

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

from the GOSPEL OF JOHN

Pack Your Lunch June 11, 2017

Day 1: Read through John 6:1-15. Consider this quote from Rohr as you read: “The flow of grace through us is largely blocked when we are living inside a worldview of scarcity, a feeling (or belief) that there’s just not enough...” Who in the story acted from a worldview of scarcity? Who acted from a worldview of abundance? Focus on your inner narrative as you go through your day. What is your first thought when you recognize a need in the life of someone around you? What thoughts go through your head? “This is too much”, “I don’t have near enough time for that”, “the problem is too overwhelming”, “What good can one person actually do anyway?”, “There just isn’t enough (fill in the blank) to go around”. “I need to protect what is mine”. Take a few minutes to ponder the times you find yourself thinking and acting from the worldview of scarcity.

Day 2: Think about the boy from the story in John 6:1-15. He didn’t know what would be done with his lunch when he gave it. Maybe the disciples would sit down and enjoy it. Maybe it would be given to Jesus so he could have the energy to continue teaching. Against all that was logical or practical and even against how the world seemed to work, this boy chose to reject the common worldview of scarcity. What teachings might the boy have heard that day? “Blessed those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God...”? “But seek first the kingdom of his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mind and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” This boy believed the teachings of Jesus. He trusted in the divine reality of abundance. Abundance of goodness, grace, love, and mercy of God. With faith and trust he offered what he had. Have you seen God provide exceedingly when it appeared there wasn’t going to be enough?

Day 3: The concept of abundance vs. scarcity is completely counter-cultural. Our culture can send a message that feeds greed, fear, and over consumption. We live in a relentless stream of marketing. We are led to believe we need more. Where in your life do you hear that message? Repeatedly throughout the gospels we see Jesus trying to move the disciples and his followers from their own worldview of scarcity into the reality of divine abundance. Throughout the gospels we see the disciples making decisions from a mentality of scarcity; advising against feeding the crowds, against too many people wanting to be healed, against crowds wanting to be near Jesus, and keeping the children, who would surely be a drain, away from him. Isn’t it interesting that when Jesus feeds the crowds with a little amount there was more than enough? Not just enough or just the right amount but an abundance - more than we could possibly need. Where do you have a scarcity mentality? What are you holding tightly? What would that situation look like if you responded from abundance instead of scarcity or fear?

Day 4: Let’s think again about our story from John 6. What if this young boy had looked around at the hungry crowd and decided that they didn’t deserve to be fed. After all, “they must not have planned ahead.” “They probably are following Jesus around for all the wrong reasons, they probably aren’t even real followers!” “I know some of these people, you should see how they live!” Two weeks ago, Cory shared that Jesus’ eyes were open to the real need of real people. Jesus chose to take steps toward the people, to build bridges of friendship with them. When we encounter and follow Jesus, He expects us to do the same. Have you allowed yourself to believe another isn’t deserving? Sit quietly and ask God. Do you need to seek forgiveness? Ask him to see people as he does.

Day 5: Seeing the needs around us can be overwhelming. Even if we are able to find our way to believing the reality of divine abundance we can be paralyzed by the enormity of need. How do we push past this? **Read Matt. 25:34-40.** Jesus didn’t say, “There was hunger and you fed the world.” He says “I” - a person - was hungry and you fed “me”. We aren’t called to solve a problem, rather we are to love and serve a person. Think back to the message from Sunday. We are to bring what we have, present it to God and allow Him to use it and to multiply it; to do what we can do and see what God will do. Where can you bring what you have? In your neighborhood? Your community? Your workplace? Who can you feed today? He doesn’t expect you to bring more than you have.

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John 6:1-15 (Matthew 14:13-21)

'God can take your _____ and turn it into an _____ thing.' (Alexis Stout, age 13)

The miracle took place when they chose to _____ what they had.

If we want to encounter Jesus, we need to place what we have into the hands of Jesus. If we wait until we have _____, we'll miss the _____.

It's not how much _____ that matters, it's what _____ with what we have. And when we put what we have into the hands of Jesus... _____.

Next Steps:

· If you want to have an encounter with Jesus, make a commitment to 'pack your lunch'... To live with a willingness to place what you have into His hands... Even when it doesn't seem like enough; and even when it doesn't make sense.

· Consider an LSCC serve opportunity with VBS (kids) - www.lscckc.org/vbs or summer camp contact jeremy.lanning@lscckc.org (students).