Monday, July 27, 2026

A week ago, I was preaching and realized that I had been speaking for thirty minutes. THIRTY Minutes!! I never preach that long. But I wanted to share what God had presented to me in studying the scripture.

This week is communion Sunday and I realized my sermon was beginning to be a bit lengthy. Mike has been begging for a weekly article for our website so I thought I would share some additional thoughts that came out of my sermon preparation. If you want to know what I am preaching on, check out Matthew 14: 13-21.

One commentator - Ray Fowler- had the following points to make about this scripture. This isn't all he said, but what I took away as most essential. Although I loved his ideas, they didn't fit with my sermon but are worthy of sharing.

When God calls you to do something - whether it be to preach or start a ministry- God will equip you for that task. You should first ask yourself what people need. You may think you have the answers, but do people really need what you are thinking about doing? I was inspired to perhaps build a food pantry (a small road-side building or cabinet) in our neighborhood. But is that really what people need? The second question would be: how do I find out what people need? In this scripture, evening was closing in and the crowd was away from civilization. They obviously needed something to eat. I know that if God is truly calling me to do something like build a small food pantry, I will hear the call again. And I know God will find ways for me to evaluate the needs in the community where we live. In fact, Fowler suggests being aware of people's needs all around you all the time. That way you are also are aware of when God cals you.

Fowler goes on to say that we should focus on the tasks needed not the obstacles perceived. In the feeding of the 5,000, the disciples were focused on the impossibility of feeding so many with so little. They were focused on what they didn't have and the problem of so many hungry people. Jesus simply asked them what they had, blessed it and gave it to them to hand out. We are often like this - someone suggests a ministry to do in the church and we find ourselves making all kinds of reasons or excuses why we can't possibly do that ministry. Instead of this, we need to focus on the steps to make it happen.

The last point of this section of Fowler's commentary (I really think this was actually his sermon) is that when God calls you to do something and you focus on the tasks you must also bring what you have. Five loaves. Two fish. That's all you have but God can make it something that meets people's needs. Think about something God has placed on your heart. If you ran with the idea, did God not provide? If you thought you didn't have much to contribute, I bet that God made your contributions multiply.

God calls and equips. We must see the need, focus on the tasks needed, and bring what we have.

Have a great week!

Amelia