

How to prepare for a miracle?
March 30, 2003
Mark 6:34-44

How to prepare for a miracle? Notice I did not ask a question like this: "How to ASK for a miracle?" Asking God for a miracle may indicate a lack of faith. Our faith should not have to survive with a regular supply of the miraculous. There are times when we prefer the miracle to the miracle worker. If we truly have faith in the miracle worker, miracle will come according to the worker's will. This is exactly what we are doing today, where we place our trust in God who gave us the vision to also give provision miraculously – not because we are asking, but that we are expecting! Therefore, it is imperative that we are prepared for a miracle so that when it happens, we do not miss it.

*Mark 6:*³⁴When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. ³⁵By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. ³⁶Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." ³⁷But he answered, "**You give them something to eat.**" They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" ³⁸"How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "**Go and see.**" When they found out, they said, "Five--and two fish." ³⁹Then Jesus **directed** them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he **gave thanks and broke the loaves**. Then he **gave** them to his disciples to set before the people. He also **divided** the two fish among them all. ⁴²They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

This is a well-known story that even a five-year-old can probably tell. It has a rich lesson for us to learn how a miracle take place and how can we be prepared for it when it comes. Four-point outline:

Vision to see it
Obedience to go for it
Faith to believe it
Courage to do it

VISION

Notice the word 'but' at the beginning of verse 37, which suggest something contrary to the previous described circumstance. Often times, that is what a vision is like – it is not an idea, it is certainly not common, it is something different. Jesus said, "**You give them something to eat.**" (verse 37) What? Did we not just tell you, Jesus, that we had no food enough for so many people? I mean, cannot you see? Do you understand our circumstances? Like the disciples, We **procrastinate**. v 35 We pass the **buff**. v. 36 We **worry**. v. 37

Dr. Vance Havner, still one of America's most quoted preachers, says "Too many times we miss so much because we live on the low level of the natural, the ordinary, the explainable. We leave no room for God to do the exceeding abundant thing above all that we can ask or think."

Helen Keller once was asked "is there anything worse than being blind?" She said "Yes, **having eyesight and no vision.**" How true! He works in ways, we cannot see. His way is higher than our ways. We must have a vision to see the miracle He is about to do.

What is our vision to build? A simple way to put it is to build an international village on our land. Now, God never care for a building, or an activity, or a program, more so than He does His people. What God is really going to do is that God is calling TIBC to "Arise, shine, for your light is come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you (Isaiah 60:1)." He gave us a vision of an "international village", a ministry where Chinese, Indonesian, Malaysian, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Angolans, Americans, and people of every nation are coming together at TIBC on our Promised Land. The nations shall come to worship and praise the goodness and mercy of our Lord!

What is a vision for? A vision is given for immediate direction and is given to develop the kingdom of God by revealing the moral and spiritual deficiencies of the people of God in light of God's requirements for maintaining a proper relationship with Him.

Do we have moral and spiritual deficiencies? Dr. Larry Spargimino said it well last Sunday, a church is the connecting point of God and the lost and dying world. But how many of us still remember all purposes of our church? Do we still remember the mutual covenant we have with each other – to meet every Sunday morning Bible class and worship, Friday night fellowship so that we can make TIBC the connecting point of God and the lost and dying world!

OBEDIENCE

"**Go and see.**" (verse 38) The command is very simple and direct. It is given for immediate direction. Delayed obedience is disobedience. (inseparable blessing to provide for it – we don't need money to do God's work, serious. What we really need is God's Word! God's Word is light, penetrate the darkened world, touch the hearts of people who have grace of giving He laid burden in and so that we receive the blessing of money and everything else we need for the building. Let me repeat, share the vision – and you will receive PRO-vision. It is not the building, which is to impress anybody; it is the vision, which can change live or causing lives to change.)

What is my part? ACCESS what you have already have. v. 38 Mark 6:38 *"How much food do you have?" he asked. 'Go and find out.' They came back and reported, 'We have five loaves of bread and two fish.'"*

GIVE God whatever you have. v 41

Be a part of this exciting faith journey. Notice Jesus DIRECTED the people to sit in groups. We need to organize our church to groups, each function its part together in a harmonious group to do His work.

Do you know who you are following to expect a miracle? He is the Great I Am; the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He is the God of All-power and Might. He is the strong and mighty tower; the place of refuge; the One we can run to and find shelter under His wing. He is our Father, the One who loved us enough to reconcile us unto Himself through the Sacrificial death of His only begotten Son. He is the One who promised that he would never leave us, nor forsake us. Why can we expect a miracle and believe in miracles? Because if you're God's child; **you are a miracle!**

What is required of you? Consecrate yourselves, Joshua said in Joshua 3:5 'for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.' when he was getting ready to lead the people of Israel to cross the Jordan river to claim the Promised Land.

FAITH

Thank God for what you have. Jesus gave thanks and broke the loaves. (verse 41)

Some facts about sowing and reaping:

We reap what we sow.

We reap in another season than we sowed.

We reap more than we sow.

(John 12:24-25) **John 12** ²⁴I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

²⁵The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

We reap in proportion to what we sow.

We reap only if we persevere. Gal. 6:9

Galatians 6 ⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature^[1] will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

WITHOUT FAITH, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD (Hebrews 11:6) (FAITH CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS)

A small congregation in the foothills of the Great Smokes built a new sanctuary on a piece of land willed to them by a church member. Ten days before the new church was to open, the local building inspector informed the pastor that the parking lot was inadequate for their size of building. Until the church doubled the size of the parking lot, they would not be able to use the new sanctuary.

Unfortunately, the church with its undersized lot had used every inch of their land except for the mountain against which it had been built. In order to build more parking spaces, they would have to move the mountain out of the back yard. Undaunted, the pastor announced the next Sunday morning that he would meet that evening with all members who had "mountain moving faith." They would hold a prayer session asking God to remove the mountain from the back yard and to somehow provide enough money to have it paved and painted before the scheduled opening dedication service the following week. At the appointed time, 24 of the congregation's 300 members assembled for prayer. They prayed for nearly three hours. At ten o'clock the pastor said the final "amen." "We'll open next Sunday as scheduled," he assured everyone. "God has never let us down before, and I believe He will be faithful this time too."

The next morning as he was working in his study there came a loud knock at his door. When he called, "come in," a big rough looking construction foreman appeared, removing his hard hat as he entered the office. "Excuse me, Reverend. I'm from Acme Construction Company over in the next county. We're building a huge new shopping mall over there and we need some fill dirt. Would you be willing to sell us a chunk of that mountain behind the church? We'll pay you for the dirt we remove and pave all the exposed area free of charge, if we can have it right away. We can't do anything else until

we get the dirt in and allow it to settle properly.

The little church was dedicated the next Sunday as originally planned and there were far more members with "mountain moving faith" on opening Sunday than there had been the previous week! Would you have shown up for that prayer meeting? *Some people say faith comes from miracles. But others know: MIRACLES COME FROM FAITH!*

COURAGE

Gave, Divided, (Verse 41) just do it!

How did **David and Solomon, kings of Israel**, prepare for miracle of building the temple?

First, there was a vision from God for David. 2 Samuel 7:1-3

Then, there was obedience from himself and his leaders, and all of the people. **1**

Chronicles 29:6 "the leaders of families, the officers of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds ..."

It daunt on me that even kings, both King David and King Solomon both built the temple in faith.

It is difficult to believe that even a king or kings do not have enough to build right away. If they choose to build smaller or less magnificent building, they could have done it the next day. He would not have to bother his fellow leaders and people. But the task that God give His people is always bigger than what they can – otherwise we probably do not need God. I believe that a building is a tool for ministries and not monument.

Most importantly, he understood that the blessing was from God to ALL of His people, not just David. King David cannot and must not hold the blessing to himself.

That is why we have CSP. We need is God's Word. Then why CSP? CSP is not about raising money. It is about teaching the word of God is a systematic way. **The first responsibility of Christians is the receiving and giving of God's Word.** His Word provides strength for living and serving; we share His Word that others, too, may be saved and nurtured. Let me share with you that we don't need money to do God's work. When God told David to build, He gave him His word – not money.

How to prepare for a miracle? Have a **Vision** to **see** it, be **Obedient** to **go** for it, ask for **Faith** to **believe** it, and stir up the **Courage** to **do** it by being a part of His plan for you.

Invitation:

I wonder this morning what kind of needs you have in your life. What things have come over you that cause you to be stressed? The only way that you will find relief is to change your focus from self to God...from the problems at hand to the "Problem-Solver," as you accept every situation with the understanding that God is, indeed, in control. Expect a miracle to solve your problems, to help you grow, to restore your relationship to God.

Our God is a miracle worker. The greatest miracle of all is that wonderful, incomprehensible act by which God became man, and was born to a young Jewish girl named Mary, in a stable in Bethlehem. He came for you and me. Today is the day for you to receive him if you have not already known Him.