

Comedy and Horror

In the Bible

It is what it is: **Mark 6 and John 6** (The Kids dinner)

Hey that's my dinner your using!

The story Part one:

One of the funniest stories in the Bible comes in a miracle. Jesus actually has some humor in several of his miracles and dealings with people. Theoretically Jesus is a holy man and lives by holy rules. In those days some of the rules were only holy because men said they were. Jesus, at times, broke those rules to prove a point. I think in many ways he broke human rules to make points and offer solutions that only a God could do.

Here we have the story of Jesus feeding five thousand men. If you dig through the three accounts of feeding five thousand you can tell there were way more than 5 thousand people. It's five thousand men and their women and children too. At times Jesus put himself in situations only a God could get out of. The disciples are in the mist of these events every time. They found Jesus at a well talking to a Samaritan woman (unheard of at the time). They found Jesus picking grain on a Sabbath (blasphemy). Jesus even defended prostitutes and tax collectors, all the scum of the earth in those days.

Jesus had been teaching all day in a mountainous area that could be called the wilderness or deserted area. As dusk settled Jesus realized that it was supper time. I took a course once that talked about the basics of Jesus. The professor was so unique and funny. He told us a story once of Jesus always being around food. You know that was so true. Jesus feeds five thousand and four thousand. In his resurrection, he appears while eating. Jesus has a last supper. Jesus sends

the boys for food while he talked to the Samaritan woman. Jesus first miracle is at a banquet. He eats on the Sabbath and so on it goes, Jesus loved food.

As I said Jesus liked putting himself in tight spots to make miracles. He is found here with 5000 hungry Jews. Jesus is accosted by a mob over a miracle. He is causing a ruckus in the temple area. Jesus draws a crowd on a donkey and forces men to cut through a roof to see him. Jesus heals a demonic man and drives herds of pigs into the water to drown. He is whipped and crucified only to be raised from the dead. This is not a boring life all within three years. So it should be no big deal to feed people on a sunny afternoon.

This story is funny because it's a kid's dinner. I will tell you all about it next time. For now just read the three accounts in Mark and John 6 and Matthew 12. It's also funny that later Jesus feeds more people with another bread miracle. It appears they are always short on bread. Jesus then talks about yeast and the disciples wonder if he is still mad about the bread. I like this event because it confirms to me what Jesus was all about. He caused chaos and unnerved situations to show the divine power of God.

The story Part two:

Usually when you have a dinner you don't give it away. Certainly, you don't expect a return on it. A sandwich does not turn into four when you give it to someone else. I have heard of people bartering their food at school. I have also heard of people getting their food taken. Some just throw it out, but they usually don't give it away.

Imagine if you will: being a kid with his dinner. You have two fish and five loaves of bread. It seems like a lot of bread for a kid's dinner. I wonder if the crowd was an opportunity to sell food. In this story of the feeding of five thousand there is no mention of why the boy has the

food. Actually, the boy is only mentioned at all in John but not in Mark or Matthew. I find it interesting that the first three Gospels share most of their content with each other, yet John is completely different, except for a few stories like the feeding of five thousand. It's not the only shared story but I am surprised they all mention this one more than others. Why? I think all four writers were impressed by this miracle. In all four cases, the disciples are unsure what to do to feed all the people.

I heard the funny analogy of the boy in this story. Suppose he is sitting by Jesus and the disciples. He has his food spread out before him. Yummy, it's time for supper. Suppose Jesus asks the disciples for food to feed the crowd. The men look at Jesus baffled. "we have none" they say. Jesus gives them the look like "well." All of a sudden one of the disciples notices this boy about to make a fish sandwich. He may have mockingly said to Jesus "all we have is this kids sandwich." The kid draws his lunch/ dinner closer to himself as Jesus says that will do. The kid says "hey that's my dinner."

I just think it's funny because Jesus always asks the impossible from his disciples. They don't have food or money and Jesus asks for food and money. After this event, there is a storm and Jesus walks on water. Also, this kid has food and they just assume he will give it to their cause. That's why I think the kid was peddling the food. Then it gets even better. Jesus accepts the food and begins to pass it around the crowd of 5000 men.

I have been in church where they pass out 6 bags to receive an offering. I have always thought it would be funny to have extra bags and mix them in. what would the look on the usher's faces be when 12 bags returned. I bet it was the same with the disciples. They probably gave out 2 baskets. One with fish and one with bread. Imagine their shock of receiving 12 baskets back full of fish. With Jesus, nothing turns out as planned. Water gets turned into wine.

Peter walks on water. Blind people begin to see, and cast off demonic men are cleaned of evil spirits. I believe it's meant to keep those around Jesus off balance. God is not predictable.

I read around this story and there are a ton of faith stories. Belief is strong in this section. The Bible is always written in chunks of themes. The feeding of 5000 is way more than a fish story. It is way more than a kid's dinner. Jesus is doing the impossible. Actually, he is making the disciples do the impossible. They passed the baskets around. Peter walked on water and so did Jesus. Although I find this story funny, there are good lessons to learn. Check back next week to bite into some good tasting lessons.

What we can learn:

Can we learn anything from a kid's fish sandwich? Jesus agrees to take the kids food and pass it around to over 5000 people. The kid either took in a profit or lost his dinner. The disciples probably gained respect for Jesus yet they questioned him again a chapter later with four thousand. Did they learn anything from this mess? I like the episode in Mark 8:14 where Jesus begins to talk about yeast and the disciples wonder if Jesus is mocking them over the bread incidents. This is funny stuff.

I feel that there are several things to be learned from the feeding of fish and bread. One is that they had a good diet. It certainly was not domino's pizza or Big Mac's. God does not usually give you more than you need. I bet if someone prays for a car they don't get a Ferrari. Jesus supplied what the crowd needed. Even better he did it without them asking or complaining. It makes me think that God knows and God cares maybe even before we pray.

Faith is a tricky thing. Our faith grows when we experience something. So for instance, our faith might grow in the weather if it rained every morning and was sunny every afternoon. In

Calgary Alberta, we can have faith the weather will change hourly. Our faith in sunshine will diminish but in weather change it grows. Do we have faith when God is silent? Do we have faith that God will provide before we ask? This story and the stories surrounding it reflect many people's faith. In Luke 8 Jesus talks about throwing seed on different types of ground. What type of base does your faith grow on? A strong faith grows not based on what we experience and see. It really flourishes when we just believe and trust.

I think the feeding of 5000 and 4000 represent a shaky faith. The disciples panicked both times. They were with Jesus yet they did not expect the unexpected. There is another story of Jesus mother Mary asking Jesus to provide wine at a party. The interesting part is he had not done any miracles before that. I bet though his mother had seen Jesus do little miracles for 30 years. She believed and she had faith in her son's ability. The disciples on the other hand were not that strong in their faith.

I guess what I'm feeling is that God feeding 5000 people in a miraculous way should not surprise anyone who believes. We should expect the unexpected from God. Jesus seemed nonchalant about the whole thing. To him it was just "feed them, what's the big deal." When he needed taxes, he went to a fish and pulled out the money. Sure, he is God so that's cheating, but that's the type of faith Jesus taught. He showed us in miracles and parables. He tried to tell us. The lesson here is that life with God should be common ground for the miraculous.