



Real People Making A Real Difference

James Smith

King James Version (KJV)

John 6:1 After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

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There are two things about this story that are interesting to me.

1. vs 6 mentions that Jesus asked the question to prove to Philip's faith. According to John, Jesus knew already what He was going to do to take care of the problem.

It's important to realize something that this scripture teaches us about Jesus.

- "He already had the answer to the problem."

You say your problems are pretty big?

- I say, He already has the solution.

It's probable that the situation that you may be facing this week is entirely God's way of finding out just how much faith you have.

- Can I encourage you today with 4 little words... "Have Faith In God."

Your problem is not God's problem.

- He's already got the answer to your problem.
- God's problem is whether or not you are going to have the kind of faith He needs you to have so He can bring a miracle your way.

The second thing that I feel is important to realize is that none of the other 3 gospel writers mentioned the fact that a little boy had given them a little food to feed the people with.

In the other 3 gospels, MT, MK, LK – the fact that a little boy donated the food for the miracle was omitted.

- In fact it was a little boy who made the contribution that Jesus used to preform a miracle.

Apparently, it was not important for MT, MK, or LK to mention this fact, but I'm glad that John told the story too.

- You see, it's important to me to know where the miracle comes from.
- I don't just want to see a miracle; I want to see the process that led to the miracle happening.

If we can see and understand the process of the miracle, it's entirely possible that the next time we find ourselves in a tight spot, we can duplicate the process of the miracle again and possibly get a similar result.

- Apparently, all Jesus was looking for was somebody to show some faith for the situation.

Why is it that none of the other Gospel writers mention this little boy?

- The first 3 gospels never mention the little boy, but John who coincidentally is also the disciple who is closest to Jesus.
- So close that on one occasion, we find John laying his head on Jesus chest.
- John was also the one who was at the feet of Jesus's cross the day he was crucified.

I believe John understood some things about Jesus that the other Disciples didn't understand.

- John understood the value of mentioning the little boy.
- John knew that there is importance in mentioning the source of the smallest offering.
- John knew that Jesus would want the little lad mentioned in the telling of the story...
- Why?
- Because Jesus is looking for Faith today!

He's looking for someone who can identify with the little lad enough to say, "Hey God, I'm not much, and I don't have much, but what I am and what I have is all yours for the taking if you ever need a source for a miracle."

- Notice, Jesus didn't need a Wall Mart to appear on the horizon to feed everybody.
- He didn't need for a McDonalds to pop up out of the ground,
- He just needed someone, and in this case, some little boy to show some faith and give Him something to work with.

God's not looking for some corporation to build him a church in Valparaiso.

- He's not looking for some organization to build Him a church in this community.
- God is looking for some Real People who want to make a real difference.

You say, "Is my contribution to Acacia that important?"

- Is my offering really all that significant?
- Is the giving of my time so substantial?

Absolutely it is if it's coming from your heart!

- See, you can't be real and not have a love for people.
- Genuinely loving people causes you to be real.
- When you truly love someone, you stop making excuses and you help them.

When you truly love someone, you find a way to help them no matter how bleak the situation looks.

- Being real means being honest.
- Being real means going out of your way.
- Being real means giving when you don't have much to give.
- Being real means being there if no one else is there.
- Being real means helping when no one else wants to help.
- Being real means being committed to making a real difference.

You know, the bible does not say if the disciples confiscated the boy's lunch or if he gave it willingly.

- But knowing how children are, I tend to believe that the little boy gave it willingly.
- I believe he said something like, "Let Jesus know that if he needs my lunch, he can have it."

We need to understand, that boy gave his WHOLE lunch.

- I don't see where he held back any portion of the bread or fishes.
- He did not give his leftovers.
- He gave the whole thing.

You see, children give from their heart.

- Children give regardless if they are truly in the position to give or not.
- And Jesus said in Mk 10: **15** Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

When I considered what portion of scripture to share today that would exemplify for us "Real People", I could think of no one better than this little boy.

- You know how generous children can be.
- You know how honest they are.
- You know how real they are.

That little guy didn't ask for anything in return.

- He didn't ask for the leftovers.
- He didn't ask for the credit.
- He just wanted to help Jesus out with the problem of feeding the people.
- He didn't have much to give, but all that he had to give belonged to Jesus as long as Jesus wanted to use it.

I'm going to tell you something you may already know;

- There is no more real need in this world than feeding hungry people.

The problem that day was not the need for a shelter to be built.

- They were not taking up a collection to build some seating into the hillside.
- The need that day was hungry people.
- The need that day was people fainting on their way back to their homes.
- The need was hunger.
- Hunger is real today.

- Both physical hunger and spiritual hunger

I don't know about you today, but I have ONE ambition here today.

- I'm not really interested in who gets the credit.
- I really don't care who gets recognized for it.
- My one ambition here today is to help someone whose spiritual hunger is not being met.

We say that Acacia is a place where "Real Needs Are Met".

- I want to ask you today, Do you really think we are qualified to do that?
- Are we qualified to meet the real needs of people?
- I believe we are.
- But it's going to take a child's heart that is willing to do whatever and give whatever is needed to meet the need.

When I think of real people making a real difference, I think of people like Mother Teresa.

- This woman fed millions of hungry people nearly her entire lifetime even though she herself never had money.

I've been 3 times to the convent in Calcutta, which was the headquarters for the many orphanages around the world that she started.

- I've stood in the doorway of the little room that was her home all her life. I've seen the wood bench she slept on because she did not want to sleep better than those she ministered to.
- There are no computers.
- There is no carpet on the floors.
- There is no air conditioner even though it is over 100 degrees much of the year.

This woman at a young age, came into Calcutta India with literally pennies in her pocket, and moved into the slums to care for the people who otherwise would have died.

- Her entire life was dedicated to helping people who could not help themselves.
- She fed people who had no food.
- She sheltered people who had no shelter.
- She clothed the naked.
- She gave medical care for those who had no physician.
- She to me is the eponymy of a Real person.

You see, you can't be real and pass by a hungry soul without feeding them.

- Real people meet real needs.
- Real people reach out when no one is reaching out.
- Real people help when no one is helping.

For to be real is to face the severity of the situation with childlike faith that says, I will do all I can do, and then we will see what God will do.

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I'm asking you to be real to someone this week

- Find a need and fill it.
- Find someone who needs what you received here today and ask him or her to come with you next week.
- Find a ministry in the church where we need help and get involved.

Be Real!

