

Bread & Fishes

by John Follette

The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering our limitations to God to experience true spiritual fulfillment and growth.

Scripture: Matthew 6:17, Matthew 14:15, Matthew 16:24, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:10

Topics: "Surrender To God", "Spiritual Consecration"

Description

John Follette emphasizes the importance of worshiping in spirit and truth, recognizing that only the Lord can satisfy our deep inner longings. He highlights the need to surrender all that we possess, stop counting our limitations, and have faith in God's ability to provide. Follette shares his personal journey of consecration and surrender, illustrating the transformative power of giving everything to the Lord. He stresses the significance of enduring sufferings and trials in secret, allowing God to use our inadequacies to bless others and bring eternal satisfaction.

Transcript

The Lord has placed within us the ability to worship as the means to find satisfaction for the deep inner longing that is resident within each one of us. This worship is to flow out from our inner depths, upward to the Lord, as we recognize that He alone is able to satisfy this hunger.

To worship in spirit and truth does not negate our use of form or structure. Rather, it has to do with the motivation of our heart in relation to these, that our seeking and worship is toward the Lord, alone.

I remember my first hungering for spiritual truth. I expressed this to those I thought would give spiritual guidance, and I was told that I needed a good education. I followed their recommendation and discovered many interesting things, but none of these satisfied my inner longing for spiritual reality.

I had been sent to an earthly village to seek food to satisfy the heavenly hunger that was within me.

Therefore, I returned still hungry. This has been repeated all too many times in the lives of those who

are spiritually hungry.

When faced with a need that was beyond their ability, the disciples of Jesus also sought a tangible, earthly solution.

"And evening coming on, His disciples came to Him, saying, the place is deserted and the time has already gone by. Send the crowd away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves" Matt 14:15.

Jesus had a better answer, "They do not need to leave, you give them something to eat" Matt 14:16b. Immediately, the disciples began to count their limitations - the five loaves and two fishes that were available. But Jesus had the answer to this problem. He said, "Bring them here to Me."

This represents a surrender of all that we possess. It is important that we stop counting our limitations, as the Lord knew about them before He asked us to feed others. We will never have sufficient to meet the need. Many fail at this point as they cannot see beyond their limited abilities and take a step of faith. Instead, they go to the "villages" seeking a seemingly easier way, which will never meet their real need.

Jesus is yet asking us, "Would you dare to surrender all to me?" He knows how limited we are, but our willingness is all He requires. However, it must be unconditionally placed in His hands.

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it, and whoever desires to loose his life for My sake shall find it" Matt 16:24-25.

An indication of spiritual maturity is our ability to become detached from things. If we cling to anything, it will hinder, or destroy the work that the Lord is seeking to accomplish within us. When Jesus asks us to bring to Him the "fish" that we have, we usually respond, "Lord, these fish do not amount to much." But He already knows that; all He is asking is that we give what we have to Him.

Before the Lord filled me with His Holy Spirit, He put me through a most grueling consecration. He was preparing the "soil" of my inner being that I might receive all that He had for me. One evening, He closed me in to Himself until three o'clock in the morning. I had never experienced anything like this as I had no prior understanding concerning the powerful groaning for God that was finding its expression through me.

I did not know that God could communicate with me, as I had not been taught these things. But somehow I knew that I was experiencing the presence of the Lord dealing with my spirit. When this began, it was not concerning sin or failure, as these had previously been dealt with. Rather, He was dealing with the legitimate issues of my life.

During this special time in His presence, I placed the Lord first in my life and unconditionally "buried" each member of my family. There was such a sense of victory and triumph. I had always liked intellectual things. Jesus said, "You are to surrender that." He took my social life, along with all that I desired to do and have. During this time, He was saying, "Will you fall into my hands? All I want is to possess you."

I did not repeat my past mistake and go to another village. Rather, I brought the deep spiritual hunger that was within me and placed it in His hands alone, trusting that He would do the rest.

As I brought these things, one by one, to the Lord, He accepted them and broke each of them into worthlessness. No one of us wants our lives wrecked, as self-preservation is all too present. But He was saying to me, "I cannot feed this hunger that is within you unless you first bring to me all that you have." As I have done this over and over again, He has multiplied and given it back to me, to pass out to the multitudes.

When I finally surrendered on His terms, it was the most real thing I have ever experienced. It seemingly wrecked my life by absolutely taking from me everything I had desired. I was as empty as a barrel with both ends knocked out. Then the next night, He filled me with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

When we give Him the inadequate bread and fish that we have, He uses these identical things, but they no longer function under the impulse and limitations of the Adamic, as they are now multiplied and

blessed of God.

This depth of surrender is never easy for any one of us. It may require the sustained dealings of the Lord until we are willing to place all that we have into His hands. We are not to publish our sufferings, rather we are to mask them. This is not deceptive, rather it is Scriptural.

"But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face; so that you do not appear to men to fast, but to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly" Matt 6:17-18.

When we are called upon to fast, we are to anoint our face with oil so we do not appear to be fasting. As He deals with us to place everything in His hands, He will lead us through many difficult experiences that we might fully enter into, and understand the "fellowship of His sufferings." He will only do this when He can trust us to not turn aside to the villages.

Only then will we be able to impart to others the rich deposit which we received through our sufferings. People say, "Where do you get all these things?" The "bread and fish" that I have comes through deep sufferings; then the Lord uses these very things to feed others a full and rich meal. But the sufferings remain masked.

The villages will never satisfy us. Placing our limited resources in His hands will bring eternal satisfaction to multitudes.

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