

Matthew: Jesus, The King of Kings

## They Do Not Need to Go Away / 12 Baskets Full

Matthew 14:12-21

*[Preface about original message, dreaming about it, waking up and a mind dump of notes]*

**What's your favorite vacation spot?**

*Growing up, the Outer Banks*

- **Do you have a favorite place to hang around town?**  
Restaurant? Hiking spot?
- **Favorite room of the house?**
- **Favorite spot on the couch?**  
*My spot downstairs*

**Where do you go when times get tough?**

*Cheers theme song*

**What do you do when you're hurting?**

**Who do you turn to?**

**What's your favorite food?**

**What's your favorite restaurant?**

**If you could go out to eat right now with anyone, who would it be?**

*The single days - diners, Chilis, pizza, trips to NYC for food, day trip to Philly for cheesesteaks*

**Do you know God wants to eat with you?**

**[Pray]**

**14:13-14**

**When Jesus heard it...**

the news of his cousin, the man who prepared the way for him (and his creation) had been murdered by the king.

**Sometimes I think we look at Jesus as untouchable,  
unaffected, unbothered**

## **Although He was God, He was God in flesh**

**Isaiah 53:3-4** - He is despised and rejected by men, **A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief**. And we hid, as it were, [our] faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. **Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows**; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

### **This hurt him.**

He wept for Lazarus. I'm sure he was upset about John.

### **So what does Jesus do? Where does He go?**

He went back to a deserted place. By Himself.

**When we grieve. When we're hurting. It's good to get alone. Get away from things.**

Face our grief.

### **Grieving is important.**

**Pretending we're not hurting, ignoring it, is not good.**

**We need to let out the pain.**

*When my best friend died, after weeping, going out in the woods, by the stream behind the house*

**But Jesus wasn't alone. Neither was I.**

**We both left the presence of other people to grieve with God.**

**To seek God.**

*The words and comfort of others only goes so far.*

*It's also important. It's not good to be alone for too long.*

*But they cannot minister to the deepest hurts, deepest needs.*

*Only God can.*

**John 14:16 KJV** And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever;

**When we're hurting, no matter the reason, we'll only truly get better if we let God comfort those areas. Cry to him. Talk to him. Be open with him in a place and the place where no one else is. The deepest parts of you.**

### **The multitudes...**

**Maybe they don't realize why Jesus left, maybe they did**

*(crowds and fans don't seem to care about the famous people they follow, only for themselves)*

**They follow Jesus. I mean, picture him grieving. Trying to grieve. Be alone. Get away. And here they come...**

*The disciples shooed the little kids away, maybe they should have done some crowd control.*

**But Jesus' response? Compassion for the people in the crowd.**

He's grieving. He's hurting. But he still has time for them. He heals them.

**When we spend time with God and allow him to comfort us (whatever that need for comfort is) it shows by our reaction to those around us. Compassion. Wanting to comfort others is the result of God comforting us.**

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4** Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and **God of all comfort**, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

**Jesus, despite His grief, never stopped being God.  
God always has time for you. Always cares about you. Always sees you in your need.**

**So let him comfort you.**

**:15-21**

**Disciples show up that evening.**

**Jesus, send them away. You've done enough. There's nothing here.  
Tell them to go find their own food. Meet their own need.**

**Jesus' response? They don't need to go away.**

**The crowd's need was not to leave Jesus  
Jesus liked that they were there. He liked that they wanted to be near him.  
Even though he was grieving.**

**but...You care for their hunger.**

**It was the disciples' selfish need to tell the crowds to go away**

### **Our cheap excuses reveal our real motives.**

*I need to wash my hair (I care more about how I look than going out with you - and how i'd look to others going out with the likes of you),  
my favorite show is on (i like my friends on the tv more than i like you)*

**Jesus ministered to their spiritual needs.**

**He wanted the disciples to minister to their physical needs.**

**But how? They're in the middle of nowhere?**

**It's still going to take a miracle. The disciples can't do it on their own.**

*"If they remembered the miracle of the wine in Cana (John 2:1-11), they should have asked Jesus to meet the need, not send the people away." (Carson)*

### **Read Acts 6:1-7**

**Early church - caring for the needs of the widows**

The apostles could only so much

The others needed to step up and serve.

**The serving was not less important. But different people for different roles.**

- Apostles to lead - focus on the ministry of the word - to the church.  
**Feed spiritually.**
- Deacons to serve - focus on the ministry of the physical needs - to the church.  
**Feed physically.**

**Both required the Holy Spirit.**

Praying, Studying or Serving Food - if it's to be done for God, all require the same Holy Spirit directing, driving, empowering, providing.

### **Back to the crowd...**

**The boy with the fishes and loaves not mentioned here (John 6:9)**

*Who was the boy? I like to think it was Mark, same kid who ran away naked in the garden.  
Wrote Peter's account in the Gospel of Mark.*

*They snatched his happy meal!*

*No komrade, OUR lunch*

*(looking at 80s Happy Meals with Mia, remembering some)*

### **What did they eat? Fish and bread**

*Was there a menu? Yes. Fish or bread or fish and bread*

*Was there a choice of fish? Yes, fish or no fish.*

*Was there a choice of bread? Yes, this bread or that same bread.*

### **Food with God serves two main purposes**

- **Feed our bodies, keep us alive** (Elijah and ravens)
- **Fellowship for our souls** (eating, out of the same dish in many cultures, becoming one with the people around you)

*Food also involves sacrifice...we'll talk more about in a minute*

*I originally didn't get much into this...but I think the Lord would have me spend more time here because, if you'll hear me out, there's a deeper spiritual issue at work here. And I got myself in trouble last week, might as well get in trouble this week! As a pastor i need to make this point as I'm concerned about the underlying spiritual issues*

### **We worry too much about WHAT we're eating**

**Not that we shouldn't aim to be healthy**

#### **The attitude of the world (the west) today about foods is something to consider**

*We've basically figured out how to feed everyone, and cheaply, and we're so free from having to grow food all day every day, we have so much we begin to pick apart every ingredient on the box...yet 10% of the world goes to bed hungry.*

*(Bahamas hut, aisle of salad dressing)*

### **Food can be a sensitive issue.**

**Talking about it not because I care what you eat and not**

**But I want you to see how free you are in Christ**

- We all have preferences (mushrooms, the fall...but I know that we can eat anything we want under grace)
- Some have allergies or health issues  
*Is it just the food or could it also be humans ate getting weaker since the fall - Weaker physically and spiritually*
- Some diet to lose weight or gain muscle
- Some diet for their religion (Muslims and pork, Hindus and meat, British from good food)

**1 Corinthians 8:8 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.**

### **How much time do we spend thinking, worrying, planning our meals?**

*Trust me, I love a good snack as much as the next person  
And it's more than just meals, entertainment, fun, etc.*

**Matthew 15:1-2, 11** Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." ... **"Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."**

**The point of all of this is to know the Bible and to know Jesus**

**Hebrews 5:13-14** For everyone who partakes [only] of milk [is] unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, [that is], those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

**Feeding on the word of God will bring us to spiritual maturity**

### **There is a spirit of our age**

Bible calls it "The Spirit of the Antichrist"

### **It touches everything**

Politics, fashion, technology, culture, movies, music, news...**and yes, food.**  
*(This could be a great topical message in and of itself)*

### **Working with major food companies for a decade**

*Both corporate and consumer sentiment*

*Driven by profit, but the spirit is one of:*

*Environmentalism/global warming, elevation of animals over human babies and the push for "plant based diets" (my steak is plant based too)*

### **When the church and the world start thinking the same way,**

We need to step back and ask, why? What for?

Is the church leading the world or is the world leading the church?

**Which spirit are we listening to?** The spirit of the antichrist? Or the Holy Spirit?

**1 Timothy 4:1-5** Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, [and commanding] to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe

and know the truth. For every creature of God [is] good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

**Could argue over “did God make this twinkie though?”**

**But the thing to take away is “it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”**

**Being blatantly unhealthy is not wise**

**Our eating habits can reveal our spiritual or emotional state** (eating disorders, eating from depression or not eating from depression)

**But the point is your body is dying. Your spirit is what needs to live.**

**The old world ate nothing but raw, unprocessed organic food and look how much suffering and disease and short life expectancy their was**

We've seen Jesus constantly heal masses of people living on a “pure, grass fed, organic diet”

**1 Timothy 4:1-5, 8** Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, [and commanding] to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God [is] good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. ... For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

*Guy spending his fortune on trying to make his body live forever. Thinks he'll do it.*

*Spirit of the antichrist*

*God walled off the Tree of Life so we wouldn't, couldn't live forever in our fallen spiritual state*

*Food and sacrifice*

- *Sacrificed our relationship with God, through food*
- *Animal sacrifice, eating, covering, worship*
- *Old message...Meat diet & worship, non-meat diet - spiritual things going on*

**Food is about fellowship**

- David and the showbread
- tree of life vs tree of knowledge of good and evil...the choice was food based
- Every plant in the garden was to eat...
- Because of sin stuff doesn't and won't ever be as healthy anymore. After flood, eat meat
- Israelites had rules for food for spiritual purity
  - a lot was actually modern common sense hygiene without refrigeration and proper cooking techniques

## **And God did away with all of that with the church. The holy Spirit. The age of grace Peter's vision**

**Acts 10:9-11, 13-16** - The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ... And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything **common** or **unclean**." And a voice [spoke] to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call **common**." This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

## **Those things divided the church (something that shouldn't be divided)**

- Divided Jew from Gentile
- Clean from unclean
- Spiritually common to spiritually special

## **And God doesn't want unholy division**

**Communion**...the ordinance of the last supper. **Food based.**

*That Jesus is our spiritual food. Our feast. Our drink. It proclaims his death and life and sacrifice and who he is (bread of life) and makes a special bond between us and him personally and the church together*

## **Our diet should never divide.**

### **We are free in Christ**

The spirit of the antichrist is prideful, and separates people based on what they eat. You're a better person, in the world's eyes, if you eat this and don't eat that

### **But are they any better?**

- When there's people out there who need a meal?
- Or there are things to be said and done more important?
- Or your self-imposed diet prevents you from ministering to someone?

*Missionaries and receiving food*

**Or something else for the Lord and others we could be doing?**

### **It's healthiest to simply step back and ask:**

**what are we doing with our lives? With our time? With our resources?**

**Honestly, do you think God cares (what we eat) as long as we're worshiping Him? Fellowshiping with him and others?**



**Something to be gleaned here:**

**Jesus directed the crowd, prayed for the meal**

**But gave it to the disciples to hand out.**

**5,000 men + women and children. 15-20k people?!**

*Just so happens that the Griz Stadium can hold 25,217*

*That's a lot of hot dogs, pretzels and soda!*

**They ate and were filled!**

They weren't being polite, I think they were really all stuffed.

**When God does something...He really goes all the way**

**"If we're gonna do it, let's do it right!"**

*It's why we try to have lots of food here most Sundays*

*Despite any effort or cost. I want us all to feel welcome. Be comfortable. Be fed to some degree.*

*You've come here to hear the Word of God, I want you to be comfortable doing so*

*Not that you'd demand it, but as a blessing to those who would draw near to God.*

**But more than physical feeding,** it's easy to tell when Jesus is spiritually feeding us

It fills us. It's not a half measure. It's not a flaky self-help sermon. A "sermonette for Christianettes."

**It's a full meal made possible by a miracle of God's Spirit.**

A little study. A little compassion. Being blessed by God will feed many people's needs for today, for this week, maybe even longer.

**Jesus directly healed the people**

**But used the disciples to feed**

**We have a responsibility to go to Jesus and what we receive from Him give to others**

- Not what we want (maybe the disciples wanted steak).
- Not what we have (disciples didn't have much).

**But what Jesus offers is what we offer. Nothing less. Nothing more.**

**12 baskets left over**

Was it 12 just because there were 12 disciples? Jesus has a sense of humor.

Each disciple has a basket.

**Let each of the disciples see what God can do.**

**So much leftover the disciples couldn't even eat it all.**

**Would probably feed each of them for a week.**

*Ah, the days of being young and single after a church potluck*

**The disciples thought there was nothing to give the people.**

**Jesus showed each one that there was more than enough.**

**And there'd always be more than enough.**

*I've been out of FT work for 3.5 months...*

**Where are you with the Lord this morning?**

**How's your fellowship?**

**Have you been eating with him?**

**What's your spiritual diet been like?**

**Any good meals lately?**

**Are you in need of healing?**

**Are you in need of feeding?**

**Jesus can do it. He's not going to send you away. You can find what you need by staying close to Him. in Communion.**