

God's God It: A Spiritual Supply and Demand Case Study

On Sunday we looked at a dramatic encounter between Jesus and a crowd of hungry people; in the process learned something very important about spiritual supply and demand.

1. Warm-up Question: Shortages are all around us in life, especially during COVID. Where have you encountered a COVID-related shortage?
2. The inconveniences of COVID shortages are nothing compared to more important areas of our life where we experience lack. How would you finish this sentence: "Right now in my life, I sometimes feel like I don't have enough _____."
3. Hebrews 11:3 says, "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." What are the implications of this verse for times when we feel like we don't have enough of something?
4. Now let's turn to our Gospel story. Read John 6:1-13, as printed on p. 3.
 - a. Verse 2 tells us that "a large crowd kept following Jesus." Why? What were they hungry and thirsty for? For you personally, what motivates you to seek Jesus in your life?
 - b. In Matthew 5:6, Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." Pastor Jason said, "When you desire a new perspective, a new thought process, a new revelation – a shift in your own consciousness to produce a shift in your experience – when you hunger and thirst for this, there shall be a fulfillment of what you have earnestly desired." Put in your own words what you think Jason meant. Have you ever experienced this phenomenon in your own life?
 - c. Deuteronomy 6:4 says, "Here, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!" Charles Haanel said, "The Infinite Mind, which is the Source from which all things proceed, is one and indivisible, and each individual is a channel whereby this Eternal Energy is being manifested." What do you think he means?
5. In our Gospel story, verses 5-6 tell us, "Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little!'" In effect, Philip was saying, "Are you crazy, Jesus? We don't have enough to feed all these people." From this part of the story, we can see that, well before the miracle ever happened, Jesus wanted and intended to meet the needs of the people. But the faith of Philip and those around Jesus was a limiting factor. Jason summed this up as a type of equation: Your Capacity = What Is Believable For You.

- a. Tell us about something you wish could/would happen in your life. Do you think your faith is a limiting or contributing factor in making this happen?
 - b. Looking back over your life, tell us about a time when you dared to believe something wonderful could happen and your faith was fulfilled.
6. In our Gospel story, Jesus had a miracle germinating in his mind (he intended to feed them all), but those around him had to cooperate for it to happen. The little boy had to **offer** what he had to Jesus, Jesus had to **ask God's blessing** on the bread and fish, the disciples had to **obey** Jesus instruction to organize the people and get them seated in orderly fashion, the crowd had to **sit in the presence** of Jesus, and they all had to **share**. These five factors are what it means to cooperate with God in making miracles happen.
- a. Offering what we have. In the area of lack you mentioned in response to Question 2, what is something you can offer even though it may seem insignificant to you?
 - b. Obeying God's voice. Jason said, "The disciples had to be willing to obey Christ, and maybe felt a little foolish doing so . . . having the people sit down in groups, as if they were preparing for a great feast, and then even beginning to pass out food, when they knew all they had was a meager supply." When in your life have you sensed God calling you to do something that may have looked foolish to others?
 - c. Ask God's blessing. It was important that Jesus lift the loaves and fish to the Higher Mind of God and declare a blessing over it. Why is it so important that we do the same? What might happen if we skip this step?
 - d. Sit in the presence. Verse 11 tells us that Jesus "distributed [the loaves and fish] to those who were seated." Jason asked, "Have you communed with Words of Life to the point that they drop down into your heart, the seat of your soul, your subconscious depths? Are you seated in the belief that God is Your Source?" How would you answer his question? If a jury were evaluating whether you believe God is truly Your Source, what evidence could you offer?
 - e. Sharing. Because everyone shared, verse 12 says twelve baskets of broken fragments were left over and gathered up after everyone had eaten their fill. Jason said, "Your smiles, your gratitude, your time, your talents, your skillsets, your praise to God, your words, your money – there's a blessing in the fragments." As you look forward to tomorrow, what's a "fragment" of something you can share with someone around you?
 - f. Given all we've talked about, what insight do you believe God most wants you to carry out of this conversation?

John 6:1-13

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ²A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near.

⁵When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little!" ⁸One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?"

¹⁰Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹²When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." ¹³So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets.