

“THE GOD OF ABUNDANCE”

Matthew 14:14-21

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El Paso

Intro: *THE UNIVERSE IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE IN TERMS OF SIZE AND VARIETY...YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THE ASSERTION THAT THERE ARE MORE STARS IN THE UNIVERSE THAN GRAINS OF SAND IN ALL THE DESERTS AND ON ALL THE BEACHES ON EARTH...THAT BOGGLES THE MIND.*

- *Astronomers calculate the total number of stars in the universe by studying nearby galaxies, ones in which we can count the stars, to see how many it takes to make a galaxy shine. Then, based on detailed counts of galaxies we can see, and making conservative estimates of how many we can't see, they estimate the total number of stars in the universe. Our universe contains at least 70 septillion stars...7 followed by 23 zeros. Astronomers now estimate there exists roughly 10k STARS FOR EVERY GRAIN OF SAND ON EARTH!!*
- *They estimate there are over 2 trillion galaxies...our earth and solar system is a very small part of our Milky Way galaxy. (Pic #1)*
- *Made up of over 100 billion stars....over 100k light years across. How fast light travels in a set amount of time. 186k miles per second, 11,260,000 per minute, 671 million miles in an hour, 16.1 billion miles in a day, 5.8 trillion miles in a year...AND WE'RE ONLY JUST BEGINNING OUR JOURNEY OUT OF OUR GALAXY AND ACROSS THE UNIVERSE...INCOMPREHENSIBLE!*

WHY ALL THIS?...WHY NOT JUST WHAT WE CAN SEE, (Pic #2) THAT'S SPECTACULAR ENOUGH (3-6k stars, the sun/ the moon) SUFFICIENT TO MARVEL... HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD. (The furthest the human can see?...3m light years, The Triangulum Galaxy)

- *But NO!...He goes way beyond...to an absolutely mind boggling/ incomprehensible degree. (The universe 7t light years across)*
- ***[Psalms 19:1] “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.”***
- ***OUR GOD IS A GREAT GOD...AS EXPANSIVE AS THE UNIVERSE IS HIS LOVE, HIS POWER, HIS CAPACITY TO REDEEM...OUR GOD IS A GOD OF INCOMPREHENSIBLE ABUNDANCE!***
- *That's what we're going to focus on...*

[Matthew 14:14-21] And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the

fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

I. THE GOD OF ABUNDANCE

A. Familiar story/ miracle...only miracle recorded in all four gospels

1. OF ALL JESUS MIRACLES THIS MADE A POWERFUL IMPRESSION

a. **Approx 20k people men, women and children...and they are hungry.**

- *They day is spent...they've been with Jesus: Vs. 15: "When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food."*
- Very practical request...all day, evening, hungry...let em go. (The disciples were hungry to)
- Jesus: Very matter of factly **NO!**, not necessary...**Vs. 16: "But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."**
- Jesus is saying that from the position of being **THE GOD OF ABUNDANCE ...SMALL MATTER...VERY SMALL!**
- The disciples are responding from a practical/ rational level: We don't have the means to feed them...**Vs. 17: "And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish."**
- Not possible for us to feed them, help them...let them go into the surrounding villages...that's a good plan.
- **[Matthew 14:18] "He said, "Bring them here to Me."**

B. An important lesson Jesus is teaching us and His disciples

1. GOD IS A GOD OF ABUNDANCE

a. **Something God wants us to know and act in light of.**

- He's not a God of poverty/ lack/ want or need...there's nothing spiritual about not having enough...struggling financially...That's not what God intends for your life.
- If we're going to reach the world...Need to tap into abundance!
- The TEXT is one tiny little demonstration of this...They have 5 loaves and 2 fish and then they have enough to feed 20k people...**THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH?...AND THEN THEY DO!**
- Not only that, they have left overs...an abundance overflowing...**THIS IS A PICTURE OF THE NATURE/ CHARACTER OF GOD.**
- **HE'S NOT JUST A GOD WHO MEETS THE NEED BUT HE PROVIDES A SURPLUS TO MEET FUTURE NEEDS THAT ARE SURE TO COME.**
- Vs. 20: "So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained."

- God doesn't want to just meet the need, He wants to provide a surplus.
- It's in His nature to do so...*HE WANTS YOU TO EXPERIENCE THE ABUNDANCE THAT HE IS...AND HAVE CONTROL OF A SURPLUS.*
- The disciples got a taste of it in this text.

b. The Word of God underscores this premise over and over.

- [2 Corinthians 8:7] *"But as YOU abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that YOU ABOUND IN THIS GRACE also." (The grace of giving...you are to abound)*
- Abundance needs to flavor every area of your life...'**everything...**'
- [2 Corinthians 9:8] **AMP "And GOD IS ABLE to MAKE all grace [every favor and earthly blessing] come in abundance TO YOU, so that you may ALWAYS [under all circumstances, regardless of the need] have complete sufficiency in everything [being completely self-sufficient in Him], AND have an ABUNDANCE for every good work and act of charity."**
- This is abundance realized in your hands.
- [Ephesians 3:20] **"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us..."**
- Why not just 'able to do...all that we ask or think?' We don't always think in terms of abundance...'*all that we ask or think*' is to limiting for God...*HIS PLANS GO WAY BEYOND.* Ex. Pastor Mitchell.

2. IT'S NOT JUST *THAT* GOD IS A GOD OF ABUNDANCE.

a. He wants to be able to channel abundance and surplus into the hands of those He can trust.

- TEXT: The 12 baskets leftover were put into the hands of the disciples...They had authority over it to put it to use.
- [Deuteronomy 28:12] **"The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow."**
- *You're going to have a surplus to help others.*

II. HINDERING THE FLOW OF ABUNDANCE

A. That is a possibility

1. THE ABUNDANCE THAT GOD HAS NEVER LANDS WITH YOU

a. There is poverty in the world, lack, want and need.

- And ditto among God's people.

- A person who is not right with God can be a beneficiary of abundance.
- **[Matthew 5:45] "...He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."**
 - Anyone can benefit...but, we can also hinder.

2. THIS WAS A TEST

a. Something here they would need to learn.

- [John 6:5-6] *"Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do."*
- Jesus knew what He would do, they did not...Wants them to see... something they were going to need down the road.

B. Hindering the flow of abundance

1. DOUBT

a. Doubt and unbelief can work overtly...**'I DON'T believe!'**

- Also, can work very subtly...an opportunity for faith emerges and we don't see the possibility of the supernatural.
- None of the disciples said...*'Lord, lot's of people, maybe you could work a miracle.'*
- **THEY'RE JUST NOT INCLINED TO THINK THAT WAY.**
- The feeding of the four thousand came after this...**[Matthew 15:33] "Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?"**
- You would think the previous miracle (this one) would give them faith for this one!!
 - The possibility for a miracle never occurred to them?? **REALLY!**
- What's wrong with them...**THEY HAVE DOUBT LIKE WE DO WHEN AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A MIRACLE PRESENTS ITSELF AND WE DON'T SEE IT.**

2. NEGATIVE CONFESSION

a. What you say matters...how you talk.

- You can talk yourself right out of a miracle.
 - If left to the disciples; **[Mark 6:37] "...and THEY SAID..." "Shall we go and buy two hundred Denari worth of bread and give them something to eat?"**
 - \$14,500...*Doubt they were walking around with that much in their pockets, a little tone of mockery.*
- **BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY...JESUS WAS THERE TO OVERRIDE THEIR NEGATIVE CONFESSION...But had they got what they spoke...no miracle.**

- **[Luke 9:13b] "...And THEY SAID, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."**
- [John 6:7] "Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."
- A lot of negative confessing going on.
 - **BE VERY CAREFUL HOW YOU TALK WHEN YOUR FACING A NEED/ CRISIS.**
 - Mark 5...girl dead... 'they ridiculed'...Lit. Laughed to scorn/ derided.

3. NOT SEEING THE POSSIBILITIES

a. **They simply don't see the possibility for a miracle.**

- **HE'S TRYING TO TEACH THEM TO LOOK AT NEED THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH...AND PUT THAT UP AGAINST THE GOD OF ABUNDANCE.**
- No limits or boundaries.
- **[Ephesians 3:20] "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us..." WE NEED TO LEARN TO LOOK AT NEED THROUGH THAT LENSE.**
- Goes way beyond what you are thinking/ imagining/ hoping for.
 - **[1 Corinthians 2:9] "But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."**
 - **THE ABUNDANCE THAT GOD HAS FOR US IS HARD TO GRASP...SEE FULLY AND HAVE FAITH FOR...BECAUSE IT GOES SO FAR BEYOND.**

III. RELEASING THE FLOW OF ABUNDANCE

A. Very simple

1. CO-OPERATE

- a. **Co-operate with what God wants to do...such a simple premise but it's the baseline of the power, blessing and fruitfulness of our fellowship.**
- Vs. 18: "He said, "Bring them here to Me."
- They don't yet understand...but they fulfill the crucial element...**DO WHAT YOUR TOLD....LEARN TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE GOD OF ABUNDANCE.**
- Start co-operating with what Jesus is wanting to do, even if you don't understand.
 - What PM always said...very simple 'We discovered what God was doing... and committed ourselves to doing that.'
 - Ex. Jesus People Movement...PM co-operated with what he saw God doing...**AND HERE WE SIT TODAY!**
- **Vs. 19b: "...He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes."**

- Imagine what's going on there!!

B. Two ways to experience abundance

1. NATURAL MEANS

a. **The earth is filled with natural resources/ an abundance...can be tapped into by natural means.**

- Dig/ refine/ work/ cultivate
 - Send them into the villages to buy food.
- That would be one way...natural means to get resources...That's a good way, God intended resources to be cultivated by natural means and systems.

2. SUPERNATURAL MEANS

a. **Two ways to get these people fed...**

- Go into the villages and buy...that's one way/ a good way...or...**"He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes."**
- **RESOURCES CULTIVATED BY SUPERNATURAL MEANS.**
- Abundance by a miracle is unusual to us...not to Jesus.
- Famine/ Widow of Zarephath: **[1 Kings 17:16] "The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah."**
 - *I'm claiming a bin like that!!*
- Debt/ Widows oil/ vessels: **[2 Kings 4:7] Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest."**

C. God is a God of abundance...goes beyond meeting the immediate need.

1. ABUNDANCE MEANS SURPLUS

a. **TEXT: It's blessing to be distributed given to you beforehand so that you'll be ready when need arises.**

- *It was for the disciples!?...Way too much...Not just for them but for them to distribute for others.*
- *Ex. Rich fool...built bigger barns...had a surplus but he only thought of it in terms of himself. [Luke 12:16-19] "Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man **yielded plentifully**. And he thought **within himself**, saying, '**What shall I do**, since I have no room to store **my crops?**' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."*

- Nabal: Had abundance, enough to bless David and his meant with: [**1 Samuel 25:10-11**] **"Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?"**
- THIS IS WHAT I WANT SURPLUS FOR, NOT FOR MYSELF, BUT FOR OTHERS...TO ADVANCE THE KOG ON EARTH...TO MEET ALL THE NEEDS OF OUR PASTORS AND MISSIONARIES.
- God Give me surplus.
- [**2 Chronicles 31:5, 10**] **"As soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first-fruits...of everything... And Azariah the chief priest, from the house of Zadok, answered him and said, "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have PLENTY LEFT, for the LORD has blessed His people; and what is left is this GREAT ABUNDANCE."**
- God is inclined at channeling abundance toward your life.
- Ex. The earth is a miracle of abundance...and it keeps producing.
 - Water/ Oil/ precious metals/ natural gas/ timber/ coal...we aren't going to run out!...ever!! it's not a finite amount and then it's gone...continually replenished!
- **WE NEED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THIS FOR THE KOG...PASTORS, LEADERS THAT WILL OPERATE IN THE REALM OF ABUNDANCE/ SURPLUS TO THE KOG CAN BE ADVANCED.**

Giving creates Abundance and Surplus...as we give/ distribute...the disciples broke off a piece of bread/ fish...and more was supplied, the miracle took place in their hands...and more...and then surplus after everyone is fed.