

The Testing of Faith

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: John 6:1-15.

B. Setting: the feeding of the five thousand.

C. The multitudes followed Jesus because of the signs that He did. He left across the sea to free Himself from the crowds, but the crowds followed.

II. Jesus gives out an “exam.”

A. He chooses Philip as a representative perhaps because he was the most advanced in the faith.

B. Jesus asks how they will provide for the crowd.

C. Philip begins to think of the material resources available and despairs. Philip fails the test.

D. Andrew did slightly better recognizing that a boy had some fish and loaves, but he still has more faith than Philip does.

1. All Jesus wants is what we have right now.

2. Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to the Father and multiplied the loaves.

3. There was no spectacle to His work.

4. Jesus only did what He saw His Father doing and responded by giving thanks.

5. The crowd ate until they were satisfied.

III. Many attempts have been made to explain away the miracle, but none of these are credible.

IV. The people concluded that Jesus was the prophet that Moses spoke of, but they reacted improperly trying to make Him a king. (Deuteronomy 18)

A. The people did not want to follow Him—they wanted to use Him.

B. We often fall prey to the desire to use God also.

Application questions:

1. How do we trust in material sources today instead of depending upon God?

2. Have you ever found yourself using God? What did you learn from the situation?

3. If God gave you an exam concerning your faith today, how would you fair? What areas would you need to improve and in what areas would you do well?
