

There is a story about a man who was a regular customer at a certain restaurant. The management always did its best to please him. So, one day when he complained that only one piece of bread was given to him with his meal, the waiter then brought four slices. "That is good" he said, "but not enough." Then came six pieces, but he complained they were still being frugal.

The next day even a basketful of bread could not satisfy him. So, the manager decided to surprise him with a colossal loaf of bread. The man glared at the huge loaf and looked at the manager saying, "So, we're back to one piece of bread again!"

That is the world we live in, one that is full of food. It is not uncommon for us to say after a good meal, "Man, I ate too much." Jesus came into a world very different from that. I don't know if we know what it is to be two or three days away from starvation, but that's the kind of world Jesus entered.

It's no wonder that Jesus, at the beginning of his ministry, under the driving of the Holy Spirit, went into the desert and fasted forty days.

I think one of the fundamental reasons Jesus went out in the desert was to know in his bones the world that he was ministering to. In the withering time of his starvation, he got to know this world that is so hungry.

No wonder Jesus put at the very center of the prayer he taught them to pray, "Give us this day this daily bread." In their world it was a physical need of hunger, but in our world, it is spiritual hunger. For the impoverished, it is both. One can understand why Jesus might say to us all, "I am the Bread of Life." Jesus meets a hungry world.

In the other gospels of the multiplication of loaves, it is the disciples that approach Jesus and basically say, "We like these people, but we think it's time to wrap it up and send them home. They must be getting hungry." In John's gospel, however, it is Jesus who initiates a conversation about food.

He asks Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" And then John provides this little side note: "He asked this only to test him..." Philip answers like this: "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite."

That little conversation between Jesus and Philip is one of the hinge pieces of this entire story. Jesus is asking a question at one level, and Philip answers it at another level. Jesus is asking a where question. It's a faith question. And Philip answers with a how response.

He heard Jesus' question as a budget question—a logistics or strategy question. Those are two different ways to have this conversation. I think that many of us are missing Christ's invitation to join him in God's mission in this broken world, because when he asks a where question we answer with a how response.

You can see how this plays out: Can you help with bringing communion to the homebound? "How? I don't have time." Could you be a catechist for the kids? "How? I have no training." You see, when we are obsessing over the how question, what we're really doing is assuming that God is unwilling to meet the needs of our world, and that's not the response God blesses.

Some of us are missing the kingdom of God because we're asking the how question first instead of the where question. Be willing.

Jesus asks the where question, and there's one kid in the whole group who's willing to sacrifice. He's got what he needs—one boy willing to step forward and make a sacrifice of what he has for the sake of what Jesus is up to.

All Jesus needs is one person to say yes and make a sacrifice toward it. That's it. He doesn't need twenty people. He doesn't say, "Okay, if we can just get ten more." It's amazing what will happen if just one person with faith will take what they have and give it.

This boy gets it. Jesus already knows what he wants to do, so the boy makes a sacrifice, a step in faith. He gets started with one boy's willingness and then comes a miracle. If you want a miracle, you have to make room for it. You see, the kingdom only needs one thing and that is for someone to say, "Yes, I will sacrifice what I have."

+Neat story of one little girl's sacrifice and what transpired. At a routine traffic stop last year, 5-year old Mackenzie Brown sacrificially gave up her own stuffed moose toy to a Pennsylvania police officer, hoping it would help keep him safe.

"She was holding a stuffed moose out of the window and tried giving him to me," the police officer said on the Facebook page created on behalf of the moose. "I tried to politely say no thank you, but was told she wanted me to have him so he could keep me safe. Clearly there was no way to say no to that!" The officer held onto "Mr. Moosey" for a short time, but then decided to pass along the stuffed animal to different first responder units.

It was a hit. Recently, reporters followed up on the story and discovered that the moose has since made visits to Chicago, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, "serving" alongside Air Marshalls, the National Guard, fire departments, and even the NYPD Intel-Terrorism Office. One person and one sacrifice.

The Facebook page "Mr. Moosey's World Tour" is updated regularly with stories of what impact the presence of the moose has had on different parts of the country. Cameron Knight, "Traveling Moose Comes to Cincinnati to Protect Police," Cincinnati.com (4-20-2017).

As you go out from here, resolve to answer the Lord, "Here I am. I don't know how this is going to work, but I don't need to know. You already know what you want to do, so here I am. Send me. Use me. Here's what I have." Our sacrifice may impact the lives of others far beyond what we can ever imagine.