

Introduction:

- Bragging rights: My grace is sufficient. Paul had plenty to boast about: untold stories of deliverance. Untold stories of revelation from God. These capture peoples attention but rarely their character. In light of these things, he gets a thorn in the flesh to help hi stay humble. Thorns: hurt, irritate, agitate, and cause us to be uncomfortable. Three times Paul asks that it be removed. God's reply: My grace is sufficient. My ability in your is sufficient.
- **Today's Theme: Often we follow him to get our needs met not because of who He is.**
- *"They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs."* (John 6:25-26, NLT)
- In John 6 we have the story about the feeding of 5,000 men plus their families. Then the rest of the chapter is about bread, Jesus the Bread!

I. Here's Your Sign

- A. Signs point to something. *"Jesus soon saw a huge crowd ... 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, NLT) In other words he was about to point Philip to something. The test would show Philip something in the process. What Jesus is about to do would be a sign to both Philip and the multitude of people. To help us understand what this text is telling us. Let's ask ourselves "What do signs do?"
1. Signs communicate:
 - a) They communicate direction. South I95 next left.
 - b) They communicate information. Curves next four miles.
 - c) They communicate warning. Beware of falling rocks.
 - d) They point to something. Historical marker ahead.
 - e) Jesus is about to give us a miraculous sign that is designed to point us to who He is.
 2. The sign of feeding 5,000 men and their families. It was a miracle! With 12 baskets fulls left over. Who saw what?
 - a) vs. 14 *"When the people saw him do this miraculous sign they exclaimed..."*
 - b) vs. 15 *"When Jesus saw they were about to make Him king..."* He headed for the mountains because they just missed their sign.
- B. Jesus points out they have missed the sign and taken a wrong turn.
1. *"Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs."* (John 6:25-26, NLT)
 2. What Jesus is saying to them is this: You are following me because I met your needs not because of who I am. You follow me because I fed you not because you realize who I am.
 3. "You are following me because I am useful!" Not because I am God. You follow me because I am useful not because I am precious!
 4. le. The wisemen's 'star' pointed to the Christ. Everyone saw the star. The wisemen followed the star because its light beam pointed to the Christ.

- a) When Jesus performed signs, it was not about the miracle manifested it was about the Christ it pointed to.
- b) The beam of glory that multiplied the bread and fish was to be followed back to Jesus. The sign was to point to the Glory not the Glory to the sign. Jesus did not come to give us break but to be the bread. The Bread that satisfies, sustains and gives life.
- C. They are seeking Him. You would think that would be a good thing. But Jesus is not happy. They are seeking Him because He was useful for bread, useful for money, useful for health, useful for stuff. They didn't look beyond their need to the "treasure in the field!"
 - 1. They did not see Jesus as precious they saw His gifts as precious.
 - 2. Oh, what a King He could be! He will take care of us. Jesus does not want those kind of disciples.
 - 3. The point of the loaves was that men would see Jesus, love Jesus, know Jesus and make Him the treasure of our lives.
 - 4. The point of the baskets is that His disciples might know that He individually provides for His own when you trust Him.

II. Bread and Boats vs. 22-26

- A. What do bread and boats have in common? Like I said in the introduction: we have the story about the feeding of 5,000 men plus their families. Then the rest of the chapter is about bread, Jesus the Bread! But why is this boat section stuck in here? Simplest answer: The Apostle John is pointing to something. Here is your sign!
- B. The disciples are three miles out into the Sea of Galilee.
 - 1. A storm comes up. Or can I say it this way? A problem comes up. And the questions are:
 - a) Will we die out here?
 - b) Where is Jesus?
 - c) I guess the basket lesson will not work out here on water! Then Jesus comes walking on the water.
 - 2. Here is your sign: This story is not about getting people out of storms but about getting Jesus into your boat. IE. Hey Paul, "*My grace is sufficient for you.*" Note: As soon as Jesus gets into the boat, there is not mention of wind and waves stopping. But, they immediately arrive at the other side. The important things for us understand is that things happen when Jesus in your boat, your life, your marriage, etc. Is Jesus in your boat!
- C. What about the bread. The followers of the bread found Jesus in Capernaum.
 - 1. They are seekers of Jesus right? Maybe not.
 - 2. "*Rabbi, when did you get here?*" Is this what they are asking? Or are they wondering how He really got there. Jesus avoids the question, why? Because if He says He walked over, they are going to say, "We thought so! What a King you will be!"

III. Believe in the Bread of Life!

- A. Spend your energy seeking eternal life not lunch money.
 - 1. God sealed His Son as the Son of Man. God himself has approved of Jesus as the eternal mediator, the giver of eternal life.

2. This is what we are to work for...for that endures to eternal life. That really sounds bad!
You cannot earn eternal life. It is a gift. So what does Jesus mean?
- B. Your work is to believe. Read 28 and 29 and it is crystal clear.
 1. The labor is faith. The labor is stop laboring. The labor is stop working and trust him.
 2. He is standing there as the Bread of Life, freely offering himself to you.
 3. He is standing there as gold and silver and treasure, everything you have ever needed He is for you and He is free.
 4. And they are there saying, "What do we have to do? What do we have to do? What is the deed we have to do to have you?" And he would say, "If I don't look to you as a treasure, if you don't see me as a treasure, no amount of work is going to make me precious to you."
 5. Working for Jesus doesn't make him precious to you. Seeing Jesus makes him precious to you. You have to be born again. Nobody can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.
- C. Jesus says, "No amount of work for me makes me precious to you. Seeing me as gold, seeing me as silver, seeing me as bread, seeing me as treasure, seeing me as everything makes me precious to you."
 1. Paul said, *"I count everything as loss for the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection that I may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death if by any means I might attain the resurrection of the dead."* Phil 3:8-11.
 2. And the point of John's showing this to us, again and again, is to wake us up from being this dull. His aim is our faith, so he shows both the deadness of unbelief and the greatness of Christ.
 3. This chapter start off with the feeding of the 5,000 and after that it is all about the bread, the bread of life.
 - a) Verse 35: *"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger.*
 - b) Verse 41: *"I am the bread that came down from heaven."*
 - c) Verse 48: *"I am the bread of life."*
 - d) Verse 51: *"I am the living bread that came down from heaven... eats of this bread, he will live forever."*

Conclusion:

- Are you a follower of the bread or the Bread of Life?