need to take to experience more of His blessings.**
- ***What does it take to experience more of God's blessings in our lives?***

Experiencing God's Greatest Blessings Requires:

PASSING THE <u>TESTS</u> GIVEN US BY THE LORD

- *"Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for Him. Turning to Philip, He asked, 'Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?' He was testing Philip, for He already knew what He was going to do."* (John 6:5-6)
- **The Lord often tests us to see how much trust we have in Him.**
- **Sometimes the Lord tests our *Faith* in order to develop us.**
    - *"It is through faith that a righteous person has life."* (Romans 1:17)
    - *"Without faith it is impossible to please God."* (Hebrews 11:6)
    - **When our faith is "tested" we find out how much our faith can be "trusted."**
- **Sometimes the Lord tests our *Fears* to see if we will stay focused on Him.**
    - *"They got into the boat and headed across the lake . . . Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. . . . Suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified, but He called out to them, 'Don't be afraid. I am here!'"* (John 6:17-20)
    - **Lots of people are overcome by the fears and anxieties of their lives.**

- **Sometimes the Lord tests our *Finances* to see if we will still trust Him.**
    - *"'You hoped for rich harvests, but they were poor . . . Why? Because My house lies in ruins,' says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, 'while all of you are busy building your own fine houses.'"* (Haggai 1:9)
    - **Sometimes life challenges happen because we haven't prioritized the Lord and His ways in our lives.**
- ***In what areas of my life has the Lord been testing me?***

Experiencing God's Greatest Blessings Requires:

SEEING <u>SITUATIONS</u> FROM THE LORD'S PERSPECTIVE

- *"Philip replied, 'Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!'"* (John 6:7)
- **Many people are more focused on what they do not have and cannot do instead of who the Lord is and what He can do.**
- **When we think what we have is not enough for God to use, we're looking at ourselves and our situations from a natural perspective rather than from a spiritual, faith-in-God perspective.**
- *"O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by Your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for You!"* (Jeremiah 32:17)
- **Christians should believe that the Lord can work through what they have and what they've experienced to help and bless others.**
- Jesus - *"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in Me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works . . ."* (John 14:12)
- ***What are some situations in my life or others lives that I need to look at from a spiritual rather than a natural perspective?***

Experiencing God's Greatest Blessings Requires:

MAKING OUR <u>RESOURCES</u> AVAILABLE TO THE LORD

- *"Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?"* (John 6:8-9)
- **The young boy was able to experience God's blessing because he made what he had available to the Lord and to the people in the crowd.**
- **The Lord wants to use our *Abilities* to bless and help others.**
    - *"God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another."* (1 Peter 4:10)
- **The Lord wants to use our *Experiences* to bless and help others.**
    - *"As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend."* (Proverbs 27:17)

    - *"God comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us."* (2 Corinthians 1:4)
- **The Lord wants to use our *Knowledge* to bless and help others.**
    - Paul - *"You have heard me teach . . . Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others."* (2 Timothy 2:2)
- **The Lord wants to use our *Financial Resources* to bless and help others.**
    - *"God loves the person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.'"* (2 Corinthians 9:7-8)
- **Jesus is not primarily interested in what we don't have, but He wants to know if we are willing to give Him what we do have so that He can utilize what we do have to impact the lives of many people.**

Experiencing God's Blessing Requires:

FOLLOWING THE LORD'S <u>INSTRUCTIONS</u>

- *"Tell everyone to sit down,' Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes."* (John 6:10)
- **Sometimes we don't experience more of the Lord's blessings because we are unwilling to do what the Lord instructs us to do with our abilities, experiences, knowledge and financial resources.**
- Jesus - *"Even more blessed are all who hear the word of God and put it into practice."* (Luke 11:28)
- **The Lord blesses people who are willing to submit to His will for their lives.**
- *"Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred. . . . A total of 5000 men and their families were fed."* (Mark 6:39-40, 44).
- **When we get our lives in order like the Lord wants us to do, that's when we begin to experience His greatest of blessings in and through our lives.**
- Jesus - *"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He (our Heavenly Father) will give you everything you need."* (Matthew 6:33)

- *"Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward He did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told His disciples, 'Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.' So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. When the people saw Him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, 'Surely, He is the Prophet we have been expecting!'"* (John 6:11-14)

- ***What types of miracles do I need for Jesus to do in my life or others lives - and what steps am I willing to take to partner with Him in those miracles?***