



Trusting in God

By Brother Scott
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Today I want to speak to you about trusting in God. Although there are many examples throughout the **Bible** of people trusting in God, from terrible sinners to prophets and everything in between, there is one story in particular that I am going to focus on. Please turn with me in your **Bible** to **Matthew 14, Verse 13**.

Now before we start, I want us to catch up on what happened right before this. Jesus just found out that His cousin John the Baptist had been killed by Herod. Herod had imprisoned John the Baptist for telling him it wasn't lawful for him to have Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. On Herod's birthday, Herodias' daughter danced for him, and he was so pleased he promised an oath to give her whatever she asked for. Prompted by her mother, Herodias' daughter asked for John the Baptist's head on a platter. So Herod was obligated to fulfill the request because of the oath.

After hearing about His cousin being murdered by Herod, **Matthew** tells us in **Verse 13**, "Now when Jesus heard this, He withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart." (Translations may vary – some may read a private or solitary place – either way it means He was going to a secluded spot.) It continues, "But when the crowds heard it, they followed Him on foot from the towns."

The people saw something in Jesus that they wanted, just like all of us. These people were broken, they needed help, they needed hope, they needed healing, they needed what only Jesus could provide!

Let's continue ... **Verse 14** says, "As He went ashore He saw a great crowd of people; and He had compassion on them, and healed their sick."

Now remember Jesus just found out His cousin was murdered. And Jesus obviously was trying to go somewhere secluded, possibly to mourn. But, when He gets there, He sees a crowd of people.

I don't know about you, but I would probably have been upset. But Jesus "had compassion on them." Do you see how He loves them? Even in His time of grief, He put others first. He has that same love for all of us. He tells us to come to Him, over and over.

Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." We are all heavy laden, we all labor, we all need rest! And the only place we are ever going to find it is in Him!!!

This crowd of people knew this, and it is why they sought Him out. And because they sought Him out "He had compassion on them," and "healed their sick." He wants to heal us too, but we have to come to Him; we have to trust Him!

Let's continue, **Verse 15**, "When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, 'This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.'"

The disciples asked Jesus to send the people away. Now, one could only speculate why. Their reasons were: "the day is over," which suggests that maybe the disciples were tired, or that perhaps they were trying to give Jesus a break, knowing about the loss of His cousin John the Baptist. The other reason was the crowd can "go into the villages and buy food for themselves," suggesting maybe the disciples were the ones who were hungry, or perhaps some of the crowd was complaining of hunger.

Whatever their motive was, be it selfish, or compassionate, one thing is for sure: the disciples asked Jesus to send them away.

Jesus, however, did not want them to go. Why? Because the disciples were still not done learning. The lesson was not over! Jesus' response to the disciples request really made me stop and think.

Matthew tells us in **Verse 16**, "Jesus said, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.'"

There are many levels to this response ...

Number 1: Jesus was teaching the disciples that the people are their responsibility. Remember when Jesus sent out the twelve, He told them in **Matthew 10:24-25**, "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master; it is enough for the disciple to be like his master."

In the same way that Christ gave Himself, He was teaching the disciples to give themselves. Setting His own cares aside, He took care of the people's needs. Likewise they, as well as us, should do the same.

Number 2: Jesus was also teaching them a lesson about their duty. He said, "you give them something to eat." This reminded me of the encounter on the shore of the sea of Tiberias, after the resurrection. **John 21:15-19**. When Jesus spoke to Peter, after Peter having denied Him three times, He asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" to which Peter replied, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You." With each time this question was asked, and each time Peter answered, Jesus gave an instruction, "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep," "Feed my sheep"!!!

Jesus wasn't just talking about food!

Let's continue with **Verse 17** and hear what the disciples say. "They said to Him, 'We have only five loaves here and two fish.'"

I can only imagine what was going through their heads. How are we supposed to feed so many with so little? Did Jesus expect them to feed such a multitude with only five loaves and two fish? Needless to say, the disciples are in doubt. And it's perfectly understandable. They have been given a task that is impossible.

Before we go any further, I want you all to think about what seemingly impossible tasks you have been given. I want you to think about the impossible odds you're up against. I want you to think about all the things in your life that give you doubt, that cause fear, the goals that seem unobtainable, the addictions that you can't seem to conquer, the freedom that seems impossible to obtain, any and every single thing in your life that is out of your control, every thing that is impossible for you. Jesus tells us in the next verse what to do with it!

Let's continue in **Verse 18** ... Hear what Jesus says, "And He said, 'Bring them here to me.'" The disciples were taught multiple lessons as this scene continues to unfold. They have been taught ...

Number 1: That they must set their own wants and selves aside.

Remember, Jesus just lost His cousin John the Baptist. He never got a chance to mourn, and instead of being upset with the multitude of people for not giving Him space, He had compassion for them. Jesus set aside His own grieving to focus on the individual problems of the people. Remember "a servant is not above his master."

Number 2: The people are the disciples responsibility. When the disciples wanted to send the crowd away, Jesus told them, "They need not go away." Their responsibility was to the people.

Number 3: After acknowledging the people as being the disciples' responsibility, He reminds them immediately of their duty. He tells them, "you give them something to eat." "Feed my lambs ... Feed my sheep ... Feed my sheep." Remember, Jesus isn't just speaking about physical sustenance.

Number 4: It's not about what they had. The disciples said, "we have only five loaves and two fish." It's not about the seemingly impossible odds they were up against. It's about their willingness to obey against all odds!

Number 5: The most important lesson of all: Jesus said, "Bring them here to me." Brothers, He wasn't just talking about bread and fish! No, He was talking about much, much more!!! And, He wasn't just talking to the disciples. He was talking to all of us!!! This wasn't just an instruction to the disciples concerning physical matters. This was an invitation, to all of us, to trust in Him!!! And to see what He can do!!!

Jesus fed five thousand men that day, not counting women and children. The disciples only had five loaves and two fish. But they trusted in the Lord! Against all understanding, against all physical possibility, against every single thing logical, they trusted Jesus, they trusted in God!!! God defies all understanding, God defies all physical possibility, God defies every single logical.

All of the things that seem impossible to us are not impossible to God. Jesus tells us in Matthew 19, Verse 26, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." All Things! All things are possible with God!

Trust in God. Come to Him, bring Him your hunger, bring Him your sickness, bring Him your sorrows, bring Him your addictions, bring Him your brokenness, bring Him your heartache and pain, bring Him your burdens, bring Him every unconquerable and impossible situation you face, trust in Him, and see what He can do!!!

AMEN.