

Content with Crumbs

by Micheal Durham

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not settling for spiritual crumbs but pressing in for the fullness of God's blessings. It highlights the story of the Syrophenician woman who demonstrated great faith by persisting for a miracle despite obstacles. The preacher challenges the congregation to move beyond mediocrity, to seek a deeper experience with God, and to believe for more than just salvation. The message urges believers to have a relentless faith that seeks the fullness of God's provision and blessings.

Scripture: Matthew 15:21, Matthew 11:12, James 4:2, 1 John 5:14, Amos 5:4

Topics: "Relentless Faith", "Seeking God's Fullness"

Description

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Transcript

I would rather preach to you actually than about anyone else, and there's a reason for that. The reason is not necessarily because you're the most responsive church I preach to. I was in a Sovereign Grace Church not too long ago, and I thought they were going to shout me down.

They like to say amen. It was a little different. That's not the reason I love to preach to you, because you're a demonstrative responsive church.

I love to preach to you because you are of me, and I am of you. God has knitted us together. Whether you claim me or not, you're stuck with me.

I'm one of you, and you are of mine. The Lord has put us together severally as He will. He has ordained that you and I be together in His great redemptive enterprise.

Think of that. You and I are joined together in what God wants to do in Denton, in the surrounding area, and I believe to the other parts of the earth. He's doing that.

He's doing that, and we get to be a part of that. What a blessing. Hallelujah.

Let's pray. Our Father and our God, we come now because we need to hear you as we have heard the exhortation. We need to see you.

We also need to hear you, and we thank you for this Word that is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. May you shine and expose, Lord, with your light. May your light give us comfort.

May we come to it because we love the light, and we do. We love you, Lord Jesus. Forgive us for our low view of you, how little we see and know, so increase our understanding.

Anoint me. Holy Spirit, I'm yours. Do with me as you please so long as Jesus is glorified.

Help these who are here. Lord God, we are together. I'm not a preacher preaching.

They're a congregation listening. We're a body, and you're our head, and we need you to speak to us. So help us now in Jesus' name.

Amen. Will the text, I pray the Lord, be pleased to speak to us from is the Gospel of Matthew chapter 15. Matthew chapter 15, I want us to look at verses 21 through 28.

Matthew 15, 21 through 28, I want to speak on the theme, content with crumbs, content with crumbs. Matthew chapter 15, beginning with verse 21. Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David. My daughter is severely demon possessed. But he answered her, Not a word.

And as his disciples came and urged him, saying, Send her away, for she cries out after us. But he answered and said, I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

But he answered and said, It's not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs. And she said, Yes, Lord. Yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from the master's table.

Then Jesus answered and said to her, O woman, great is your faith. Let it be to you as you desire. And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

This is a remarkable text of Scripture. It's remarkable in that it is quite unusual and uncharacteristic of our Lord in the way he treats this Syrophenician woman. For a God who is faithful and unchangeable, he has a lot of surprises about him, doesn't he? I mean, you sometimes don't know what to expect.

Jesus, in this case, with this heart-sick mother, first he ignored her. He refused her request, and he called her a dog. Now, I don't know about you, but it's not the suggested soul-winning technique I was taught, and I don't think it's very effective.

At least, I don't think it would be for you and me to try, because he said it wasn't right to give God's blessings to Gentiles. He was excluding people by their nationality and ethnicity, and in our culture today, people would say Jesus was being a racist, that Jesus wasn't woke yet. The words of our text ring a fence, even.

It's so unlike Jesus, until you get to verse 28. And then when you get to verse 28, it's like he snaps back, and here he is, the one we expect, the one we've become accustomed to. There he is, the compassionate one, the loving one, the gentle one, the powerful one, the mediating, inclusive, unbiased Jesus.

However, in the culture of our Lord, you need to understand that his behavior was not abnormal in the least. It was very normal. The racial tensions between Jews and Gentiles were perhaps at their highest.

It was extreme. It was not an uncommon thing for Jews to call Gentiles dogs. In fact, the apostles even encouraged Jesus to shoo her away, get rid of her.

It was the Jewish way of life. But friends, you know the truth. Jesus was not a racist.

He was anything but that. In fact, what he's doing here is he's exposing the sin of racism. He defied racial hatred, for in the end, what did he do? He granted the woman's request, and to boot, he complimented her.

Oh woman, great is thy faith. Now here's a question I want to ask that we want to spend time on. Why? Why was her faith great? She pleaded for crumbs and not the whole loaf.

Why did we compliment her faith as our Lord did when she told the Lord all she wanted was a few crumbs? Great faith, it seems to me. If she had great faith, she would have sought the whole loaf, right? She wouldn't have stopped for the crumbs on the floor. She would have got to the table, set up, and was ready for the meal.

So why does he call her and her faith great? But there's more to it than that. There's a second question. We also need to understand why Jesus ignores her and then insults her.

Why does he treat her this way? Because she was a Gentile woman. Jesus called her a little dog. As I said a moment ago, that was not uncommon for Jews to call Gentiles dogs.

But then Jesus heaped insult upon insult, and he says, you're not even a very important dog. You're a little dog. But the insult doesn't put her off.

It causes her to press in all the more. If she's going to be a dog and a little one at that, and if the crumbs are all that the little dog should expect, then surely she would not be deprived. Crumbs she would have, and with crumbs she would be content.

But again, why does Jesus deal with her like this? And why was her faith great? But then there's another question I want us to also look at today. What about we who are God's children? Why are we who sit at his table not expecting more than crumbs? Why are we the children of the Master who has set the table for us? Why are we on the floor licking up the crumbs and content to do so when we should be seated at our Father's table and feasting? Our Heavenly Father gives good things to those that ask Him. He does not hold out crumbs, or excuse me, hold out the meat and offer us the crumbs.

And yet we're content to eat the crumbs and not the meat. Why? And so I say, let's pursue the text and let's get to the answers. Why does Jesus say her faith is great? Why does our loving Lord appear to be unloving to the woman? And why are we so easily to be content with crumbs? So let me direct your attention to an analysis of this woman's faith.

Why did our Lord say her faith was great? And the answer is because simply she wouldn't turn Jesus loose until He blessed her. Like Jacob of old who wrestled with God at the river Jabbok, who said, I will not turn you loose until you bless me. With that kind of determination she took hold of our God and she refused any answer but yes.

That's why. Today I fear that so many of us here this morning were the opposite. We make our requests known to God.

We pray. We share what we would like to see God do. But we can't even remember what we've asked for 30 minutes after we've finished praying.

There's no perseverance in prayer. Charles Spurgeon said in a sermon on prayer, please listen, Brethren, how many times we ask of God and have not because we do not wait long enough at the door. We knock a time or two at the gate of mercy and as no friendly messenger opens the door we go our ways.

Too many prayers are like boys' runaway knocks, given and then the giver is away before the door can be opened. Do you get the picture what he's saying? We're like a little couple of kids, pranksters. We run up to some door and we knock and then we turn off and run.

Oh for divine grace to stand foot to foot with the angel of God, says Spurgeon, and never, never, never relax our hold feeling that the cause that we plead is one in which we must be successful for souls depend upon it. The glory of God is connected with it. The state of our fellow man is in jeopardy, end of quote.

May I say without being harsh, it's like we don't expect God to answer our prayers. Oh we know he can, but we're always hung up with the question, will he? Do we honestly believe he will answer? I think if we did we'd be more like this woman who would not take no for an answer, who would press in closer and come nearer and who would take God's delays as an indication there's still hope. Now that's a very important point by the way.

How do you view the delays in the answer to your prayers? Do you see them as an indication to keep praying, to keep hoping, to keep interceding? Or rather do you see God's delay in not answering your request quickly as an indication that it may not be his will to pray? You see how we think can view shape our faith? Do you see God's silence, his apparent idleness as an answer no? Or do you see it as an encouragement to keep praying? Or do you get disappointed at the first sign of God not answering and you determine that the answer therefore must be no? Jesus told this woman that his heaven-sent mission was to be a Jewish Messiah. That's what he's saying in essence. He says in verse preceding, verse 24, that this is why he had come to the lost house of Israel.

But look at what verse 25 says. Look at her response. Verse 25, then she came and worshiped him saying Lord help me.

She didn't hear the word no. She didn't hear he was just a Jewish Messiah. She did not interpret his statement as a sign that he wasn't merciful.

No. She came and worshipped. How do you respond when God carries and answers to your prayer? I want to ask you child of God.

Please listen. Please ask yourself what I'm asking you. Can you worship God when God's not acting the way you want him to act? There it is.

That's the question. Come on. You know the answer.

I don't know what it is for you, but you know it and your heavenly father knows. Can you still worship him? You know we claim to be a people that believe in the sovereignty of God, but most of the time we act like people who say that God isn't sovereign over all things. We take the delay in God's response to our prayers and we interpret that as somehow it must not be God's sovereign will.

Otherwise he would have answered before now. And I wonder sometimes if we really, really do want a sovereign God. Now please don't misunderstand me.

I'm not here to be an accusatory preacher. I'm just simply asking the Lord to search your heart along with mine. Do I really want a sovereign God? Do I want a God that I cannot manipulate? That I cannot control? Can I worship God when God's ordained affairs do not go the way in which I would so desire? And do I take the delay, the unanswered prayers, as an indication that I must be praying contrary to God's will? I think that's what most of us do because we do and are firm believers in the sovereignty of God.

We come to the conclusion after praying once, maybe twice, and the more sanctified among us three times and then God doesn't answer and we conclude, well, it just simply is not in the sovereign plan of God for my life. So be it. That's not her response.

Maybe that's why the Lord would not say to you, oh great, oh woman, oh man, great is your faith. The foundation of faith is singular. It's one thing.

May I suggest it's the capstone on the foundation and you've got to come to grips with this. Someone told me the other day, it seems like all of my sermons, they kind of, every time I'm in their neighborhood, they come and listen. They come and follow where I'm going to be preaching and they said to me the other day, sounds like every sermon I hear comes back to this same theme.

And I said, well, I've always prayed not to be a one note preacher, but if the one note is Jesus, I'll be happy. And that's what he said. It comes back that to Christ and that Christ is good.

And it is. That's essential to faith and faith thriving. Faith has an environment in which it can grow, in which it can thrive.

And that is this, in the character of God, that God is good. And He loves to bless you. And He loves to delight in you.

And yet so many of us, so many of us in this room right now struggles with that theological proposition. You wrestle with it day after day. It's on your mind.

And even when you're not thinking about it, it's like a cloud hanging over you. I know He's good, but is He good to me? Then you begin to analyze your performance. You begin to look over your performance this past day.

Did you read your Bible? Did you pray? And you go through the roster of duties. And you grade yourself and say, well, I don't know if I deserve any help from the Lord today. Surely, maybe not today.

Oh, friends, where are we? Why are we approaching God this way? And I tell you, it's one reason our view of God is too low. We don't believe that God is good and that He wants to bless you. We've let these kooks around here, and Dallas Air has got a lot of them.

We've let these people steal our theological view of God, our biblical view of God. The foundation of faith is that God is good. The implication of that is this.

Listen, all that He does must be good because that's who He is. That's not to say that all that He allows is good. No, evil is evil.

It's never good. Thank God we have an omnipotent King who has the power to take anything evil and turn it for our good, right? I call it the Joseph effect. You remember what he said when he exposed his true identity to his deceptive and malevolent brothers who sold him to the slave traders? He said, you sold me, but God sent me.

That's what he said to them. He said that God, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring it about this day to save many people alive. And so I ask you again, do you really believe that God loves you? God is good and He knows what's best for you and that you can trust this sovereign God when God doesn't follow your plans.

I don't believe this woman's request was amiss, as James says in James 4, otherwise Jesus would have never answered it. Her request was within the parameters of the providential will of God, but his seeming reluctance might have led her to think that she was asking something contrary to the will of God. And once again, I want to press this a little bit deeper.

So please brace yourself. It may not be comfortable, but let this poor physician of the soul do his work. Would you let me? Would you let me have your heart for a few moments? Is our view of God's sovereignty a unbiblical one? Have we run past the goalpost? Have we taken this truth beyond the biblical parameters in which God has revealed Himself? Has our prayer lives been affected by this unbiblical view? Could it be that the sovereign God of the universe has ordained in His enterprise that He will not work apart from the intercession and prayers of His people, and that this dear woman is an example for us? This is the way you pray.

This is the way you intercede. This is the way you deal with me. But if your view of the sovereignty of God does not include this woman and her example, I say to you, your views are unbiblical.

This woman's theology did not prevent her to believe. Sometimes our theology prevents us from believing. Jesus gave her a theological argument.

Let's look at it for a few moments. It seemed airtight logically and theologically. He said, once again, verse 26, it's not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.

Now I believe all God's children should be theologians. Don't let the word scare you. All the word theologian simply means is to study God.

Study God. I knew a pastor who was inquiring about a church that didn't have a pastor and he was thinking about it. In fact, they had actually reached out to him.

So he calls up the church office one day and he says to the secretary, I'm just wanting to find out a little bit more about your theology. She said, oh, we don't get into that theology stuff. We just study God and his word.

Well, little did she know that's what theology and to be a theologian is, to study God and his word. And every one of us should be students of the Lord God and his word. We must be theologians.

We must continue to learn what God has said of himself and about himself. But please listen, if you're not careful, your theology can hinder you in knowing the Lord. Some people let their learning take them away from experiencing the Lord Jesus rather than draw closer to him.

This dear woman didn't know much theology about God or Judaism, but what she did know was this. My daughter is demon possessed and it will eventually kill her. I've got to get to this man.

That's all she knew. She probably, because of where she lived, she was familiar with some of the Old Testament stories of God's deliverance. And she would have, by the testimony of others, knew something about this Jesus of Nazareth.

She had heard that he healed the sick, he cast out the devils. And so in her simple understanding, she put her theology together and here it was. The best she knew was that this Jesus of Nazareth acted like God and he can do something.

And so she comes. She comes and makes her appeal. He can do something for my daughter.

That's all she knew and with it she drew near to God. And she even uses theological terms. Notice what she calls him, Lord, Son of David.

She's not a bad theologian after all, even though she's a Gentile and a little dog, according to Jesus. Now here's my application. It's pretty obvious.

I think you know where I'm going. I wonder if our theology helps us draw near and worship Jesus or does it get in our way. If what you know about God, now listen carefully, if what you know about God doesn't create more hunger for him, then what you need to find out is if what you know is just stored in your brain and not affecting your heart or what you think you believe is right is actually wrong.

Does your theology, Providence Chapel, dear brother, dear sister, does it propel you? Does it motivate you to press in to his heart, his soul, his love for you? Again, I warn us not to let what we know make us think that knowing is the same thing as experiencing it. What little this woman knew pushed her towards Christ and she would not let him go. Does your theology do that? Does your theology cause you to press into Christ and not let him go? If not, you need a more biblical theology.

I don't care if you subscribe to the Five Solas. I don't care if you identify with the Westminster Confession or the London Second Baptist Confession. My friends, our theology should drive us to Christ because that theology says, I have nothing, I am nothing, but he is.

He is. I am that I am and he has all that I need and I need him. Do you hear me? Come on, somebody look.

Just don't look at me. Do you hear what I'm saying, beloved church? God has blessed us with a knowledge of the Bible. This church is more theologically astute than any church I've been a part of, including the one I pastored for 23 years.

It's an amazing thing to be with you and to hear you. I mean, we have people who can teach other than five elders and can do what we saw with the children in the Bible study hour. This is a theologically rich

congregation.

He has given us very much in this regard. Why then are we content to eat crumbs? Why are we content to wallow on the floor when it comes to experiencing him? We eat crumbs up the floor rather than sit at the table and get the full course meal. Any theology that lifts us away from the foundational truth of God's good character and his love for us is theology that is improper at best and is simply wrong at worst.

If you start qualifying God's goodness displayed in answer to prayer by biblical qualifications, please be careful. Let me give you an example of what I'm talking about. Let me say this statement again because that's a little bit to grasp.

If you start qualifying, putting conditions on God's goodness displayed in answer to prayer with these biblical qualifications, you've got to be very careful. For example, if you say to me, well, it's true God answers prayer, but he only answers prayer that's according to his will. Is that a true statement, church? I've got a few over here that are awake.

Yeah, Leslie's awake. Is that true? If we pray according to his will, we have this assurance that what we ask we shall receive. First John chapter 5 verses 14 and 15.

And we all say, getting better. Maybe by the end of the sermon, everybody will say amen. True, indeed, the word of God says this.

But don't use the Bible as an excuse for your weak faith. Instead, use the qualification for the will of God to be a faith builder. Just the opposite.

For that's what it is. Listen, if you pray according to the will, you do get what you ask. Don't use that as an excuse not to pray in faith, but to build your faith by saying to yourself, the book says if I pray according to his will, I get it.

So let me start praying according to his will, and I'll see more answers. That's how the logic of faith thinks. Not to use the qualification to not pray in faith.

Are you starting to see? Let me give you another example. The Bible says God's ways are not our ways. Indeed, it does.

But don't use that to kill your faith. Instead, use it to build your faith. Should the Lord respond to your prayers with the answer, no, my ways are not your ways? Don't be discouraged like some of you are.

Perjoice in faith that his ways are something better and he has something better in store for you. That's the logic of faith. Instead of getting discouraged because he said no to your prayer request, remember when he says no, it means he's got something better because his ways are not your ways.

Am I making sense? The preacher needs to know if you're understanding by me making clarity here for you. Thank you, sister. Here's what happens.

We use these biblical qualifications from the position of doubt instead of faith, and that's grievous to our gracious God. Grievous, grievous. That woman would not let her theology do that.

That's why Jesus said, oh woman, great is your faith. What's the Lord's intent with the silent treatment, the ignorance, and even the insult? Let's look at that for a few moments. Our Syrophenician sister knew that

she had to press into Jesus to get her crumbs.

In other words, she had to force her way into the Lord to experience his gracious power. And her response to Jesus, I think, is just absolutely amazing. When he said it's not good to take the children's bread and to give it to the little dogs, well, he insulted her.

Point simple, point blank, he insulted her. To call someone a dog is pretty low, but then you add the adjective little, that's just simply cold-blooded. That's almost an act of cruelty.

But look at her and her demeanor. It's awesome. She agrees with him.

She agrees with him. She said, yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs from which fall from the master's table. For the Conrad Merle said of this passage, when Jesus called her a dog, she started barking.

She agrees with him. She's not offended. She's not put off to play with the words of our Lord.

She had a dogged determination. She hung in there. She would do whatever it took to get her blessing.

And so I ask you, are you willing to do whatever it takes to get the blessing? Are you willing to do whatever the Lord wants to do in your life to give you the blessing? Are you willing instead to feed off the few crumbs that fall off our Father's table? At the time of this miracle, listen, the new covenant's not in effect yet, right? It's not in effect. That's why Jesus said at first in verse 24, I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It's not that he wasn't sent to save both Jews and Gentiles.

He's just simply saying my first responsibility is to the covenant people of God. It's not that Jesus hadn't performed miracles for Gentiles either. There's the Samaritan woman at the well.

He brought eternal life for her. She got a drink that's still satisfying her right now. And then there was the Roman centurion.

God answered his request. And by the way, said the exact same thing that he says about this woman. The only two people Jesus ever said that about were Gentiles.

Oh, great is your faith. And then there's a Samaritan leper. He healed him as well.

And yet he never said anything like this to them. He never insulted them. He quickly answered.

So what's going on here? Why did he do this with her? And here I have to depart from most commentators and preachers. I think they just simply get it wrong. Not that I'm smart.

I just think God has let me see something here. And I want to share it with you. Most commentators and preachers tell us that Jesus did all of these outrageous things to develop the woman's faith.

And I wholeheartedly disagree. Jesus didn't need anyone to tell him what was in the heart of men. He could see from the very beginning what kind of faith she had.

He's not so much interested in developing her faith. No, no, no. It's the apostle's faith that he was most interested in.

You see, when God brought these 12 men into His fold, He enrolled them into the school of faith. And up to this moment, they hadn't been passing. Oh, now and again they got a good mark.

But for the most part, they were failing in the school of faith. And what Jesus is doing here is using her as an object lesson of what faith and prayer ought to look like. He used a Gentile's faith to teach Jewish apostles something about the goodness of God and what true faith looks like.

In fact, I'd like to say, go on the record, I'll have to face these guys sooner or later one day, but I'll stand by it even in heaven. She had more faith than they did. He never said of them, great is your faith.

And at times they did exercise what I would call pretty good faith. I mean, Peter walking on water is pretty astounding faith, but he can't sustain it. They think they're pretty powerful in their faith life because they drop their nets, they drop their trades, their businesses and follow Jesus.

That's got to demonstrate great faith, yes. But friend, what does it demonstrate if you can't sustain it? They had heard all the great sermons of Jesus. They had spent time in private with Him tutoring and mentoring them.

They saw every one of His great miracles. She had none of those privileges. She had only a fraction of what they knew, and yet she had great faith.

Jesus knew what He was doing. He was purposely throwing obstacles for her faith to hurdle to show the disciples how they were to trust and act in faith. They were enrolled in the school and they were not passing.

And so here they are. They're the children. They're the children at the table in Jesus's words to the woman.

They're the ones who are supposed to be feasting at the table of faith, and she's the little dog at the table getting their leftovers. But the truth is, they didn't have enough faith to pick up the fork and start eating. They were the children playing the part of the household pet instead of acting like the heir of the house.

And so Jesus takes someone, not even a Jew, not even a man, but a Jew to be like, this is the kind of faith I want you to trust me with. The Syrophenician, she forced her way to God's dining room table and she said, I will not be denied. I remember singing a hymn as a kid in our church, I would not be denied, I would not be denied till Jesus came and made me whole, I would not be denied.

And she wouldn't. The Bible says in Matthew 11, 12, Jesus's words, and from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of God suffers violence and the violent take it by force. If a woman who had no doctrinal right to gain the blessing, yet by her violent faith forces her way in, surely the royal children should be content to sit at the table and eat with her.

But they weren't. And sadly, friends, we're content to get God's leftovers also, just like the disciples. I want to answer our third and final question, settling for crumbs rather than the whole meal.

How many of you, God's people, are content to have your sins washed away, but you never desire the fullness of the Holy Spirit? Too many, I fear. It's not that saving grace is a crumb. I don't want you to think that's what I'm saying.

No, it's not a crumb. But the problem is that many are not willing to go beyond this blessed event and experience more, more of His goodness, more of His love. Too many of us are content with just a few moments of lightheartedness here on a Sunday morning, and we're not willing to press, to take the time to press in to the throne room of God and wrestle.

We're all too happy to pay God our tips on Sunday morning, so long as He gives us our crumbs. You know what they are. Keep our children good and out of trouble.

Keep us well and safe and give us a comfortable life. We're settling for crumbs, friends. We're too content to have a good service, hear a good sermon.

Not today, perhaps, but when the five brothers preach, we are content to let those men feed our souls, and we walk away satisfied instead of getting on our faces before God and interceding for the miracle, interceding for the child that's lost, interceding for a nation that's going to hell in a handbasket. We live thinking we've experienced something of God. Yes, the crumbs, when we ought to be laying hold of the horns of the altar for a revival for our church.

Have we become so content with the crumbs that we can't see? We're living for so little, settling for less. I'm not here to be a raw, raw preacher to whip up your emotions. That's not the point.

So, let me address that. That's not why I'm preaching this. I'm preaching this because I do believe with all my heart this is what I'm supposed to say to you, but I think I know why I'm supposed to say this to you.

It's too easy to wallow in the floor and get a few crumbs. What's wrong with this church that we're content with the spiritual status quo, an average spirituality that does not impress God or frighten the devil? You know what average is, don't you? The best of the worst and worst of the best. It's mere crumbs compared to what we could have.

God has made you a promise. He's made this church a promise. Listen.

Stand up and listen. Listen. God has made a promise to Providence Chapel.

He's promised to spread before you and in front of our enemies a banquet table. How many of you would say you feast rather than famish on the stale crumbs of an old experience with Jesus? You're living on leftover from a day gone by. Hmm? Am I speaking the truth? It's bewildering to me that we can be so satisfied with a few milestones with Jesus rather than see them as stepping stones to better things.

We live most of our time in the shadowlands of the dingy grays and the drab browns, reminiscing of a better time when we could live in the cinematic color of God's glory. Oh dear friend, I wish it were not true, but I fear that some of us, most of us will take from God the lower hanging fruit rather than take the effort to go for the higher, more luscious fruit. You say, well, it seems to me for the like of the crumb that this woman, God was awesome, doesn't look like a crime to me.

A crumb, I should say, not a crime. Doesn't look like a crumb to me. And I can say to you in return, it's because you settle for far lesser crumbs.

That's why this looks like something big to you because you have come to be accustomed to a lot lesser, smaller crumb. When was the last time God just simply came through for you? When was the last time you prayed with such fervency that if God didn't come through, you were sunk? And again, I think we're just all

too happy to settle for mediocrity. I remember what Jesus said about a church of mediocrity.

They were neither hot nor cold, and He was going to spew them out of His mouth. They were the church of the almost alive. Not quite alive to be among the living and not quite dead enough to bury.

I don't want to be in that category. Do you? We're content in living in God's grace, but not in His fullness. We're content with being saved ourselves while others around us perish.

We're satisfied with crumbs, not the full meal. Beloved, these are perilous times, and they're going to be more perilous. There were Afghanistan Christians who died during the night because they refused to hide, and they gathered with other saints.

I don't know how many. I've not yet heard, but you know it. They woke up, and they went to an assembly of other saints, knowing it might cost their life, and they did the math, and they said, sufficient price for the glory.

Are we willing? We may have to someday soon. I don't think we're aware of our own peril. Everybody seems to be talking about politics and the deplorable state of society, and we're not lamenting the deplorable state of our hearts.

I'm not what I should be, but I'm not what I used to be. I love that statement, but I have found that it can be a crutch for me. I'm, thank God, I'm not what I used to be, and I'm not too interested in making much more progress.

It's not that you don't care at all. The problem is we don't care very much. We've sunk into an apathy that keeps us from forcing our way to the table where we deserve and to get what is ours.

How many of you are simply just quite happy to be spoon-fed by the more dedicated amongst us? There are some who still need the bottle rather than a juicy cut of steak, and they complain that maybe sometimes the food here may be a little heavy on their digestive system. And then there are some, I don't think anybody here, I hope not, but I'm in churches all the time, it's not about eating meat. They'll cry if you change their formula.

We criticize the Word of Faith movement, the Kenneth Copelands, the Benny Hens, the Joel Osteens, and I say they need to be criticized. They're not just heretics, they're demon-possessed. They ought to be criticized, yes.

But we sit in judgment on their abuse of faith with our little faith, and we congratulate ourselves for our smallness of faith. Look at me, I'm not trying to believe God for a miracle, as if that's somehow commendable. If this miracle is a crumb, then give me the whole loaf.

If sitting at the table is better than living in the squalor on the floor, then my dear friends, come on, let's get up, church, let's get up, and let's press our way into the table before the feast that God has spread for us. Let's no longer be satisfied with the crumbs that fall from God's table. If God has something better for you, and I say to you, listen to me, He has.

Yes sir, God's got something better for you. We cannot hear about this Jesus as we heard. I don't know, they sometimes call it the children's sermon, but I get something out of it too.

Greater than Solomon is here, whose wealth is like having half of a nerf gun compared to heaven's riches. And He's here. Do you think He intends for you to limp your way into the kingdom of God, into the city celestial? Do you think He means for you to get in by the skin of your teeth? No, no.

The apostle Peter said that a wide entrance might be made open to you. That's what God has for you. And I pray with new determination that you'd be relentless to eat and have the full cuisine of God.

Get out from under the table and be a child of the King, because that's who you are. I remember an old hymn written by the man who wrote Christianity's anthem, Amazing Grace, John Newton. Here's what the first two stanzas of that hymn said.

Listen carefully, and I will conclude. Come my soul, thy suit prepare. Jesus loves to answer prayer.

He Himself has bid thee pray, therefore will not say thee nay, therefore will not thee say thee nay. Now listen carefully. Thou art coming to a king, large petitions would thee bring.

For His grace and power are such, none can ever ask too much. None can ever ask too much. Amen and amen.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Father, for your help.

Thank you for your assistance today. You have answered my prayer and I am so thankful. Now, Lord, we turn our attention to what we have heard.

We ask that your Spirit, your precious Holy Helper, would advocate and help us to believe what we heard, to believe it for ourselves. Every one of us in this room, Father, we confess we have enough faith to believe that you saved us from our sins. We have enough faith to get into the kingdom.

But now that we're in the kingdom, we confess that our faith is very strong at times to believe you for much more than that. But we want to trust you more, because we know this pleases you so very much. You're a sovereign and an omnipotent God, and yet at the same time, you love us so much to give us the thrill and the joy and the delight to work beside you in your redemptive enterprise.

Oh, Lord, help us to believe that you are good and that there is more for us. We're not asking for a simple life, a comfortable life, free from pain or sorrows. Oh, God, if anyone is hearing that today, they've not heard me.

You know, Lord, what I have said. Preserve and protect them from that preacher from hell that would twist, distort, and deceive. No, but we do believe we are to live a life that is Christ in us, the hope of glory, to live by your faith and by your power.

Take this church, Lord, and help us to get to the next level with our faith. Help us to get to the table and eat as you have prepared for us to dine. Oh, Lord, may fellowship communion with you be our meat and our drink.

For Jesus, you're everything. You're everything to us. You're our treasure, our portion, our inheritance, and we love you so.

Forgive us for our doubts. Increase our faith, oh, Lord, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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