



I. Introduction (Main Text: John 6:1-4)

A. Throughout the book of Mark, there are at least 10 notable miracles before you get to John 6. The most vividly recorded are in the book of Mark.

1. The Synoptic Gospels — Matthew, Mark and Luke — all three basically tell the same stories, but John gives a different slant. He tells the same overall story but from a different perspective.
2. The story recorded in John 6 is one story that is told in all four gospels. If it is told each time, it must be important.

II. A Great Multitude Habitually Following

A. John 6:2 – Phrase: “*A great multitude*”: In the Greek, there is something here that is not required unless you are trying to make a very strong point.

1. The word “multitude” is the word *ochlus*, which describes *an innumerable multitude*. But if you add the word “great,” which is the Greek word *polus*, it would translate as *a great and innumerable multitude*.
2. This was far greater than any multitude Jesus had ever yet attracted to His ministry.

B. Why were they addicted to Jesus’ ministry? Because the people were seeing the miracles Jesus performed on those who were diseased. The word “seeing” in the Greek agrees with the word *following*, which means you would translate the verse: “*A great, massive multitude kept on habitually following and following Him, because they kept on habitually seeing and seeing and seeing His miracles that He performed.*”

1. The word “performed” is the Greek word *epoiei*, which carries with it the idea of *creativity*. They were not merely attracted by the idea of the healing of a headache or a skin disease. Jesus was doing something of a creative nature.
2. The people were regularly seeing Jesus’ miracles that He was creatively performing. Jesus was exercising His power on the diseased — and for this reason, they were following and following and *following* Him.

C. First Century Physicians: There were good physicians. In fact, some of their physicians wrote rules that are still in use today.

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1. But there were no medications — and where there are no medications, people perceive healing power as *Good News*.
2. They don't have another option — it is Good News for them!

III. Reasons for Habitually Following

A. “Diseased”: Sometimes people say, “I believe that the Lord could do this, and He could do that — *but not that*.” “Disease” is the Greek word *asthenios*. In this word is included *every kind of sickness and disease*.

1. In the four gospels, there are five Greek words that can be translated for sickness and disease. Jesus healed all five categories. The word “healed” in the gospels is the word *iomenos*. It is the Greek word for a *doctor*.
2. In Acts 10:38 – A literal translation would read, “...*went about doing good and doctoring everyone that was oppressed of the devil*.”
 - a. Act 10 – paints the picture of Jesus laying His hands on the people with all receiving what they needed. Then they went on their way and received a progressive healing touch from Jesus.
 - b. In addition to the instant healings recorded in the Bible — of which there are many — there is also progressive healing, where people went away from Jesus and were healed as they went.

B. Five Words for Disease: These five primary words used in the four gospels to describe the sickness Jesus healed. We find that Matthew 4 uses three of them.

1. **Nosos** – sickness or disease that is terminal or incurable.
2. **Malakian** – Diseased or crippled; describes someone who has become a cripple.
3. **Kakos** – someone who is grievously vexed by demon spirits; someone who is in a bad way or emotionally or mentally affected.
4. **Mastogos** – Mark 5 is where we see the woman with the issue of blood. The Bible tells us when she touched the hem of Jesus’ garment, she was healed of her plague. The word “plague” is the word *mastogos*. This was a word that described *a specific act of torture — repeatedly striking until bringing to the point of death, but not allowing to die*.
 - a. A “plague” is *a sickness that repeatedly strikes*, such as athlete’s foot, allergies, high blood pressure, etc. This woman had an issue of blood for 12 years. It struck her and struck her and struck her — but Jesus healed her.
5. **Arroustos** – Refers to *someone who is so physically weak, he has lost consciousness; he is comatose*. This is the word used in Mark 5 where it says, “He could do no mighty works.” This means Jesus couldn’t get those who were conscious to cooperate with Him; therefore, He worked with the comatose and did it on His own.
 - a. In Mark 16, it’s the same word. A word used pointedly so we understand how great our authority is in Jesus. Literal translation: “*You can lay hands on the comatose, and the comatose shall recover*.”

C. All of these five categories of words fit right up inside this word *disease* in John 6:2.

1. This word for “disease” is the word that embraces all of these concepts. There is not one category of sickness in the gospels that Jesus did not heal.
2. ***Jesus healed every category of disease, and He is still healing them today.***

IV. Results of Habitually Following

A. John 6:2 – “a great multitude followed and followed him because they were seeing and seeing his miracles which he was creatively performing on them that were diseased.”

1. This word “disease” was used very broadly. It referred to *all* kinds of diseases.

B. In John 6:3, Jesus went up into a mountain and sat privately with His disciples. In Mark 6, we find out the reason Jesus did this.

1. Mark 6:31-32 — Jesus attempted to get away from the multitude so that He and His disciples could get some rest. Verse 31 tells us they had no leisure time, even time to eat. Many who knew of Him went

out to where He and His disciples were.

2. In John 6, Jesus went to a mountain to sit with His disciples, but the people found out where He was and began coming and *coming* by the *thousands*.

3. It was almost Passover, so there were many traveling this road. Luke's gospel tells us this was private property near Bethsaida. It was very near to the main road that connected the north of Israel to the city of Jerusalem.

4. John 6:10 tells us there were 5,000 men in number. "Men" is a Greek word meaning *only men* — excluding women or children. Most scholars believe the number to be closer to 40,000.

C. And when Jesus *saw* them, He said to Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that they may eat?" (v. 5).

1. Jesus taught them till the evening. In fact, He taught them so long that He became concerned that they needed something to eat.

2. Jesus said this statement to Philip to prove Him. "Prove" is a Greek word that means *to test something to find out its quality*.

3. Jesus Himself already knew what He would do. He didn't need to ask the question. The question was for Philip's sake entirely to prove Him.

D. Philip and the disciples had seen miracles that Jesus did.

1. John said, "If it were possible to write down all the miracles of Jesus, the world could not contain them."

2. How many days do we have record of? 27-33 days over four gospels — and we don't have a picture of one full day! Just fragments of events and days here and there. And it took four gospels to contain that! Imagine how many miracles the disciples were seeing!

3. This one question: "Whence should we buy bread, that they may eat?" exposed that even the disciples needed to come up higher in their faith.

4. Philip answered and said, "If we had 200 days of wages, it would not be sufficient to buy enough bread for each to take a little."

5. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, "Wait — there is a lad here, a little boy, who has five barley loaves and two small fish."

a. There was no reason the boy would have five *big* loaves. The Greek word translated "loaves" is a word that describes barley *crackers*. "Fish" in the Greek describes fish so small they could fit on top of the crackers. This little boy had sandwich material.

b. "There's a boy who has five crackers and 2 minnows, but what are they among so many?"

E. Miracle and Order: Jesus said in John 6:10, "Make the men sit down." And then men sat down in number about 5,000.

1. In Mark's gospel, you find that Jesus was very organized. He had the people sit in ranks and groups of 100 so they would be easier to serve.

2. Jesus took the crackers and gave thanks. Then He distributed to the disciples; the disciples distributed to the people; and they ate until they were filled.

3. John 6:13 — The Greek says they were doubly filled. They filled 12 baskets with the leftovers. Coincidentally, there were 12 baskets and 12 disciples. And this word "basket" describes the bag they used to carry their luggage when traveling.

4. The disciples began to empty their luggage and fill it with the fragments because Jesus didn't want that anything to be lost.

F. The little boy: John is the only one who tells us there was a little boy. Matthew, Mark, and Luke just give the number of loaves and fish. When I read this, I thought about the role the little boy played in this story. The little boy was taken to Jesus and gave his crackers and fish to Him. Then Jesus performed a miracle, and 5,000 people ate until full.

1. Who was amazed by this miracle? The little boy! He understood where this came from. What if he had said no? God would have used someone else, but the boy would have missed the miracle.

2. Denise and I had the opportunity to say yes or no — and when we said yes, the grace of God fell

upon us. We were even able to start a television program in the former Soviet Union. God gave Denise and I the grace to say YES.

a. What if I had said NO to the Lord? He would have used someone else, and I would have missed the miracle He wanted to perform in my life.

V. **Application:** What is the miracle Jesus is wanting to perform in your life? What is He asking of you? (John 2:11)

A. What is the move of God that's supposed to happen deep inside your own personal life? What is He asking of you that has revealed your own level of faith and is going to require you to come up to a new level?

B. It's going to require you to press in. Once you've obtained a new level, you don't ever have to go back to the old.

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