



What's Really at Stake?

June 2, 2019

#newpointechurch

Bottom Line: There is a direct connection between your faith and your serve.

Icebreaker: When there's just "nothing to eat" at home, what's your go-to? If you could only eat at one fast-food restaurant for the next year, which one would it be? If you could only go to one sit-down-and-order restaurant for the next year, which would it be?

Key Verse: *Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."* Matthew 14:16

It's a little known and appreciated fact that your spiritual growth is linked to your service. God uses your service to others to teach you something about Him and others. You are missing out on something great God has for you when you choose to be uninvolved.

Matthew 14 shows the remarkable opportunity the disciples had when the huge crowd listening to Jesus was hungry and needed to eat. Their solution was to send the masses away. Jesus' solution was for them to take on the responsibility and feed them. They were more than reluctant; they did not feel equipped or prepared to meet this great need. Jesus responded that what they had was enough to start: the small lunch of loaves and fishes. Jesus blessed what they gave Him, broke it into little pieces, telling them to feed the people. They did the only thing they knew to do: Turn around and give the people what Jesus had given them. As they did it, the Father blessed their obedience, and the bread and fish kept multiplying to provide more than enough for everyone. When they put away their anxiety and did what God said, everyone's needs were met.

The tension and anxiety you feel as you start to serve is actually your faith muscle being stretched and strengthened. It is part of the faith process. The future of your faith is at stake. This is how your faith and confidence in God grows. It's not just learning to follow directions; it is learning to know God's voice and trust Him. The disciples had to start where they were in order to be able to grow to bigger things. That's true for you too. Peter grew so much, he ended up walking on water soon after, and became one of Christ's most effective followers. What might God have in mind for you? What is at stake as you decide to serve/not serve?

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

"The most important thing in serving is NOT the ministry's need. They will survive without you. YOU need to serve in order to grow and mature." How is this true for you?

When God nudges you to give/serve, what is the most frequent reason you are tempted not to respond? Lack of time? Talent? Resources? Someone else should do it? Apathy?

Have you experienced a feeling of total inadequacy but obeyed and gave Jesus what you had anyway? What happened? Share it.

"Jesus had a very specific agenda with this miracle. He was doing more than feeding the people. He was stretching His disciples' faith for their own futures." Reflect. What does this mean in your life right now?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

"Peter got it. He realized that they, the disciples, could do anything Jesus asked of them as long as they brought to the table what they had and trusted Him with the rest." In what area of life right now is God asking you to bring what you have to the table?

"Peter understood that he couldn't just jump into the water and expect Jesus to not let him fall. That would be stupidity. Stepping out in response to Jesus' invitation is faith." Reflect. Discuss.

"The Lord calls us for our benefit and the world's to be agents of His kingdom in a broken world. Salvation is not the goal of the Christian life, it's the beginning of fulfilling our purpose." How have you found your purpose since salvation? How has your faith grown?

"The purpose of salvation is to prepare you for the purpose for which the Lord created you: to be an effective agent of the kingdom of God in your time and place in history." Does this challenge your thinking in any way? Why? Why not?

NEXT STEPS

This week consider taking some next steps together as a group:

- 1) Identify a skill, talent, or experience God is inviting you to use as a means of meeting needs.
- 2) Sign up to serve in the church.
- 3) Decide to serve outside the church as Jesus issues the invitation.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: There is a direct connection between your faith and your serve.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Philemon 1:4-6

Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

Wednesday: John 2:1-11

Thursday: Ephesians 4:7-13

Friday: Matthew 20:26-28

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)