

Forgetting About the Bread and the Fish

expanded from

Day 35

Overcoming the Overwhelming ¹

Mark 6:44-52

Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men. ⁴⁵Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. ⁴⁶And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. ⁴⁹And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; ⁵⁰for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." ⁵¹Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. ⁵²For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

Most of us have experienced many miracles in our lives. First of all, He saves us, making us new creations. He provides for "all things pertaining to life and godliness". For many, God has opened the door for a better job and a place to live. We are blessed with family and friends. He heals us. He lifts us up when we are weak. He sends people along to encourage us. He does big things for us that bring us to our knees in gratitude and praise.

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Then something goes wrong, and we somehow totally forget how faithful He has been to us, and instead, panic and fear. We focus only on the trouble at hand.

We forget about the loaves and the fish.

It's natural for this to happen. We are sensory creations forced to focus on the information at hand. But as supernatural creations, we are also able to shift our focus off of our demanding circumstances and look to our God who saves us.

When storm clouds gather, we have a choice between fear and faith. Faith remembers the faithfulness of God in times past. Faith believes that nothing is impossible with God. Faith knows and believes the love God has for us—that He will never leave us or forsake us.

It isn't always during storms that we must believe, but also during times of success. After being healed, delivered financially, or seeing relationships restored, we can have an underlying thought that these glorious breakthroughs will eventually be followed by more of the same troubles from which we were just delivered. We forget about His former faithfulness and worry about the difficulties returning.

Those who have seen breakthroughs in relationships sometimes fear those same relationships will fall apart again. It is a natural response because we have been hurt before. So, when the slightest conflict arises, instead of turning our eyes upon Jesus, we tend to accept defeat as the norm. We forget about the fish and the loaves, the amazing miracles God just did.

Those who have finally seen breakthroughs in their health can often be triggered by the slightest hint of that sickness returning or of another arising. It's normal to feel this way. Sickness leaves its mental toll. But as believers in Jesus who have just experienced the healing power of God, we can choose to praise our God instead. We can deliberately remember what God has done and stand against the lies swarming about us, trying to bring us down. We confess the truths we have been given and also say, "My God has delivered me, and He will continue to deliver me."

Sometimes people struggle financially for many years. It is difficult to "pull oneself up by the bootstraps." Then God does a miracle, and it looks as if we will finally be delivered from "just barely making it." Then the thoughts come, "Don't get your hopes up. This is just a one-off miracle. God did you a favor this time, but you can't expect him to do it again."

Maybe this was how the disciples were thinking. Feeding thousands of people with only handfuls of food must have been exciting. They'd seen the food multiply in their own hands while they distributed it to the multitudes. Perhaps they saw this as a one-time special event. So, when they found themselves in the middle of a storm, they didn't think, "We just experienced a miracle back on land. Surely God will provide for us now."

They “had not understood about the loaves, because their hearts were hardened.”

Now, even though the disciples witnessed countless miracles, they were not yet new creations as we are. They did not yet have “the mind of Christ.” They did not have the indwelling presence of God. They did not have the wealth of Scripture we do. We can rise above the human tendency to only focus on the present trouble. We can fight the fears that lurk, telling us that God helped us this time, but we can’t expect Him to continue fighting for us. We can stand in faith against these thoughts and bring them into captivity unto the obedience of Christ.

Our faith expresses itself in praise. We praise because we believe in HIM. We praise because we believe in His goodness. We give thanks because we know He will do what He promises. We express our gratitude to Him because we trust in His love. We remember all the wonderful things He has done, and lift our praise to Him for all He will do. He is worthy of this.

When God hears us praising Him, He sees our faith in Him. Our faith in Him pleases Him and makes nothing impossible for us.

Hebrews 11:6 ESV

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek² him.

Let us be those who believe God when we go through stormy seas and also when we experience His mighty miracles. Let us not forget the loaves and the fish.

² This word “seek” implies asking God expecting He will answer affirmatively.