

Facing Frustration - John 6:5-11

by Jon Courson

We can overcome frustration and fear by trusting in God's faithfulness and provision, and giving thanks in everything.

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Overcoming Frustration"

Description

Jon Courson preaches on the story of Philip's frustration when faced with a seemingly impossible situation of feeding a large crowd with limited resources. Despite Philip's doubts and frustrations, Jesus remained calm and confident, knowing what He was going to do all along. Jesus used Philip's moment of frustration as an opportunity for growth and stretched his faith. The key lesson is to lift our eyes to heaven, give thanks to the Father, and trust that He will take care of our situations, even when we feel limited and frustrated.

Transcript

Because there's a good chance you're feeling frustrated about something even now, I want us to look at a man who faced frustration in his own life to see how the Lord dealt with him.

The situation is this: The disciples had just returned from a mission during which they had seen blind eyes opened, the sick healed, the oppressed liberated (Matthew 10). Wisely realizing they needed time to unwind, to be rebuilt and renewed, Jesus took them across the Sea of Galilee (Mark 6:30-32).

After crossing the Sea, and arriving in the town of Bethsaida, however, they discovered that a crowd had figured out where they were headed, and had gone around the lake to meet them. Seeing the multitude, and knowing their need, Jesus turned to Philip and said, 'Philip, we're in your town. A lot of these people are your friends, your relatives. What are we going to do?' (John 6:5). 'I don't know,' answered Philip. 'We don't have enough money to even begin to feed this crowd.'

Maybe today you feel that same frustration. Maybe bills are piling up on your desk. Maybe the job you hold is not generating the necessary income to keep your books balanced. Maybe a relationship seems to be lacking the love you desire. Maybe you find yourself frustrated -- like Philip.

The Frustration of Philip

Philip was frustrated by the situation he was in. I can relate to that. I face frustrations which are very great, very deep, and weigh heavily upon me. You do too. 'Lord, why are You picking on me?' Philip must have

wondered. 'Why don't You ask Peter what to do? Or James? Why single me out, Lord?'

Do you ever feel that way? Amidst times of challenge and periods of frustration in each of our lives, there is a tendency to want to pass the buck. 'Why, Lord, are You asking me what to do with these 5,000 people? Why not ask someone else?'

Philip was frustrated not only by the situation he was in, but by the figures he had. 'Lord, as I add up our account, I realize we have enough money to feed about thirteen people.' He was frustrated by the figures he had because, dear friend, he was looking to his own resources rather than to the Source.

How easily I fall into that same trap. I find myself looking at figures, statistics, facts -- and coming up short. Yet even though Philip failed to see with the eyes of faith, his failure didn't frustrate God's work. I like that! Even though Philip was frustrated, God's work still went on.

Folks, the Lord's work will go on. And even if we go through seasons of failure, lapses of faith, I am so thankful He's bigger than our failure, bigger than our lack of faith. He's building His Church, establishing His Kingdom, pouring out His Spirit, and proclaiming the Gospel to all the world in these last days.

Philip's failure had no effect upon the work of the Lord. Neither did it disqualify Philip from the work of the Lord. Although Philip didn't see what could have taken place had he been a man of faith, Jesus still said to Philip, 'Can you get everyone to sit down in groups of fifty and pass out the goods?' (John 6:10-11).

This is what is so neat about Jesus. Even though Philip wasn't able to see the miracle come through him, the Lord didn't say, 'You turkey, Philip. You lacked faith. I'm not going to use you in any way in any time. Hit the showers. You're through.' No, He gave Philip something else to do. Philip didn't see miraculous power flow through him in the way he could have, yet Jesus used him anyway.

The Confidence of Christ

While Philip was sweating it out, Jesus was cool as a cucumber. He knew what He was going to do all along. Why, then, did He ask Philip's advice? In order to give Philip the opportunity to stretch and to grow.

The same is true in your situation. Whatever is frustrating you today -- whatever fears you face, whatever tensions you feel, whatever burdens you're bearing -- Jesus already knows what He's going to do concerning them. We don't, but He does. And He wants us to walk by faith, to trust Him. Not only did Jesus know what He was going to do, but He also knew how He was going to do it. Before the miracle ever took place, He lifted up His eyes and gave thanks to His Father (John 6:11).

So too regarding your dilemma, your frustration, your fear -- do what Jesus did. Lift up your eyes and say, 'Thank You, Father, that You're going to take care of this situation. I know You will. You are faithful. You have never let me down thus far, but have done exceedingly abundantly above all I could ask or think. When I thought I wouldn't make it, You pulled me through. When I thought I was going under, You pulled me up. When I thought I was out of it, You pulled me back. You've been so good. Thus, I give you thanks right now in this moment of frustration.'

In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you (1 Thessalonians 5:18). There is power in praise, gang. The Lord is pleased with people who are thankful, as opposed to those who complain, murmur, and worry as they utter words which are depressing, defeating, and discouraging. The Lord blesses those who take what they have -- as insufficient as it might seem -- place it

in His hands, and say, 'Thank You, Lord. I believe in You.' Philip and Jesus -- two men standing in the same place -- one frustrated, the other at rest; one hot and bothered, the other cool and confident.

The difference? Philip looked at the figures. Jesus looked to the Father.

We have a choice to make, both as a church and as individuals: We can follow the example of Philip and say, 'Why are You picking on me, Lord? My resources are so limited. My situation is impossible' -- Or we can be like Jesus and lift our eyes to heaven, give thanks to the Father, and watch Him multiply and bless.

I'm asking you today to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. In everything give thanks. Give Him what you have and expect Him to multiply it. You do not have to be frustrated today. You can be free right now if you'll fix your eyes on heaven, have faith in the Father, and in everything give thanks.

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