

The Miraculous Feeding

John MacArthur

I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 14:13-22.

B. The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

C. This is a high point of popularity for Jesus, but it also marks a time of increasing hostility and seclusion. (John 18)

II. Jesus sought privacy. Jesus went to Bethsaida. (Luke 9:10)

III. Jesus' desire for privacy was overruled by the design of the people. (John 6:2)

A. They were thrill seekers like the shallow soils. (Matthew 13)

B. God even pitied these thrill seekers.

C. Jesus felt the pain in His own heart for the people. This is a mark of God. (Jeremiah 13, II Corinthians 11, Psalm 146)

IV. Jesus asked Philipp where they would buy food to feed these people in order to test Philipp. (John 6, 14)

A. Philipp says there is no resource.

B. Andrew points out that they do not have any money to buy food.

C. Jesus says to give the people food to lead them to the point where they would admit that they lacked resources.

V. Jesus fed the people miraculously according to God's economy. (John 6:11, Revelation 19:21, Matthew 5:6)

VI. The reaction of the people was amazement at free food.

VII. The miracle was a lesson.

A. The disciples.

1. He taught them to withdraw from needless danger.

2. He taught them the importance of solitude for restoration.

3. He taught them the value of spending time with those with which one labors.
4. He taught them the importance of compassion for men.
5. He taught them to sacrifice and rest to demonstrate God's compassion.
6. He taught that while meeting physical needs one must teach the truth of the gospel.
7. He taught them to learn to obey through their inability to buy.
8. He taught them that God is a God of great order.
9. He taught that God is a steward of His power
10. He taught that God is generous.
11. He taught that we are called to provide for others.
12. He taught to learn to share with those who have not.
13. He taught to learn to trust in God as the supplier of the impossible.
14. He taught that God wants to provide through us.

B. The elect remnant.

1. They saw that Jesus was the Messiah. (John 6)
2. They saw divine power.
3. They saw creation.
4. They saw compassion.
5. They saw integrity.
6. They heard words that were inexplicable.
7. They saw the Lord's ability to meet needs.

C. The thrill seekers.

VIII. Conclusion. Many walked no more with Jesus, but the disciples remained sure.

Application questions:

1. How did the miracle demonstrate that Jesus was God's Messiah?

2. How does God help us to come to the end of our own resources and trust in Him?

3. Which lesson from the miracle did you find most valuable personally? Explain.
