



June 2007
Upcoming Events

* to be updated later

Don't Limit God – Sr. Pastor Wayne Syas

We live in a world in which limits are frequently, and by necessity, imposed for the maintenance of an orderly and safe society.

Consider the following:

- speed limits in school zones when there's a flashing yellow light
- weight limits on bridges
- weight limits on elevators
- maximum people occupancy in a room for fire safety
- in baseball, there's a limit on the number of strikes you're allowed (three), before your turn at bat is ended
- in basketball, there's a limit on the number of fouls an individual player is allowed to commit, before they can no longer play in the current game
- At the-Friday-after-Thanksgiving sales there is often a limit of one sale item per person.
- in restaurants, there is

usually a limit of one coupon per visit

These are just a few of the many imposed limits we routinely experience, almost without conscious awareness. In fact, we are so accustomed to limits until we often try to put limits on God!

Jesus' disciples discovered this in Jesus' miraculous feeding of 5,000 men (not including women and children), with two fish and five loaves. Observe the conversation that transpires between Jesus and the disciples:

And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. (Mark 6:34 – KJV)... .. and he healed their sick. (Matthew 14:14). And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, this is

"God smiles when
we LAI – Love
Accepted People
unconditionally"



Don't Limit God (continued)

a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. (Matthew 14:15).

When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little (John 6:5-7). And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? (Mark 6:37). But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat (Matthew 14:16)

He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. (Mark 6:38). One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, there is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? (John 6:8,9). And they said, we have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people (Luke 9:13)

Notice, the mind set of the disciples and how they described:

1. **the place as barren:** " *a desert place.*" In other words, there is neither water nor food. There's no eatable vegetation anywhere. We're in the middle of nowhere.
2. **the time as late:** "*the time is now past.*" It's late in the evening, and the people are too far from home to go home and eat. To compound matters, they didn't bring food with them because they didn't plan on being out here this long.
3. **the people as many:** "*the multitude*" They could tell the crowd was large, but probably didn't determine that it was more than 5,000 until after Jesus had them to seat the people in groups of 50 and 100.

4. **their needs as great:** "*there is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?*"

We see that the disciples have the compassion of men who see the need; but to their limited human thought, the situation is discouraging and hopeless. They are well versed on how dismal the situation looks. According to their analysis it is as if they are asking, "what can be done in this dried up place?" Rather than have the men, their wives, and their children faint under their noses, they propose the only feasible solution they can think of, and that is - send the multitude away.

How spiritually blind these disciples are to have *The Bread of Life* and *The Living Water* in their presence and to not recognize it. Although Jesus already knows what he is going to do to feed the multitude, he asks Philip what he thinks, in order to show Philip a void in Philip's faith. Jesus then intervenes by having the five loaves and two fish brought to him. He instructs the disciples to have the people sit down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. Looking up to heaven, Jesus says grace over the meal and then gives an inexhaustible supply of bread and fish to the disciples, for them to in turn give to the hungry crowd. "*And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.*" (Mark 6:43-44).

As I reflect on this miracle, I'm reminded that although we live in a world replete with limitations, we are not to transfer the world's and our personal limitations onto God. Just as Jesus called into existence food for 5,000, which did not previously exist, we can take comfort in knowing that whatever challenges we face, our extremities are merely opportunities for God to demonstrate his limitless resources, love, and compassion toward us.

- Pastor Wayne





Reconciled to God!

Many people do not fully understand what Christ did for them at the cross. His purpose was to reconcile all people back to himself. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly." Since the entire world has been reconciled back to God, the sin issue has been resolved once and for all. Those who refuse to believe what God has done for them will not be partakers of the Holy Ghost or the Kingdom of God. Those who believe will be filled with the Holy Ghost (Spirit of Christ) and will have the opportunity to walk in the Spirit and not after the flesh.

Sin has always been the issue that has separated the Holy God from sinful man. Man, no matter how hard he tries cannot do anything to remove the sin nature (Adam). Man and God like oil and water could not fellowship together after the fall. God saw fit to be his own sacrifice to redeem man back to himself. This is just, because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. It is also merciful since man could not save himself. God forgave the sin of the whole world with one sacrifice. He says that he will not go back to the cross again. He did it once and for all. This is the message of reconciliation (good news) we as Christians have to give to the world. God is not counting their sins against them.

The Christian should no longer ask for forgiveness that God has already provided. When we sin we should agree with God that it was wrong and we repent (turn from it). This is pleasing to God, we are agreeing with God and his word. If we ask for forgiveness we are saying that we don't believe what He has done. We are also asking him to once more go to the cross and shed his blood. How this must sadden God to hear us express unbelief in what he did. How nice it is to know that we are eternally forgiven.

If you are working to get something from God, ie. tithing, seed faith or any of the other scams that the church has perpetrated on Christians, you are missing a major point. We are not the initiator in reference to what God does. When Joshua was looking over the battlefield to prepare for battle, a man stood by with a great sword in his hand. Joshua asked are you for us or against us. The angel said that he was neither for nor against, he was the commander of the Lord's army (Josh. 5:13-15). In other words it was not his job to determine which side he was on, he only obeyed the Lord. So should we be with the things of God. God is the initiator and we are the responders.

Elder Dennis Mann

