



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC He Provides

SPEAKER

Pastor Darren Kuek

THEME God Answers Prayer

DATE

23 & 24 March 2024

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Pastor Darren's message addresses two groups of people –

- 1) Those who find it hard to fully trust in God's provision for their lives,
- 2) and those find it hard to give/provide more because they feel limited by what they have.

Pastor Darren exhorts us through the account of Jesus feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fish in Matthew 14, that (1) God cares deeply, (2) He provides generously, and (3) He partners intentionally.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER - HE PROVIDES

1) He cares deeply

When Jesus heard that his cousin John the Baptist was beheaded in jail, He withdrew to a desolate place by Himself, but a great crowd followed him (Matthew 14:13-14). Despite His personal turmoil, Jesus had compassion on the crowd and healed their sick (Matthew 14:14). Jesus did not choose to withdraw again to another place of quiet and rest. Instead, His great compassion for people in need led him to sacrifice His solitude, and He healed them. This is the heart of Jesus—that He cares deeply for us.

Pastor Darren encourages us to experience the Lord's care for us by approaching Him, whether as Christians or pre-believers. Just as a child experiences his parents' love for him through not just their words, but through his entire experience of his parents' love and care, we are also called to "taste and see" the depth of God's deep love and care for us (Psalm 34:8).

2) He provides generously

In Matthew 14:17-21, Jesus fed five thousand men, besides women and children. They all ate and were satisfied, and there were even twelve baskets of leftovers (Matthew 14:20); what an abundance! Jesus did a miracle and multiplied the food. As we come before God and present our requests to Him, we should also believe that He is the one who will provide for us generously.

One of the Lord's names is Jehovah-Jireh, which means 'The Lord will Provide'.

In the Old Testament, God promised Abraham a child, and after 25 years when the promise was fulfilled, God told Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. This was the ultimate test for Abraham. God showed Abraham the condition of his heart, that Abraham truly loved and trusted God, and God provided a ram for the sacrifice instead.

In the New Testament, the Lord God sacrificed His own Son Jesus Christ on the cross, so that Jesus took the penalty of our sins and death. Romans 8:32 says that God did not spare his own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will he not also with Him graciously give us all things? God cares so deeply for us that He has already given us the ultimate gift of His Son. We are spared from sin and death and can know Him and have eternal life; we can have confidence that God will provide generously in other aspects too.

God is not a stingy Father. Matthew 14:17-21 demonstrates God's generosity. Pastor Darren also shared his own testimony of how God provided a high-quality mattress for him and his wife without being financially burdened.

3) He partners intentionally

God wants to partner us in His plan for providing for others. In Matthew 14:15-16 and John 6:5-9, Jesus asked his disciples to feed the crowd. The disciples had already witnessed many miracles that Jesus did; Jesus was challenging them to step out in faith this time too, and this was a test (John 6:6). We may be in situations where we see a need in others, but we feel limited and inadequate. Pastor Darren exhorts us to exercise our faith, instead of limiting what our Lord can do through us. God can give us all sufficiency in all things at all times (2 Corinthians 9:8).

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 shows us these principles:

- (i) Principle of Sowing: In the measure that we sow our seed, we will reap. When we sow our "seed" for God (e.g. bringing our five loaves and two fish to Him), He will multiply and increase the harvest of our righteousness, helping us to abound in good works.
- (ii) Principle of Bread and Seed: God supplies us with both "bread" and "seed" – we sow "seed", and the "bread" is for our needs. It honours God when we consume our "bread". We have to recognise within our resources, which is "bread" (for us), and which is "seed" (to sow for God's kingdom). Pastor Darren shared his testimony of how God led him to be a channel of God's provision, where he gave an iPad (which was gifted to him during a Grace Draw) to a missionary who had real need for the iPad.

CONCLUSION: FAITH IN HIS PROVISION, AND FAITH TO BE A CHANNEL OF HIS PROVISION

The Lord cares deeply for us – if we are in need, we trust in Him to seek His help. When we ask for His provision, we know that He is not a stingy Father who gives us the bare bones to survive, but we can expect that our Heavenly Father will provide generously. The Lord wants to partner with us to be a channel of His provision – we need to trust Him with our five loaves and two fish, and we will see Him multiply and supply to help us and others in need.

QUESTIONS

1. God is not a stingy Father. He is our good, good Father. Share an experience of God's provision for you in a challenging time.

2. God blesses us to be a blessing, and we serve out of the overflow of our hearts. What are your five loaves and two fish that you will avail for God to multiply? How can we extend compassion to those in need?

3. When times get tough, we might start to doubt God's goodness and provision in our lives. Share some practical ways where we can help and encourage one another's faith, trust and joy in Jesus.