

PLENTY TOO MUCH SERIES WEEK 4
HOW GOD MEETS ALL OF OUR NEEDS EVEN
WHEN IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THERE'S ENOUGH
6/14/2020

John 6:1-13

I. Introduction

We are in a series about how to move from a scarcity mindset to an abundance mindset, from being a person who becomes driven by fear about what might happen and what we don't have, to living by faith in what God says we do have and what He will provide for us. I think we've shown that this has some drastic implications for our lives, especially in the times we've been going through with Covid-19.

It's been such an easy time to fear not having enough. I know for Americans little things were a shock to us, like going to the store and finding there is no toilet paper. If you live in the majority of the world, that would be just another day at the marketplace. I know some people felt like they had heart pain when they heard that Hobby Lobby was closed. Just the idea that you could go online and not be able to buy a swimming pool, puzzles, cleaning supplies was concerning.

A. We are used to being able to get what we want; we are used to having the ability to be in control of our material world. If I want it, I can work for it and get it. We are used to kind of being the source of our lives but perhaps God is trying to teach us a different way to live. He is trying to get us to think of living in a way that is not so much dependent on what we can get but on what we can trust God to give.

Why? Could it be God wants us to shift from a thinking that says, "I'm plenty too much", to "God how can I let You be the One who is plenty too much in my life?"

The Good News is that God has provided for some of us in ways that we know it was God and it has brought us closer to Him. Maybe He's giving us a bigger idea of what it means to be provided for, which includes realizing God not only wants to provide for me but through me. I've heard story after story of people giving things to others that were hard for them to get.

B. To me this is so big, that it is why I wrote the book. I've imagined what it would be like if all believers really learned that God wants us to live and give from His pocket, not just for ourselves but for others. What could happen if we really believed and understood how God wants to bring the abundance of Heaven through us to meet the needs of those who lack so much on earth.

The theme of the whole book is based on this story of a little boy who gave his 5 loaves and 2 fishes to Jesus and how Heaven was opened onto earth in a way that changed lives forever!

Let's read it today. Let's see how it might apply to our lives in a season in our country where many of us are facing lack in so many ways. For some of you it might be financial; it might be emotional. It could be what is going to happen when I have to pay my mortgage and I don't have an income. Maybe it's that my job has become so much more complicated or I'm now a homeschool teacher and there is not enough time or energy. For some, it's I'm out of health physically, mentally, or spiritually; I'm out of grace relationally.

II. Some beautiful things this story tells us.

A. God is our Provider. In fact, there is a special name for God, *Jehovah Jireh* (The Lord will provide), that Abraham used when faced with an impossible situation. When there is no way God makes a way. I was watching *Indiana Jones*-his back was against the wall, he was about to be shot and all of the sudden the wall moved. That is what it is like: God makes a way. I tell the story about when we had no money our car broke down. I went to Casa Ford without money to afford even a payment. When the salesman asked me what car I was interested in, I found out someone had previously come and said, "Whatever car he asks for tell him it's already paid for."

The beautiful thing is that He promises not only to be the Provider for our physical needs but every other kind of need as well. Let's go to our memory verse: Philippians 4:19. *My God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*

B. What we see in the story is so amazing. When God provides it's not only enough to supply, He promises that He will give to and through us PTM. When He gives, He doesn't just provide He multiplies. When we learn to give and receive from His pocket, He not only supplies to us but He provides through us in ways that bless people way beyond us. (Huatabampo story) When God gives you seeds there is an orchard inside of it. The little boy thought he was bringing a lunch for himself; little did he know he was about to cater the most famous lunch in history.

C. When we learn to look to God as our Source and Provider, not only are our needs met but our lives are blessed in so many other ways beyond our present needs.

Someone might say, "If God wants to provide for our needs, why doesn't he just let us all win the lottery and make us millionaires."

If God did that it might change our circumstances but it wouldn't change us. It wouldn't help us to grow and know Him better and make us people that love and care more for others.

God's way of providing for us is not mainly about raising funds; it's about raising sons and daughters, teaching us to depend on God and become like God.

That is why when God does miracles for us, He rarely just does them apart from our participation. He usually doesn't do miracles for us but through us. When we pray for our marriage to be healed, rarely does that mean we are going to kiss our husband who is acting like a frog and turn him into a prince. It's going to be a work in us and through us.

We need to realize that God is far more interested in our character than our comfort. He is even willing for us to experience discomfort if that will lead to Christlikeness.

1. I have found an ironic thing throughout my life; God has always provided more than enough but it has usually felt like it's not going to be enough.

God makes His strength perfect for us, even while we are still feeling weakness. Have you ever asked God why He waits to the last minute so often? It's so that we are learning to trust in Him.

2. One of the most important things God wants us to learn during lean times is that He is a good, good Father. We can trust in Him. In Luke 12:22-33

Jesus is talking about the danger of materialism. He describes how easy for people with excess wealth to become distracted and live independently of God, even forget God. How devastating the loss from that kind of mindset can be.

Then He turns to the disciples and tells them that God's plan is to replace the worry and anxiety they naturally feel, with a personal growing discovery of a Father who is going to take care of them. He teaches them to think of provision the way a child thinks in relationship to their Father. Adults think of provision in terms of themselves, what they can earn and how successful they can be. Kids don't think that way. I think that is why Jesus uses this story with the example of the little boy.

I like to say, the disciples were thinking about what they could do to get money; the little boy wasn't thinking about what he could do but who he was with. His need focused him not on what he could do but who he could trust. We don't imagine a 6-year-old sweating about where we can buy hand sanitizer or over the price of milk. Their peace is in relationship to their trust in their parents to provide. That is how you live the good life,

without anxiety and fear. I've seen this in the majority of the world. People who had what I thought was nothing but had twice as much peace and I was left asking the question, "Who is the poor in this picture?"

Over and over, God has proven faithful, down to my last paycheck, giving my tithe, starting a church with no salary and a baby about to be born.

I have something better than a million dollars; I know Papa will provide for me. It's not just money.

III. How do you experience the abundance of God to provide in every area of your life even when it seems like there is just not enough?

(For example, when I've been asked to preach and had nothing to offer, asked to help counsel a family and had nothing to say, asked to pray for a dying person and had nothing to give)

A. **You boldly choose to believe that God is the Source of your life.** One of the main ways you do that is through prayer, affirming God's promise. This little boy saw a miracle because he wasn't looking to himself to be the source of his life; he was looking to Jesus.

Express Jesus is your Source by thanking God and releasing your anxieties to Him in prayer.

B. **Put God's interests first in your life.** *Seek first the kingdom of God.* You prioritize God's interests above your needs. This is something that doesn't make sense to the natural mind. There is a story of a widow of Zarephath. All she had was one last meal and God told the prophet to ask her to give the last meal. But when she did the oil never ran out.

1. In the Bible this is lived out by giving the tithe (Malachi 3:10).
2. What is so key is that the tithe is more than a statement of priority; it is a statement of ownership. Before we can really go from being our own provider to living with God as our provider, we have to go from thinking of ourselves as an owner of what we have to being a steward. When we give our first fruits to the Lord, the Bible teaches that we are declaring the Lord is the Owner of everything.

This does something bigger; it goes to the root of the problem, the spirit of poverty. Poverty is not the lack of things but the fear of lack that causes us to cling tightly to what we have. What happens when we are clinging selfishly and tightly to what we have? God can't give us what He wants to put in our hand, because there is no room for it. *Example: David Swan

tried to take a French fry from his sons McDonald's bag, his son grabbed it and cried, "No, it's mine!" God doesn't need our money, but He wants to be the Owner of the purse strings of our heart so that He can pour in His blessings. This applies to every area. If there is not an open hand, God can't give an open Heaven of favor.

3. What we discover is the incredible freedom of God when He is the owner. What He possesses He blesses. What He owns He protects. If I have it because I got it, I could lose it. But if God has given it to me, no one can take it away from me. *Example giving up my right to marry Sharon.

C. Where you have a need sow a seed.

Living by faith instead of fear always requires an action. One of the clearest Bible pictures of living by faith is sowing and reaping. If you weren't from this planet and you watched someone sowing a seed, you would think they had lost their mind. You do all this work to dig up ground and make straight rows and such. Then you get these seeds that you've spent good money for. In some cases, these seeds are things you could've eaten, but instead you throw it in the ground and bury it. It looks crazy. Then the hardest part is that nothing happens that you can see. In fact, weeks go by until one day a tiny shoot comes up and eventually becomes a plant and a harvest.

Jesus teaches us that is what living by faith is all about. You have God's promises in an area of need (To improve or mend a relationship, to see a business start, to get out of financial trouble, to help people you are called to reach).

Go especially to areas where lack seems to be shouting in your face. Maybe it's joy- begin to sing a song. When I fell into a 6-month depression, it was "go serve the poor, take walks and sing to the Lord." I felt so empty, but I was sowing seed.

When we started the church, the church began with 60 interested people then shrank down to three. "Go, sow seed. In 1999 sow 5000 seeds to help people in need in the community." For a little boy it was to give his lunch.

A few things about sowing.

1. Don't despise the day of small beginnings. There is no seed, no matter how small, that is insignificant. A dear sister in a nursing home in quarantine said, "All I can do is pray and that could start the revival that changes the world."

Injustice and hate. I could forgive people who violated my rights and love someone who has been unjustly treated. I could give a meal to a homeless person or give patience and extra kindness to a family member.

What people don't realize is that faithful and consistent giving unleashes a law in the Spirit.

Luke 6:38, Give and it shall be given to you, pressed down and running over (plenty too much) it will be given back to you.

Zig Ziglar: "You can receive everything you want in life, if you're willing to help enough other people get what they want."

Samuel Truett Cathy founder of Chick-Fil-A said he never sought to get bigger. He only sought to be obsessed with serving customers better. "If we get better our customers will demand we get bigger."

2. The result will be something far bigger than seeing your own needs met. You will see God open Heaven through you in ways you never dreamed, like the little boy and the 5000. I love when Sharon started the Harvest Party. She gave her time, money with some others to care for about 50 kids in Northeast El Paso. God didn't just supply He multiplied.

Wayne Myers, after 70 plus years living without a salary, lived to give. "You can't out-give God." He told me that "if you are consistently generous in any area of your life, God won't just open the storehouse; He will give you the keys to the storehouse." He will give you authority and power to empty the vats of Heaven to places of needs.

I had a vision of this as I prepared this message. I saw the rooms of the storehouse filled with all of the things the poor, the lost, the destitute need. There was room after room. I saw the keys. I felt He was leading me to ask the church today, "Does anyone want keys to the storehouse?"

It may mean a thousand people are healed and a city saved but it will begin by surrendering all to God, planting seeds as He leads and letting Him multiply it to the ends of the earth.

Conclusion:

Today, the Lord wants to help us move from fear to faith in the areas of our need. Even today each and every one of us could think of areas where lack is knocking at the door. What the Lord would say is that He has promised you are not going to just be beggars, hoping to get what you need for another day. He wants to make you partners, people who discover how to open the storehouse of Heaven in every way. He wants to make us all into rivers and not

reservoirs. He is going to teach us to come to Him, reach in His pocket for provisions and miracles not only for ourselves but for people beyond what we could ever dream or imagine.

He is the God of Plenty Too Much. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. Bring whatever fears, worries, and anxieties you might be dealing with to leave at foot of the cross. Choose to accept Him as the Source of Your life.

That begins with salvation and forgiveness.

It means by faith you trust that He is your Heavenly Father and you don't have to live in fear and worry. You can switch, in every way, your trust from yourself to trust in Him.

Let Him be the Owner of everything. As you commit your first fruits to the Lord, begin to move towards living a life where the first fruits of time, talent, and treasure are devoted to adding value to people and to the work of the Kingdom of God. Entrust and expect that He will meet your needs. Decide to switch the focus of your life from living to get to living to give. Watch as the Lord shows you opportunities you didn't see before and uses your life in greater ways than you ever imagined.

Let's just open up and receive a confirming witness, revelation, and touch from God as we go. Let's praise God for the plenty too much of God we are now deciding to walk in for ourselves and others.