

# Hunger

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Now I like us to spend some time this morning and it's great really that today we're looking at the feeding of the 5000 as I hope you Parallel that and we will in the sermon. I hope to do that in the sermon with the Lord supper also But I'm going to begin this morning by going straight for the jugular Okay, and I'm going to say two things just to I hope challenges and to Focus our minds on what we're going to be looking at if what is sin do I'm going to ask that question and say it Does at least two things sin in our lives does at least two things so I'm going for the jugular no introduction straight into the Heart of the matter what does sin do for as well?

It does at least a couple of things the first thing it does is it blinds us we know that from the Bible Don't with it the sin blinds us it blinds us to the truth It blinds us to God's word it blinds us to the glory of Jesus Christ So you know so we treat him like kind of like anything else. He's just ordinary and plain doesn't really excite us doesn't really challenges doesn't Appropriate our worship because he's very plain and ordinary as glory has hidden sin does that for us it blinds us But sin also Deceives us and we know that from the Bible as well that that is clear and it deceives us to think or to Ignore at least to ignore spiritual realities. It deceives us into thinking that all that really matters is today All the matters is my flesh and blood my body The material the world in which we live that that's all that matters It deceives us to think that what we need for happiness and for joy is for our appetites to be satisfied our physical material

Appetites ambition wealth sex power all these things that as long as we have them Then we'll be happy and contented and sin deceives us into thinking that the material the physical the world the jobs the lives we live are all that matter and the God if we consider God or think about God at all. He's subservient to all of these things He's secondary. He's kind of like the puppy dog that we bring along behind us wagging his tail But he's not significant. He's not important He's not the Lord of our lives because sin deceives us into thinking My life and what I do is much more important than dealing with and thinking about God in my life Apart from what he can do for me So I think these are two things that will come through and come into our sermon And to the sermon as we look at this miracle of the feeding of the five thousand Why are we looking at miracles? We're looking at miracles because we recognize from the New Testament that miracles are signs

They are signs of something else There are a reminder to us that Jesus worked miracles in this life but this kingdom because he was thinking of his kingdom to come and They were tasters. They were pointing forward to the world which was to come and they were a sign of who he was and why he had come and What he had come to do in verse 14?

We're told that and John particularly of all the gospel writers John particularly speaks of miracles as signs and He works through them in his gospel in verse 14 He says after the people saw the miraculous sign Jesus did so he's speaking about These miracles and seeing them as significant spiritual markers for us So if we were to look at the signs of this miracle I would argue there's at least a couple of things that it's pointing us to as a sign It's telling us this miracle is telling us that things need to change and It's telling us that we need to put our faith in Jesus Christ These are two of the signs two of the the pointers that this Miracle leads us to consider and to think about things need to change the miracles and this miracles no different Are outworked in a broken world a world of poverty of illness of

[ 4 : 24 ] Storms of Creation at war with itself and with humanity the very next miracle Jesus walking in the water speaks of that of illness of death of Disatisfaction, you know, that's what this world in which we live. That's what it speaks of to us Among other things that are glimpses of what the world could be and what the world will be but currently we see that the things need to change and The miracles are a sign of that and Christ comes in with the answer not just globally Not just societally but individually he comes with a personal and with a global Message of salvation that in our lives things need to change and that we need Jesus Christ to enable us to do that. So things need to change miracles are a sign of that and

They're also a sign of our need for faith in Jesus Christ so we need to move away from thinking of the miracles as some kind of a popularity Drive by Jesus, you know, I'll be I'll make myself very popular if I do these miracles That actually did happen, but that wasn't the purpose of them. They made them popular for a while But he didn't do them in order to be popular He didn't do them to show that he was something a magic man And he didn't do them to manipulate people to be followers of him because he had this power or this ability Over nature and over humanity and over the world which we live but all of them point Forward to his work of salvation point forward to redemption and point forward what he had come to do they Speak of his power His passion for us and his plan to redeem us to redeem our people to himself and what that looks like for the future so miracles are a sign and

So we come to this miracle and because it's a miracle. It's like a picture So it doesn't really need much explanation. I don't need to spend a lot of time Explaining this miracle itself explanatory. It's quite easy. It's interesting and it's easy to understand It's called it's actually it's a misnomer. It's entitled the feeding of the 5000 But we're told in the Gospels it was 5000 men who were fed probably the groups were split up into men and women and children and Disciples probably get fed up after counting 5000 men and they stopped there probably was 10 to 15 Thousand people would have been there so it's the title of it's maybe a misnomer, but it's interesting because it's in all four Gospels Do you know the only other thing it's in all four Gospels?

Well the death and resurrection of Jesus But this is in all four Gospels Which suggests to us it's a fundamental miracle. It's important and it's just something very significant to say to us and Jesus comes to Perform this miracle on the back of sadness and grief and sorrow His cousin has died brutally His head has been cut off her it has cut off his head because of His faith and trust and belief in God John the Baptist So he comes into the city. We're not told that here. We're told that in one of the other Gospels, but we come here and It's this huge crowd following him and he is compassion and he loves them He is concerned for them. We're told in Mark's gospel that they're like a sheep. They're like sheep without a shepherd He wants to teach them. He wants to care for them and he loves them and He wants practically to look after them. So he feeds them. He sees the need for feeding and

He throws out this challenge to his disciples, you know If you get the bread can you buy the bread for this and feed all and the disciples say no way This is impossible you can't possibly do that It would take eight months wages to be able to feed all of this people impossible Jesus knows that he's testing his disciples were told and then knowing what he was going to do all along he Outworks this remarkable miracle he gives thanks and he Uses the small offering of a boy who has a picnic with him a puny picnic Quite a big picnic for himself. It has to be said but for 10 to 15,000 not quite so much five loaves and two fish and God Jesus breaks that bread gives thanks breaks the bread and Has the people sitting groups throughout the hillside and they're fed without a riot and without all pushing and shoving and they all

[ 9 : 20 ] Have plenty to eat and in the end there's 12 baskets left over which Jesus says gather up Don't just leave it lying about on the grass if you walk through the meadows this morning and we have a very opposite Message to come from Jesus that he didn't leave everything strewn all over the place like the city of Edinburgh just now Which is a waste and a mess, but he gathered all up Used it feeling of the 5000 so what are we to be taught?

As we take the living word of God and I take it into our own lives and take it into our own hearts and apply it to our Christian lives today Well, can I go back to the sign?

That we saw at the beginning what these are at least a little bit of a sign towards I'm sure there's much more in Medical than that. I'm able to bring out this morning But the same is true as we look at our own lives and as we read the scripture and think about it in Our own circumstances things need to change So we need to see beyond the story itself It's not just about bread being multiplied fish being multiplied God providing through Jesus Christ for this crowd in a physical way It's not simply about Satisfying physical hunger. It is much more than that It's about recognizing a spiritual hunger and a spiritual need that only Jesus Christ can fulfill Christ is offering more than bread and fish He is speaking of something greater and it's interesting. We didn't read further on in the passage

Jesus walks in water and then He makes these great claims to be the bread of life and it's interesting He speaks to the disciples and others and he said I tell you the truth in verse 26 You're looking for me not because you saw miraculous signs But because you ate loaves and had your fill do not work for food that spoils But for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give you on him God the Father is placed to seal of approval So Jesus is applying it and saying it's not just about what you're gonna eat and drink and don't follow me just because of that but Recognize that I am the provider of the bread of life and which is eternal life and so he's read these He's pointing out that his miracles are much more than just Physical wonders he's pushing them far beyond that and I think sometimes in our lives We need also to Challenge ourselves about an attitude to Jesus Christ because sometimes I think we're missing the point

Because we treat him like our sugar daddy that we want him to give us all the things that we want in this life in Material terms I become a Christian because I want God to bless me and give me all that I want and then when he doesn't give Me all that I want we go in the half and we will pet it lip and we say well Jesus is no use because he doesn't give me what I want He's my Santa Claus figure and I want him I want happiness in the same way that everyone else wants happiness with a good bank account and with a great ambition and with power and with the Material level and Jesus is saying these things are not unimportant But they are not primary to our being and our identity because our identity It is deeper than that and we don't use Christ as a sugar daddy to give us all of these Material things and if in the belief that that alone will make us content and satisfied and fulfilled as people

[ 13 : 04 ] Whatever these things happen to be so sometimes we need to change our view of Christ and also Recognize him for who he is in verse 35 again. We didn't read this passage But it's the application in many ways of the miracle. He says Jesus declared I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty He broadens even at that point. He broadens it beyond the mere Bread image and uses drink as well and he who believes me will never be thirsty So we recognize that that's why Jesus came and we recognize that as part of the sign that Jesus is giving here You know John knows that in John 1 29 at the very beginning of the book John the Baptist Before he's been beheaded says behold the Lamb of God That Jesus is coming for a specific purpose to be God's lamb to be God's sacrificial lamb and

Throughout the book of John. We have that being Unfolded and revealed to us more and more and And that's very significant. We're told and I don't think it's insignificant that the Jewish Passover feast was near that's the Passover feast that Worked itself into the Lord's support in the New Testament So it was around that time people were thinking about the deliverance from Egypt they were thinking about the Passover and they were thinking about the manna in the desert and The provision from heaven that God brought down to the people and then he goes on to speak What regarded as some of the hardest words that he speaks most difficult words when he says that you know unless you eat my flesh And drink my blood you can't be you can't be part of me And again, he's using symbolism and imagery pointing forward towards what we're gonna be doing the Lord supper Where he symbolically says that as we do this we take him for ourselves we eat him and we drink him

We entrust our lives to him. So there's this amazing and Fusion of ideas and thinking that comes into this Miracle that he is the one as the bread of life that provides deep-seated and lasting satisfaction purpose and joy Which we will not find if we are simply looking for it in this material world and in its ambitions And in its physical pleasures and in its material blessings, however good and important, I'm not saying they're not important They're God's gifts, but if that is what all we're living for we are we are going to run on empty Because we recognize man Jesus sees it here. I'm not here elsewhere Man can't live by bread alone But by everything that proceeds from the mouth of God sin blinds us Sin deceives us so that we can't see that and don't see that or choose not to see that something

But we end up running on empty. God is Jesus is the bread of life that is God's provision and He comes and he lives and he dies on the cross the author of life Volunteers himself into death to take our guilt and the deception and the pain and The blindness that sin brings into our hearts and by his power he breaks it He has risen again on the third day and he Provides for us How I enjoy preaching to the sound of music in the background Not but anyway, that's life And it changes everything, you know it changes every God's provision changes everything and he brings into our lives grace and peace and satisfaction and hope and

Belonging it speaks of God's the bread of life speaks of God's provision and also of course God's commitment There's an interesting little verse. I mentioned it briefly verse 6 Where he speaks to Philip and asks, you know, why shall we where or he says buy bread for everyone?

[ 17 : 27 ] And Philip says well, I don't know what to do and then Jesus says he asked us only to test him for here He already had in mind what he was going to do and there's this divine sense of commitment that's implied and revealed in that text that Jesus knew what he was going to do. He was he was doing it for a purpose and he had planned to do it and it was clear in his mind and you can take that and broaden that and Be reminded of God's commitment in The plan of salvation. He knew what he was going to do It was still you know the lamb of God John 1 It's a lamb of God who's come to take away the sin of the world the sin of you and and I and in this 21st century congregation deliberate clear focused sacrificial love committed love for us and So we see God's commitment in this picture of Jesus being the bread of life and he sent us please don't just live

For your own material and physical appetites don't live just like that It it will it will please and satisfy us for a while sometimes Sometimes it'll be a just an aching and annoying dissatisfaction that is and Frustrating and sometimes we'll get exactly what we want But it wouldn't satisfy us Because that's the nature of it, isn't it?

There's not many people who reach the top of their ambition tree or their wealth tree or their Lay ship tree and then sit back and say I've made it. Everything's fantastic. I now understand the meaning of life. It generally isn't the case. But sin does deceive and blind us so we recognize and see him as the bread of life and our need for change and it may be that today we need to change our attitude to Jesus Christ and to what we think about him in order to receive him and that's the second point. Sign meaning that I'm going to bring out today and with this will close our need of faith in Christ, our need for change and our need for faith in Christ and I'm not just meaning that from the point of view of putting that out to you if you're not a Christian here today. And your need to put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, but I'm putting it to my own heart and to all of us as Christians.

Because we have a tendency towards unbelief. We always have that tendency. We move towards unbelief all the time. It's a kind of pre-delection of our lives. We move that way and it's an ongoing battle for us that we're encouraged to go back to God and ask for his grace and strength very often. We have a can't do attitude in our Christian lives, but like the disciples Jesus said feed them. You know, it's impossible you can't possibly expect us to do that. This life of feet you can't, we can't do this. It's impossible. We are always great. You know the disciples would have looked at how many, how many bread fish it can't be done. Mathematically in every other way, it's impossible at best people get a tiny little crumb and it'll be a nightmare. We couldn't do it and we're good at that in our lives. And I think we're especially good at that spiritually can't do now. Jesus is asking too much. It's impossible. This walk of faith I need to go back and just feed my desires, my appetites materially because what Jesus asked is impossible and we're great with problems.

I know you won't, we'll win. We will. Problem upon problem because that's kind of in our nature and it takes us to unbelief. But he wants us to do the opposite of that and the miracles speak of that. They speak of walking a different road and living a different kind of way. That is not typical. That's why they're remarkable. That's why they're out of the ordinary. That's why they grab our attention and they're saying this is how I want you to be. I want you to live. With this attitude of change that comes from putting our faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to react to these miracles with trust in Jesus Christ. There's no other way he says. But to follow me this way and to receive me as Savior and eat and drink me symbolically. Taking me to yourself as Lord and Savior and God and in our lives. You will find today. I get I don't know I mean 120 people or 15-20 people here more with the kids each of you will have different issues and battles and struggles today and as Christians will have that and some of you might be going through really difficult times and

[ 22 : 19 ] It may well be that Jesus is doing what Jesus does. Which is as he said here. He was testing the disciples and he tested them. He already knew he was gonna do. We were testing them because he wanted them to trust him to do what seemed ridiculous. It seemed impossible. He wanted them to trust in him that there was no other way and Jesus is saying today I want to be the bread of your life. I want you to rely and trust on me in your circumstances, which may be difficult. Because Jesus is more interested in our growth in grace to be like him rather than our comfort. He isn't generally here just to kind of rub us in the back and say dare, dare though. He is the friend that sticks closer than a brother and there are times when his comfort is unparalleled and significant and important, but often in our lives He is dealing with our desires and appetites which keep us from him and which we kind of use to

Move away from him and to distance ourselves from him He bears no rivals and he doesn't want us to be slaves to appetites Which will not fulfill us and will which will not bring us joy and contentment in our lives So his life the life of faith is impossible It's like a disciple walking and seeing a crowd of 15,000 and just a small picnic. That's what it's like Redden's probably many of you read a quote this week from Tim Keller. It's a very good one about trusting this is if you if you have a God that's great and transcendent enough to be mad at Because he hasn't stopped evil and suffering suffering in the world and in your life That's my added bit then you have in parentheses at the same time a God great and transcendent enough to have a good reason For allowing it to happen that you don't know Indeed you can't have it both ways and the miracles point to that they say trust me with the impossibilities the difficulties the trouble troubles and the struggles of our lives and we

We come to him with trust we participate in the Lord's Supper because we trust and because we acknowledge our trust and because we need reminded of that greatest miracle of all the resurrection and What that speaks to of the death of death and the life we have in Christ so we respond with trust and Faith to Christ, but also with gratitude I think this is maybe a byproduct. Well, it's not really but it's maybe not the main point of this miracle but gratitude in a response to Christ is is Important and significant Jesus gave thanks were told before he broke the bread He gave thanks to God as the provider of bread and fish and he gave thanks to God because it pointed forward to the provision spiritually of what he was doing and That's what grace does to us doesn't it it makes us thankful it gives us

Gratitude to Jesus for what he's done for us for his provision. We're taking part in the Lord's Supper That's the Eucharist that just means to give thanks. So the core of it is giving thanks It's hard to take part of the bread and the wine and grumble and moan and complain and say God's miserable and rubbish And he doesn't do anything for me, but and a thankless Because he has provided so much for his what provision we have as believers in terms of forgiveness and friendship with God and life eternal a new heart the bad and difficult and troubling things in life being taken and molded and used Protected from and ultimately going to live with him gratitudes a great thing. I think I still think No old-fashioned guy. It's a good thing to give thanks before food Because food speaks about God's provision physically in this world but also

Pointing forward spiritually. It's good to give thanks. I think it's a good witness She's going to McDonald's. It's good witness to give thanks before you have well Maybe you shouldn't give thanks before you have a double whammy burger or whatever it is But whatever you go to eat isn't it good to give thanks to acknowledge the one who's given it rather than just Straight into your food and what it says it just says well, I'm just this is just part of my material life I'm just a physical person and I'm just eating but giving thanks just as it stops It stops us and makes us think about who we are why we are and What is more important? There's more important things in our appetites in our food than our next meal and And but yet he's a provider so give thanks, but also to and I'm nearly finished with obedience Signs speaks about faith in Christ and responding to him with obedience, you know The disciples didn't have much to offer They simply had to trust but they didn't just trust then and sit down and do nothing

[ 27 : 49 ] You know Jesus at that point in the miracle didn't make the bread hover into the hands of all the people and The fish he used his disciples to serve the people he used the the picnic of the little boy To feed the people so he used means to Fulfill this great sign this great miracle and so in our lives as we trust in him grace isn't there to make us a lazy or complacent or Sit back and sit you know, well and just let Christ do everything He uses us and he wants us to follow him and obey him in word You know, he's our daily bread. We eat him physically we eat him his word You know his word is his bread and we eat that daily we learn from him. We we follow him. We serve him in word and indeed So we follow even Jesus example here and this is where I think the practical element of the miracle outworks

It is a practical miracle as well. He did feed people who were hungry. He had compassion on them. He taught them as well and we as believers should mimic and imitate that in our communities and in our societies also we should seek after equality. We should be looking for justice. We should be wanting the elevation of poverty. We should feed the hungry. We should give the cup of cold water to those who need it. Not because that in itself will bring utopia or heaven or an end to suffering our problems. But because it points forward to what we believe Jesus will do in the new heavens and the new earth and with that I will finish coming to this last bit. Which the miracles we so I'm saying we do need practically to think about these things. I don't think it's right for Christians to just shrug their shoulders. You know the whole world is going to be destroyed and he was going to be in new heavens new earth doesn't matter about poverty or all of these things. There's always going to be injustice. When Jesus said the poor you always have with you. He didn't mean to say don't feed them.

He recognized but right through the Bible. There's this great strand of standing up for the oppressed of standing up for the hungry and standing up for the needy and standing up for those who don't have and providing for them and it's one of the great marks of the Christian church as it points forward to the grace of Christ so our need of faith and faith that is obedient great full of gratitude trusting and hopeful and with this I finish so the sign the miracles speak of something in the future. They speak the point forward to the end of what Jesus came to alleviate. The end of suffering the end of illness the end of death the end of hunger the end of sadness. The end of separation all of the miracles point forward to that great new heavens and the new earth were in dwells righteousness when Christ returns to bring his people into the new heavens and the new earth and isn't it great in the Bible? that that future kingdom is

The images of what is it? It's a wedding feast. It's a feast. It's a wedding feast. That's what the new heavens the provision that God makes is. That's the image. It's one of abundance. It's one of Fellowship with Christ at the center. Christ the host he's at the center and that's what the Lord's supper and that's why it's so significant that we look to it today and enjoy it today because it points forward to that. It's there's a tree of life which gives fruit every there's every month. There's a river of life running through all symbolic and maybe sometimes real but it's symbolic of of opulence and of abundance and of satisfaction and of joy and a pleasure, you know a wedding feast is what we my niece was married in the so-and-we were on holiday and she Kairin and Andy get married in Dundee and it was kind of a taste of that. You know, we were with our family.

We were their friends. Christ was there. Christ got the glory we ate together. We drank together. We danced together. It was wonderful and yet imperfect obviously because it's in this world and it ends, you know. What do we say a really brilliant fantastic wedding pass so quickly it's ending. But we have this a wonderful reality of provision to look forward to in Christ if you only can see this life. You will not find the satisfaction and the life you were created to enjoy. C.S. Lewis says Don't let don't let your happiness depend on something that you will lose. If you're living for this life and Christ is your appendix. Then you'll probably find you're dull spiritually and don't have much of an appetite for him. Because he wants you to make him preeminent. Make him Lord of this life so that we enjoy all that this life has to offer.

[ 33 : 10 ] Through the prism of the cross and through the prism of relationship with God without making them idols or putting them into place of preeminence or giving them tasks that they simply can't fulfill. Money wealth power relationship can't provide what you need. Of what I need only Christ can do that. Life and life to the fool and we celebrate and rejoice. That truth and that hope as we move into our communion this morning. That's power heads and pray together. Lord God. We ask and pray that you would bless us. You'd bless us as we celebrate the Lord's supper together as it points forward to the wonderful marriage feast marriage supper of the lamb and as it reminds us of our personal responsibility to trust in you by eating and drinking personally, but also of this wonderful community.

This family this body this people to whom we belong that we are moving forward together Towards this great future and we pray your blessing on us as we do so We pray for your help and for your guidance and for your hope and for your joy and for your love To keep us and to protect us Lord God we ask these things and seek your blessing on us in Jesus name. Amen. You