

# DAY 29

FOR I WAS HUNGRY AND  
YOU GAVE ME FOOD  
MATTHEW 25:35

We hear a lot about food in our country. We hear a lot about obesity and how much Americans eat. In fact, in 2011, the average American ate a ton of food (1996 pounds to be exact). That includes more than 630 pounds of dairy, 185 pounds of meat, 197 pounds of grains, almost 700 pounds of fruits and veggies, and more than 200 pounds of sweets and fats!<sup>34</sup> Most of us don't have to worry about eating; we simply have to ask, "What are we going to eat today?" However, there are still millions of people in our country that are without food or are in need.

Yet Americans discard 40 percent of the food supply every year, and the average American family of four ends up throwing away an equivalent of up to \$2,275 in food each year. Just a 15 percent reduction in losses in the U.S. food supply would save enough to feed 25 million Americans annually.<sup>35</sup> I can't blame everyone else on this one. My family suffers from this too and we've started to do something about it. We noticed our two boys barely eat half of what we give them. My wife I began to feel bad about this and started to serve ourselves less because we realized we would get full just by eating their leftovers and we could then throw less food away.

Jesus was talking to a large group of people when He drops this bomb on them:

*"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I*

*was in prison and you came to visit me.'*

*"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'*

*"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"<sup>36</sup>*

We've learned in this Challenge that one of the ways people will see God in us is when we actually do what He says to do. Here Jesus says that whatever we do for the least of those in the world, the least privileged, we've done it for Him. He says that **the people who take care of the least privileged will be the ones who are welcomed into His Kingdom.** This isn't a scare tactic. Jesus isn't saying, "If you don't do this, then you'll burn in Hell." He's simply saying, "The people who believe in Jesus are the people who help the least privileged." That's just what they do! The stronger a person's relationship with God, the more natural it becomes to take care of God's children in this world.

My role on a board of directors for a food pantry here in Mount Dora, FL is a constant reminder to me that there are a countless number of people who are hungry. Even in America, the land of blessing and opportunity, people are still starving. They need help! Who better to help them than the followers of Jesus?

If your cupboards are full, if you don't have to worry about what you will eat or drink tomorrow because you know you will have plenty, then you can help in this cause.

In this Old Testament story, Elisha helps out a widow. All she has is one jar of olive oil but as we can see from this story, God can turn a little bit into a lot.

2 KINGS 4:1-7

*The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the Lord. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."*

*2 Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?"*

*"Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a small jar of olive oil."*

*3 Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. 4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."*

*5 She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. 6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one."*

*But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.*

*7 She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."*

# GIVE FOOD TO THE NEEDY.

Whether it's giving it to someone on the side of the street or donating to your local food pantry, be generous. Clear out your cupboards or go shopping and collect food for the needy. You can either donate on your own or bring it to your local church to give to a food pantry.

**SPEAKING OF THAT,** if your local church doesn't have a food pantry box where people can donate food on a regular basis, tell your pastor you are going to bring one in!

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