

Amazingly Miraculous – How Do You Respond? - Miracles 5

When Jesus does the unexplainable - the amazingly miraculous: How do you respond? *That's an incredible story from a couple in our church body: Tim and Sally Rasmussen. There is more to that story that I will show you in a few minutes! But first, hear the question again ... (repeat question) / People respond in all kinds of ways. You and I often respond differently than we might think. Today, we are going to see Jesus do the unexplainable in God's Word & we are going to see & hear more from the Rasmussens as Jesus does the miraculous and then, I pray we get to see how we honestly respond to Jesus.*

We are going to start in verse 1 of John 6 and we are going to walk thru this story just trying to answering one question: **When Jesus does the unexplainable – the amazingly miraculous: How do you respond?**

John 5:1-15 (ESV) 1 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.

Besides the last week of Jesus' life, this is the **only day** that was covered by all four writers that recorded the life of Jesus.

All told the same story – just from a slightly different vantage point. One of the things these different vantage points help with is why they went across this lake. 1) Matthew tells us Jesus had just got word that John the Baptist (Jesus' cousin) had been murdered – beheaded by Herod. *Jesus wanted to get alone with God the Father and His guys to grieve.* 2) Mark tells us they were also crossing the lake to get away from the crowds that had gathered on the west side to see the miracle worker Jesus – *because he had been doing many unexplainable and amazingly miraculous things.* 3) Mark also tells us - the disciples had just returned from being sent out by Jesus to preach and heal and many had followed them back to this place. *It was so crowded because they were all quasi-celebrities at this point - they couldn't even sit to eat.*

This is the beginning of Jesus' day. *What a start to what will be one crazy day!*

2 And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.

So, Jesus puts his disciples on a boat to escape the crowds – but it doesn't work. Mark tells us - when the people saw him leave, they ran ahead along the shore and beat them to where they were going. And as they crowd ran to meet them – they gathered even more people who heard, it's Jesus – who has been healing the sick in unexplained and amazing ways!

3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. All 4 accounts tell us Jesus went up on a mountain – again - to be alone with his disciples **4** Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. **5** Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him,

But again the crowds followed. I mean – Jesus can't catch a break. Ever have those days – you just want to get alone and it just isn't happening. *But Jesus was moved by the crowd – for their body and soul.* Matthew says, he gathered the crowd on the side of a hill – and taught them (*soul*) and healed (*body*) many. It was getting late and Jesus knew most of these people hadn't eat all day or had only had a small breakfast at the most. So ...

Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?"

6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.

Jesus had it in his mind to care for these people - for their body and their soul. *So He taught them about God but now he was about to show them God.* But not just the crowd, He wanted his disciples, the 12 who followed him closest, to see who He really was – so He asks Philip (1 of the 12 who's from this area) is there a restaurant near. Jesus knew there was no place that could take care of this many. This was a test from God that always involved two things: **1) God tests to reveal or prove who we are.** (To prove to God who we are – no. Jesus knew Philip and the other 11. The test is for Philip and the other disciples to see into themselves and what they really believed about God and Jesus. **2) God tests us to improve who we are.** Jesus also wanted Philip and his disciples to be changed by this experience. *God wants to transform our hearts and minds. He is not just teaching moral lessons – God is always about changing hearts.*

7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little."

A denarii was a day's wage for a common laborer and could buy 3 meals for a family of 4. So if 1 denarii could do 12 meals, then 200 denarii could feed about 2400 people. Even then Philip says – this amount wouldn't be enough for each to get scraps of bread. Why does he say this? ... (*start in vs 10*)

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, **9** "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" **10** Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

He says this because they have no food and there are **A LOT of PEOPLE!** 1) How many people? *Maybe 15,000-20,000 / 5,000 men, always more women than men always and there were children as well following Jesus. Josephus, a historian who lived at this time, said the crowds were usually 3-4xs the number of men counted.* 2) In v8, they find a small amount of food from a boy – enough for 2 maybe – and Jesus is going to use this to care about everyone's soul and body. (*Jesus smiles?*)

11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. **12** And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." **13** So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. **14**

What an amazing moment! Just in case you are not amazed by this moment – let me help you see how unexplainable and amazing this miracle was.

1) Jesus made food for close to 20,000 people from almost nothing. People had healed and cast out demons – but no one, no one had ever made food. How he did it with a simple prayer is impossible to explain. *But there is a second piece.*

2) Can you imagine how long it took to hand out food to 20,000 people? It takes 100 about 20 minutes to go thru a line here. How long do you think it took the disciples to feed 20,000 on the side of a hill as sundown approached. It's not like they came with catering equipment or 50 or even 20 extra baskets. Brandon and I – 2 ex waiters figured these numbers.

1) 1000 > 1 min per 100 > 10 minutes for the 1,000. 2) 9,000 > 2 min per 100 > 180 minutes for the 9,000

3) 10,000 > 3 min per 100 > 300 minutes. That is a total of 490 minutes or 8+ hours.

This doesn't take into account 1) on the side of a mountain, 2) how it was given out at each 100 without a free for all.

There is no way this took 8 hours to pass out or more. There would have been a riot and it would have been morning.

There is still night action in this story to come Mike Byrd will be preaching about.

POINT: two unexplainable & amazing things happened in this miracle 1-making of the food 2-passing out the food.

What was the people's response to this unexplainable – amazingly miraculous event?

14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

15 Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

The people had never seen anything like this. It was beyond unexplainable and amazing - this was life altering.

Why? They had found in Jesus ... **a fountain of youth.** They thought, "We have everything we need in this guy. He can heal us and He can feed us. We could live forever. Let's make this guy king."

The crowd missed the point of the miracle. They saw their greatest need as physical. So yes, you can be king bc you make my life better – really beyond anything I could ever imagine. But somehow they missed his teaching in which he said every time – your soul is in need of a King to rescue and restore it. This is not what they were responding to. They didn't rise up to make him king after his teaching. They rose up after the unexplainable – the amazing and said, "We want you to be king of our life (you can make our life better) – but not king of our soul."

What was the disciples response to this unexplainable – amazingly miraculous event?

Next week – Jesus will walk to them on the water. Let's fast forward to when he does this for we get to see their response to this unexplainable – amazingly miraculous moment...

Mark 6:51-52 (ESV) 51 And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵² for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Mark 8:14-21 (ESV) 14 Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. 15 And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." 16 And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. 17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? *Are your hearts hardened?* 18 Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." 20 "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." 21 And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

"The hardened heart is a particular problem for people who are around Jesus or things of Jesus. An ignorant heart cannot harden itself. Only a knowing heart can harden itself, and that is why those closest to Jesus stand in grave danger to a hardened heart." J R Edwards. The disciples – closest to Jesus - were hardened to the truth – Jesus was GOD, Everything, the Only Thing whom they desperately needed for the body and their soul.

What is your response to this unexplainable – amazingly miraculous event?

There are two reactions in this story that may be our response:

1) You and I become a FAN of Jesus. You and I see Jesus' work and miss Jesus. We want him to fix our problems but we really don't want him to be Rescuer or Ruler of our soul?

The people wanted to make Jesus king. They were fans, devotees, groupies – for the moment – bc Jesus seemed to be able to fix the greatest problem they had. (Later - Crucify Him!) Are you a fan of Jesus? (repeat question)

2) You and I become DISILLUSIONED with Jesus. You and I see Jesus' work and miss Jesus. Instead of becoming a believer we become a cynic in Jesus and the people around Him.

Maybe at some point, the pushing, shoving, selfish, missing the point crowd who just wanted the miracles of Jesus –

made the disciples frustrated with the crowds – and Jesus. Disciples, “Doesn’t he know they are just using him? Why does he heal that guy and feed that person and help them? Doesn’t he know? Something happened. They were right there with Jesus and ... they grew disillusioned Jesus – hardened.

Have you been there? Are you there? Disillusioned with the people around Jesus and by association – Jesus himself? Went through a season in college – I was done with church and Jesus. The further I ran – the more I wound around Christians. Weirdest people on campus befriended me, and a guy sat by me one day in a campus of 5,000 and said, hi I’m Roger Glidewell. He was a college minister. Met Fran’s brother before I met her running from Jesus. One crazy thing after another drew me back to Jesus as God opened my eyes to see his care for my body and soul. This is the only miracle in the 7 recorded in John where no one believed. Why? Don’t know – but I know this. God didn’t do this miracle just for these people or even just for the disciples. He did it for you and I – for there is a 3rd response:

3) You and I are moved by His care for our body and soul and become a worshiper of Jesus.

Except for the last day of his life, this was probably the most difficult, and most exhausting day of Jesus’ life. He loses his cousin to a murdering God hating king, His disciples come back overjoyed, the crowds are enormous, he is done. They cross the lake, - but the crowds follow. He tries to get alone with his disciple to rest and grieve – but the crowds follow. And instead hiding or pushing the people away - he teaches (cares for their soul) & he heals & he feeds (cares for their body & soul) as he tries to reveal his love and his power as GOD alone.

When we see Jesus’ work and we see Jesus as caring and all-powerful GOD, KING of kings, Rescuer of our soul and only rightful Ruler of our soul – we become worshipers.

I see God’s overwhelming greatness and I am humbled. I see His perfect holiness and love and I see my great need for him in my soul – not just my problems. I am the problem. The end of all this – I see that all this – this life, this joy, this suffering, this miracle – is about God. All is about God and I need Jesus’ rescuing and restoring work in my soul to live in this life that is all about God. 30

When we see Jesus as caring and all-powerful GOD, KING of kings, Rescuer of our soul and only rightful Ruler of our soul – we become worshipers.

Oh please – don’t miss Jesus today in either of these stories.

The saving of Sally’s life was not just to give her a second chance. It was to reveal Jesus as GOD, KING of kings, rescuer of our soul and only rightful ruler. You heard Tim and Sally say it – All this – all this miracle and all this life is about Jesus.

Don’t miss Jesus in this feeding of the 20,000. This is not a moral lesson about how we should share our food to those in need or how God can do great things with our tiny offerings. Nice and true thoughts – but not the greater reality.

** Jesus made the food – 1) because he cared but moreover, 2) because He was revealing to everyone that He was KING of kings who alone gives us life now and forever. But it is not by healing our bodies over and over and feeding us forever.*

Rather – we live forever when God removes sin and its broken effects from our body and soul.

God did this by putting all our punishment for our sin, our rebellion to holy God on Jesus. He bore our guilt and our shame and made us holy – right with God. By faith in Jesus’ work God sends His Spirit to breath new life into our soul that had been wrecked by sin and its brokenness. God’s Spirit in us – by faith in Jesus’ work gives us life now and forever.

TODAY – how will you respond to Jesus who does the unexplainable and amazingly miraculous.

** If your heart is hardened – you have become a cynic, I want to pray now that God would soften even break your heart for your need of Jesus to rescue and rule your soul.*

** If your heart has revealed to you that you are just a fan. You want him to fix your problems – but you really don’t want him to rescue or rule your life, I want to pray not that God would reveal to you that Jesus has not called you to be a fan – but a worshipper – who falls at his feet and says – Jesus you alone can rescue my soul. You alone deserve to rule my soul.*

Today – come to Jesus – faith him and become a worshiper of the only true King. 40