

# CLOSE ENCOUNTERS with Christ

## “Seeing the Savior in Action”

Key Verse - 20:31—*“But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through His name.”*

### **Study Number Four – The Feeding of the Five Thousand – John 6:1-14**

We come now to Snapshot #4 and The Feeding of the Five Thousand—John 6:1-14.

The passage is divided like this:

1. THE BACKGROUND—verses 1-4,
2. The conversation with Philip and Andrew, which revealed THE NEED—verses 5-9,
3. THE MIRACLE itself—verses 10-13, And finally
4. THE RESPONSE to the miracle—verse 14.

We’re going to look at the first four verses, THE BACKGROUND, to start with then we’ll get into these other sections as we move through it.

This particular miracle has unique distinction, and that is it's the only one that's recorded in all four of the gospels:

1. Matthew 14:3-21,
2. Mark 6:32-44, and
3. Luke 9:10-17.

Of course, we have the record here in John 6:1-14.

Now in order to get the feel of the passage and to kind of set the stage, we need to have a little background that comes out of some of these other passages.

First of all, there's been a real ordeal that's taken place in the lives of the disciples and the Lord Jesus. It's a very difficult time for them.

They have just received word, according to the Matthew record, that John the Baptist has just experienced martyrdom. Now realize that John the Baptist was a super, great prophet and teacher and he was the guy who was to point people to Jesus Christ.

So he's a very close friend of Jesus and the twelve disciples. In fact, some of the twelve were followers of John the Baptist before they became followers of Jesus.

We can imagine what it'd be like to have some religious leader

that we know and been very close to and has made a contribution to our life. When they die it's a very traumatic thing. It's just like losing somebody who has that special touch with God, who has walked with and helped us in the ways of God.

For Jesus it's tough to have received this word that John the Baptist was beheaded, because some chick made a request and the king didn't back out on it. Poor John experienced martyrdom, as well as the disciples.

And now what do we want to do when we experience the death of somebody that we love a lot? Well, the desire for Jesus, according to the other records, was to get away. He wanted to suffer alone for a while. He wanted to get some time with the guys to share with them and then to regroup the forces and get ready to go out into the ministry again.

Mark pictures the men retreating to someplace for fellowship and recuperation, almost like they're going to go on a retreat. Luke tells us that they went to Bethsaida. This is the hometown of Philip and Andrew and they're going to fit into the picture here in just a few minutes.

With that kind of framework now, let's begin with verse 1 and walk through these first four verses.

## **I. THE BACKGROUND—verses 1-4**

### **v. 1 After these things Jesus went off to the other side**

## of the sea of Galilee of Tyberias.

“After these things Jesus went off to the other side of the sea of Galilee of Tyberias.”

When we see “After these things” at the beginning of a chapter break, we have to decide what is after those things.

When we turn back to chapter 5, Jesus has experienced the greatest opposition to His ministry to this point. The religious leaders have gotten organized and they actually nearly stoned Him as a result of some of the claims which He made.

Coupled with this strategic opposition to His ministry, plus the martyrdom of John coming into the picture, Jesus just wants to get away for a while and think things through. And yet verse 2 tells us:

**v. 2 And a great multitude was following Him because they were seeing the signs (attesting miracles), which He was performing upon those who were sick.**

“And a great multitude was following Him because they were seeing the signs (or the attesting miracles), which He was performing upon those who were sick.”

As soon as they got in the boat to start across the Sea of Tyberias, what did these guys do?

They begin the long, arduous journey around the shoreline and they get over to the other side to greet the boat when it gets to the land. So Jesus can see that He has made a futile attempt to get away from the multitudes and the crowd for this time of retreat. As soon as He gets there, there's a great crowd.

Now it tells us the REASON that they come is because they've seen His "signs" or "attesting miracles."

Now since the conversation with the woman at the well that we looked at in our previous study, there've been two significant things that have taken place that have really gotten the attention of the populace, as far as Jesus is concerned.

1. First of all, a Senator came to Him right after the conversation with the woman at the well. He's called a nobleman there in John 4. And he said, "my son is sick and is going to die unless You do something."

Well Jesus said, "Look, go on to your house. Your son lives." And the guy exercises faith in what Jesus says and he heads toward the house. And when he's getting close to the house, one of the servants comes running out and says, "Guess what? I've got good news! Your son's alive!"

And this great leader says, "Well, when did he start getting better?" The servant says, "Yesterday at one o'clock." He says, "Well that's what I thought, because that's the very time that

Jesus was talking to me and He told me to go, that my son was okay.”

Well, we can almost imagine what kind of press coverage they get on something like that, when a great leader’s son is well. The *Bethsaida Bugle*, the *Capernaum Constitution*, *Jerusalem Journal* and the *Galilee Globe* all pick it up.

But then top it off with the fact that when He comes into the city of Jerusalem, He walks past the place where all the sick people gather around this pool. And this is a pool that an angel often stirs, and when it does, the first guy that gets in the water is healed. And so we have all these sick people sitting down there by the pool, just waiting to jump in. The first man in gets healed.

And so they’re just waiting. As Jesus walks through this corridor of sick people around this pool, He picks out one guy that’s laying there and He begins a conversation with Him.

He says, “How long have you been here?” He says, “I’ve been here for thirty-eight years.”

“Haven’t you ever seen the water stirred?”

“Yes, I sure have.”

“Haven’t you ever gotten in?”

“No, you see I’ve got a problem. I don’t have anybody to put

me in. I can't get in by myself. Somebody always gets down there before me.”

So here's a guy that's totally hopeless. What's the Lord say?

Jesus says, “Pick up your bed and walk.” And the guy obeys Him.

We can imagine what that does to the city of Jerusalem, when a guy that they've been looking at as a permanent fixture, been laying down there by the pool for thirty-eight years, gets up and is normal again! And he begins to walk!

Well, the crowd really was touched by the fact that this great leader's son was made well and this guy, for thirty-eight years, has recovered. So they begin to follow the Lord Jesus.

Alright, we've still got the same need and Jesus recognizes something. The Father's will is different from His personal wishes.

His personal desire is to go off and have a rest, regroup, spend some time in fellowship with the men. What's the will of the Father at this point? It's to minister to the multitude that waits.

He'd just told His men, after He talked to that woman at the well, “My need is to do the will of Him that sent Me. Don't say there are four months and there comes the harvest. Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields. They are

white already to harvest.” (ref. John 4:35)

Jesus is moved with tremendous compassion when He sees this great crowd of people coming. And one of the records tells us that with that compassion, He began healing the sick as well as teaching them.

In other words, His personal needs were put secondary to the needs of the people.

When a guy is really serving the Lord and when he’s walking with the Lord, we can always count on him being there. We can always count on him being a servant who’s willing to be spent and put aside some of his personal interests because he’s got somebody that’s hurting badly that needs him.

Many times we insulate ourselves from human need, because we hear so many cries from everywhere. But remember, the one characteristic of a person who walks with God is that person many times puts his personal needs secondary because he’s concerned about other members of the family.

**v. 3 And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there He was sitting with His disciples.**

“And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there He was sitting with His disciples.”

Jesus loves the mountains. He was a great camper and He was going up into the mountains here and He was going to

retreat and relax.

Most likely, as they got there together and the disciples began to talk and remember some of the things about John the Baptist—especially since some of them have been so close, they remembered some of the unique experiences they'd had when they'd followed John the Baptist. And they just began sharing and then this great multitude converged on them.

Now verse 4 almost looks like it doesn't belong there, doesn't it?

#### **v. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.**

“Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.”

Why did John put that in here? Well, the reason that he put that in there is because he wants to explain the magnitude of the crowd that's involved in this miracle. He's not evangelistically speaking here to enlarge the crowd. This is legitimate. There's a huge crowd here.

Part of the reason there is, is because they have a whole bunch of pilgrims that have one desire. Every Jew lived with one desire in his heart, and that was to make the trip from home to Jerusalem for Passover.

Just like every Christian today wants to go to the Holy Land, so they can see the place where Jesus lived and Jesus died. They are kind of like Christian pilgrims.

Well, every Jew had within their heart the desire to go to see Jerusalem one time in their lifetime, no matter where they lived in the world, in order to celebrate the Passover.

Now we can imagine the double attraction of going to celebrate the Passover when Jesus was there. They work on a side trip here and get to see the Son of God and hear Him speak and see Him perform. A lot more Jews probably came on this occasion. And John says, “the Passover...was near.”

Alright, now with that background material, let's go into the conversation that's going to begin to take place in verse 5.

We have a need for WINE in chapter 2. What have we got here? We're going to have a need for BREAD in verse 5.

## II. THE NEED—verses 5-9

**v. 5 Then Jesus lifting up His eyes and seeing that a great multitude is coming toward Him says to Philip, “Where shall we purchase bread in order that these may eat?”**

“Then Jesus lifting up His eyes and seeing that a great multitude is coming toward Him says to Philip, ‘Where shall we purchase bread in order that these may eat?’”

Luke fills in a little more of the detail and so does Matthew.

First of all, the disciples go to Jesus and they interrupt Him while He's teaching. And they're saying, "Jesus, do You realize it's getting late? Do you realize a lot of these people are pilgrims for the Passover and they haven't made reservations? They don't have any place to stay and they don't have any food to eat. And You're going to be held responsible for chaotic and mass confusion if it gets dark while we're out here."

And so they've gotten nervous and they've gotten worried about it. And so they're putting it on Jesus. But Jesus turns right around and puts it back on them.

According to the Luke account it says, "You give them something to eat."

And then it's at this point that the Lord turns to Philip, who's in charge of food service for the twelve—it would be normal to turn to him—and say to Him:

"Where shall we purchase bread in order that these may eat?"

Philip was phlegmatic in temperament. He loved humor.

We meet people who can always say funny things. Well, that was Philip. He was phlegmatic in temperament.

Secondly, he was super slow. We have Philip and Peter, side by side. Peter was always the one who would jump and then think about it afterwards. Philip was the one who'd scrutinize forever and then would probably meticulously eventually

jump, but it would be with a great deal of caution.

In fact, Philip is the only one among the twelve who has the unique distinction of having Jesus search him out. The rest of them found Jesus, but Jesus went to find Philip. That gives us an idea of the kind of guy that's before us.

He'd be the typical guy, wouldn't he? To be put in charge of the crummy responsibility of food service. Nobody wants to cook, and especially for thirteen men with the appetites which they probably had.

So Philip got the job. And we can imagine he made a lot of fun out of it. Instead of saying, "Oh my, I have to," he said, "Oh boy, I get to." And with that positive mental attitude and his sense of humor, he was one of those kind of guys who were just perfect for the job.

Now he gets a question asked of him. He says, "Philip, where are we going to buy bread in order that these may eat?"

John fills us in on what Jesus was doing.

**v. 6 Now this He was saying, testing him, for He himself knew what He was about to be doing.**

"Now this He was saying, testing him, for He himself knew what He was about to be doing."

The intent of the question was to put Philip to the test to see if

he had discovered yet that they can trust the Lord Jesus to supply the needs.

Hadn't they had some track records with the Lord's miracles? Hadn't they seen wine provided at a wedding miraculously?

“Philip, can't you see that it's going to be easy to provide bread for these people when you've got the Lord Jesus on your side?” In other words, that's the reason He's putting Philip to the test here.

Now Philip, because he's skeptical and slow-witted, still hadn't caught on to really trusting God to meet every need.

Has it ever dawned on us, as a Christian, that God has the prerogative to order the circumstances in our life to test our faith to see whether we'll trust Him?

A lot of Christians think that when they start suffering, it's God getting even or there's some sin in their life, or Satan did it.

That's the extent of their capacity for understanding human suffering.

There are a lot of circumstances that come into the life of people who walk with God and who love Him, that cannot be explained in any other terms. The Lord is testing our ability to trust Him in those circumstances. Because they're just things that cannot be explained in any other way, when they come

into the life of someone who loves them.

In Genesis 22 it says God what? “He did test Abraham.” God gave him a son, now He wants to take his son away. He wants Abraham to take him up to Mount Moriah to offer him as a sacrifice.

Why did He do that? He wanted to see if Abraham was going to trust Him in those dire circumstances. Abraham passed the test.

Romans 4 gives us a running commentary on it. It says, “He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” (ref. Romans 4:20-21)

In other words, while he was walking up the mountain with his son, without a ram and a sacrifice, the sacrifice was coming up the other side, provided by the Father. But we’re going to wait till we get to the top before the provision is made.

A lot of times isolated little circumstances in our lives will take on greater significance when we can see them down the pike a little bit further. We’ve got a very limited perspective and God’s got the big picture. He knows what He’s doing in our lives. Many times He tests us.

Now He does the same thing in Mark 4 with the disciples. He gets them in the boat, He shows them who He is, a storm comes up, He’s sleeping, the boat’s filling with water—they

flunk the test.

“Carest thou not that we perish while you there asleep.” (ref. Mark 4:38)

“Lord, You’re too late.” When the Lord does calm the sea, they tell us that they flunk it. “Who is this that even the winds and waves obey His voice?” (ref. Mark 4:41). They still don’t recognize who He really is.

In James 1, James says, “Consider it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith is producing endurance.” (ref. James 1:2-3)

Some people say, “Oh, I just wish I could trust God.” When someone prays that kind of prayer, the Lord’s going to stir up the circumstances to give them an opportunity. That’s just like somebody praying for patience. The Lord will give us an opportunity. He will.

The only problem is, we don’t always recognize the answer to our prayer, do we? “Oh, I wish I could trust God.” That is so we can be more prosperous. Then the Lord stirs up the pot and we don’t realize that He’s giving us another opportunity to really trust Him to know what He’s doing.

Now John goes on to record in this sixth verse that the reason this was done was because He Himself knew what He was going to do. The Lord knows what He’s doing in our life, although we might not know.

Isaiah 55 says, “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts that your thoughts.” (ref. Isaiah 55:8, 9)

The Lord has a better way of doing things than we do. The Lord has higher thoughts than we do about how we can be used by Him.

When the sea is stormy and the sky is dark, and there's no offering in sight, and we go through a circumstance where there's a multitude that needs bread and we don't have anything, we can be thankful. We can trust the Lord to make provision that's adequate and will exceed adequacy in every one of those circumstances.

God knows what He's doing in our life and we can trust Him to sovereignly control every circumstance in our life for **TWO PURPOSES:**

1. For His greatest **GLORY** and
2. For my maximum **GROWTH**.

He knows what we need and we can trust Him to order those circumstances to accomplish that purpose.

**v. 7 Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not enough for them, in order that each**

**one might take a little.”**

“Philip answered Him, ‘Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not enough for them, in order that each one might take a little.’”

Philip is basically saying, “Good grief Lord, a year’s salary is not enough to buy bread so that everybody can have a little chunk.”

What happens to Philip here in the seventh verse? Philip fails the test of faith. Why? Because he has his eyes on the bread and the fish and the multitude instead of on the Lord. He’s figuring without the Lord.

Whenever we get our eyes on our circumstances and our life, and we try to render a verdict toward God, we’ll always come up with the wrong one.

Sometimes something comes into our life that is wild and unexplainable and it stings and it hurts. And we look at that circumstance that’s there and say, “Boy God, You’re really crummy to do this to one of your sweet children.”

No, God isn’t. See we’ve gotten our eyes on that circumstance which is isolated by itself, and the Lord intended for us to have victory in knowing that He can sovereignly control those circumstances for His best interest. We’ll render a different verdict every time when we get our eyes on the Lord and off our circumstances.

Now, Philip being phlegmatic, probably thought that this might be a joke. He thought maybe the Lord was just teasing. So that's why he says, "You've got to be kidding. A year's salary won't do it."

Food service for thirteen is one thing, but food service for five thousand? He pulled out his pocket calculator and his menu planning book and said, "Impossible! It can't be done! I can't do it. I can't do what You're asking me to do to provide for them."

**v. 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, is saying to Him,**

"One of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, is saying to Him,"

**v. 9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people."**

"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people."

Andrew was the kind of guy that lived in the wake of his big brother Simon Peter. They both were sanguine in temperament. They both were outgoing, loveable guys. But when you live with an extrovert like Peter, it's like getting stomped on by elephants.

That was really what it was like. He was always living in the wake of his brother. His big brother gets straight A's on his report card, never has pimples, goes out with the beautiful girls. What happens to poor Andrew? He's the neat guy in the background. But he's always lovely, always warm, always friendly.

Andrew would be the perfect Young Life leader. He could play a little one-on-one, drink Cokes, and make personal contact. He was in charge of public relations for the twelve. He was always the guy that was out in front with a hand and a friendly smile.

Bring a guy like Andrew alongside a guy like Philip, who are both from the same hometown, they had some fun times together. We can call them the "Nutty Buddies" among the twelve. That's probably the best description that we can give of these two guys.

And here they are in their hometown, enjoying some time together. And here comes Andrew truckin' up with this little guy's lunch. That tells us something about Andrew. He'd already gotten out there and played a little one-on-one and he found a guy who had a lunch.

And our little guy says, "You know, I wonder if the Lord could use my lunch?" Andrew thought, "Well this will be one to put over on Philip." So he takes the lunch and he goes to the Lord.

It's pretty unselfish of the little guy to do that, you know?

With a couple of bags of Fritos and a Diet Pepsi and a Twinkie he'd have been all set for lunch by himself, but he's willing to share it.

Andrew renders the very same verdict that Philip does. Philip looks at it from a monetary value and he says, "Two-hundred denarii worth of bread won't make it."

Now Andrew looks at it from just what they have. "Here we've got five loaves and a couple of fish, but what's that among so many?" In other words, they both flunked the test.

Now that they've had their little fun, Jesus gets serious. When He says in verse 10, "Make the people sit down," the guys realize the joke's over.

### **III. THE MIRACLE—verses 10-13**

**v. 10 Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down, the number about five thousand.**

"Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was much grass in that place, so the men sat down, the number about five thousand."

A greater miracle is the fact that they got five thousand people sitting down.

The other gospels tell us that they got them sitting in

organized groups of fifties and hundreds, so they got them ready so they could do something to serve them.

Notice another thing here in the tenth verse, and that is although they flunked the test of faith, they really passed the test of obedience. They were instantaneously obedient to what the Lord said. They respected Him, and when He made a request, they were very respectful of it and they immediately obeyed what He asked them to do.

**v. 11 Then Jesus took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed them to those who were seated. Likewise also of the fish as much they wanted.**

“Then Jesus took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed them to those who were seated. Likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted.”

When we read this verse, we see an object lesson for Philip, Andrew and also to the little guy.

The Lord does four things in this verse with what was given to Him. The Lord would really like to do that with us, if we're willing to let Him.

Paul makes the plea in Romans 12 that “you present your body as a living sacrifice.”

There are **THREE BASIC STEWARDSHIPS** that we have as

Christians:

1. we give Him our BODIES,
2. we give Him our BELONGINGS—or we share with Him our material blessings, and
3. we give Him the PRAISE of our lips as a sacrifice.

And we have a responsibility for that three-fold stewardship.

1. The Lord TAKES whatever we give Him—like He took this little guy's lunch.
2. He BLESSED IT—and that's one of the responses that He always does when we give Him something.
3. He BROKE IT—The significance of the breaking is that like a wild stallion on the mesa, it is of no value until it's broken to the rein, to the bridle, to the halter, to the team, and to the yoke.

So God knows with us that we're of no value to Him until we come unto Him, weary and heavy laden and we take His yoke upon us and we begin to learn of Him, because He's meek and lowly of heart.

4. HE DESTRIUTED IT—He uses us beyond our fondest ambitions and dreams to meet the needs of others.

We look at that and think that we're not very much. Well, to that little guy, his lunch wasn't very much either. But look what the Lord was able to do with it. Once we give ourselves over to Him, and we allow Him to bless us and to break us, we'll be amazed how He'll use us in the lives of people.

The Lord is famous for using little things. He took a little rod and allowed Moses to use that rod to deliver a nation from Egypt.

He was there when David needed confidence that he was going to take that little sling and slay a giant that would liberate his people once again.

Jesus Christ, when He taught us in Matthew 18, He said this little child will be the greatest in the kingdom.

The fact that the Lord uses little things like a guy's lunch ought to give us great comfort that He can use us, if we're willing to let Him.

Really the big problem with a lot of us is just the fact that we aren't willing to give it to Him. We want to hang onto it, because we think we know what's best. We think we know how to program God. We think we know how to program our lives too. And as a result, we never experience the blessing of seeing what God can do when we give it to Him.

Now, there's another neat lesson here in this passage. He taught Philip and Andrew the fact, "Look Philip and Andrew,

I'd like to do this with you." Andrew probably said, "You know son, look what He did with your lunch. I think He'd do the same with you, if you gave it over to Him."

That's what the Lord wants us to do. Many times we make a distinction between the SACRED and the SECULAR. We don't know the blessing of the Lord in our business or in our marriage, in our families, simply because we're not willing to turn everything over and let the Lord do a work in our lives.

There are several lessons that we can learn out of this eleventh verse:

1. He supplies all of our needs as we come to Him.
2. He's the one who provides. We're the ones who distribute.
3. He takes what we have and He multiplies it.
4. The more we give away, the more we get.

Another great thought is everybody was "satisfied," and they had as much as they wanted.

**v. 12 Now when they were satisfied, He is saying to His disciples, "Gather up what they left in the way of fragments in order that nothing may be lost."**

"Now when they were satisfied, He is saying to His disciples, 'Gather up what they left in the way of fragments in order

that nothing may be lost.”

We can almost see those guys walking around with this bread. They’re walking up and down, they’re part of the company, and they’re saying, “Are you sure you don’t want some more bread? Are you sure you don’t want some more fish?” And the guy is saying, “I can’t believe I ate the whole thing.”

He’s stuffed. He’s had all that he could want. These guys just can’t believe that this all started with five loaves and a couple of fish. And here everybody’s been satisfied. Everybody’s had all that they need.

Then He’s saying to them:

“Gather up what they have left in the way of fragments in order that nothing may be lost.”

**v. 13 Then they gathered them up, and they filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten.**

“Then they gathered them up, and they filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten.”

Why are there twelve baskets? Because we have twelve disciples.

The Lord's going to give them one more object lesson. He says, "You guys, each of you take a basket. Go pick up the fragments." And so they start picking up the fragments.

What do you suppose is going on while they're picking up the fragments? They're probably saying, "I can't believe it. I can't believe it. I really, really can't believe what's happening! My basket's filling up with what's left over! And I've got more than what I started with."

Remember in Luke 24 when Jesus is walking on the road to Emmaus with two of His disciples in His resurrected body? Remember as they're walking along there, the two guys finally, it was getting kind of dark, and they say, "Hey man, you can't go on from here. You need to stay with us tonight."

The Lord kind of makes a concession and He goes inside. And when they're sitting down and getting ready to eat, who is it that breaks the bread? As Jesus breaks the bread, they recognize this is the resurrected Christ.

And they go on and say, "Our hearts burnt within us while He talked with us on the way." They remembered an experience of the breaking of the bread. They never forgot that. Here they are, picking up the pieces and they realize that they've got more than they started with. They've got a visible observation or object lesson by the fact that the Lord always provides exceedingly abundant above all that we can ask or think.

Ephesians 3:20 says that. Remember when they provided the

wine at the wedding? Eighteen to twenty-seven gallons—that’s more than they’re going to need for six weddings—but the Lord always provides more than we need.

Now THE RESPONSE to the miracle is in verse 14.

#### **IV. THE RESPONSE—verse 14**

**v. 14 Then the people having seen the attesting miracle which he performed were saying, “This man is truly the prophet who is coming into the world.”**

“Then the people having seen the attesting miracle which he performed were saying, “This man is truly the prophet who is coming into the world.””

That little phrase, “the prophet who is coming into the world,” was the prophet that Moses predicted would come back in Deuteronomy 18:15-18.

Here’s Moses, he’s preaching his last sermon to the nation Israel before he’s going to go up into the mountain to be with the Lord. And in his last sermon he promises them:

#### **Deuteronomy 18:15**

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.

And they were still waiting as a nation for that prophet and now, when they see this miracle, they're just united in saying, this is the prophet that Moses promised them back there just before they went into the Promised Land.

Here are the lessons that come out of our passage.

Lesson #1: Oftentimes the Lord tests our faith and trust in Him by the circumstances that come into our lives.

Lesson #2: Philip and Andrew both failed the test of faith that was placed upon them.

Lesson #3: The failure of these two men is seen in the fact that they did not take Jesus into account when they were discerning their resources.

Lesson #4: Little is a lot when the Lord is in it.

Lesson #5: It is the Lord's desire to take us, to give thanks, to break us, and to use us in His service.

Lesson #6: The Lord is famous for using little and insignificant things to accomplish His purposes.

Lesson #7: The Lord always provides for our needs as we are willing to come to Him, and He does this in super abundance. We see this in both the snapshots in chapter 2 and now in chapter 6.

Lesson #8: When our eyes are on the circumstances, we cannot do a thing, but when we get our eyes upon the Lord, He takes what we have and multiplies to meet the need.

Lesson #9: He is the One who provides, we distribute.

Lesson #10: The more you give away, the more you get.

Now, a couple of questions:

First, perhaps there is someone without a relationship to Jesus Christ. They don't know Him as their personal Savior. Rise above personal inhabitations and discover the beginnings of a relationship that's beautiful by allowing Christ to become your Savior.

And secondly, if someone is a Christian, and they realize that their efforts are futile, to trust God has been just that, turn to Him in a fresh new way. Express confidence in His ability to handle the circumstances in life.

Maybe they're going through a test right now. Maybe they've had something that's difficult, or some difficulty just ahead.

Trust Him to know what He's doing. Trust Him that when we go through those circumstances, He will not be inconsistent with His love or inconsistent with His promise that "all things work together for good to them that love God and to those who are called according to His purpose." (ref. Romans 8:28)

Let's have prayer together.

Our heavenly Father, now You know the needs of each heart in light of the passage that we've looked at. Lord, if there's someone who's going through a testing experience, Lord give them a victory by helping them to get their eyes upon You and off of the circumstances or the people surrounding the circumstances, or the event itself. And then Lord, if there is someone who has not yet discovered the abundant life that could be theirs, because Your Word says, "he that have the Son have life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life," may they come by faith and allow Jesus Christ to become their personal Savior. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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# CLOSE ENCOUNTERS with Christ

## “Seeing the Savior in Action”

Key Verse - 20:31—*“But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through His name.”*

### Study Number Four – The Feeding of the Five Thousand – John 6:1-14

#### Key Verse 6:6

##### I. THE BACKGROUND—verses 1-4

v. 1 After these things Jesus went off to the other side of the sea of Galilee of Tyberias.

v. 2 And a great multitude was following Him because they were seeing the signs (attesting miracles), which He was performing upon those who were sick.

v. 3 And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there He was sitting with His disciples.

v. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.

##### II. THE NEED—verses 5-9

v. 5 Then Jesus lifting up His eyes and seeing that a great multitude is coming toward Him says to Philip, “Where shall we purchase bread in order that these may eat?”

v. 6 Now this He was saying, testing him, for He himself knew what He was about to be doing.

v. 7 Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not enough for them, in order that each one might take a little.”

v. 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, is saying to Him,

v. 9 “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people.”

#### NOTES

## NOTES

### III. THE MIRACLE—verses 10-13

v. 10 Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down, the number about five thousand.

v. 11 Then Jesus took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed them to those who were seated. Likewise also of the fish as much they wanted.

v. 12 Now when they were satisfied, He is saying to His disciples, “Gather up what they left in the way of fragments in order that nothing may be lost.”

v. 13 Then they gathered them up, and they filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten.

### IV. THE RESPONSE—verse 14

v. 14 Then the people having seen the attesting miracle which he performed were saying, “This man is truly the prophet who is coming into the world.”

## QUESTIONS:

1. Read John 6:1-14 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. Why were the great multitudes following Jesus, according to verse 2?

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3. What question does Jesus ask of Philip in verse 5?

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4. What was the motive behind the question, according to verse 6?

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5. What is Philip's response, according to verse 7?

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6. How does Andrew fit into this picture, according to verses 8 & 9?

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7. Describe in your own words what Jesus does in this situation.

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8. Why do you suppose the Lord Jesus asked the disciples to gather up the fragments after the feast?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

**LESSON #1:** Oftentimes the Lord tests our faith and trust in Him by the circumstances that come into our lives.

**LESSON #2:** Philip and Andrew both failed the test of faith that was placed upon them.

LESSON #3: The failure of these two men is seen in the fact that they did not take Jesus into account when they were discerning their resources.

LESSON #4: Little is a lot when the Lord is in it.

LESSON #5: It is the Lord's desire to take us, to give thanks, to break us, and to use us in His service.

LESSON #6: The Lord is famous for using little and insignificant things to accomplish His purposes.

LESSON #7: The Lord always provides for our needs as we are willing to come to Him, and He does this in super abundance. We see this in both the snapshots in chapter 2 and now in chapter 6.

LESSON #8: When our eyes are on the circumstances, we cannot do a thing, but when we get our eyes upon the Lord He takes what we have and multiplies to meet the need.

LESSON #9: He is the One who provides, we distribute.

LESSON #10: The more you give away, the more you get.

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**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

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