

Faith Says “Yes” When the Inventory Says “No”

I could not be more pleased to have long-time friend and mentor Bob Shank share a guest post for the Lead With Your Life tribe. Bob is Founder and CEO of [The Master's Program](#)—a program to prepare Christian leaders to change their world and build God's Kingdom (A program that has had profound impact on my own life and leadership). He is also the co-founder of [The Barnabas Group](#). It is no over-statement to say that Bob is a major Kingdom operative, coaching and mentoring thousands of leaders who in turn are wielding their leadership influence in countless ways. Each week, Bob writes a leadership blog called [Point of View](#). Recently, he wrote about faith and I knew the Lead With Your Life audience would find his insights extremely timely and profitable.

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Thousands of people braved weather, traffic and crowded schedules to stand in line for their shot at the new iPhone X, released for purchase by adoring Appleites a few weeks ago.

Who would pay \$1000 for the newest and coolest mobile device on the planet? Answer: *more people than would have the chance*. All projections agreed that first-day consumer demand would exceed Apple's supply, causing thousands to deal with delayed gratification.

Scarcity is an economic principle: it refers to limited availability in the face of greater demand. Products and services can both be framed in scarcity; most people live most of their life expecting it, and experiencing it. When created artificially, scarcity is a proven way to manipulate and control people as they scramble to secure their supply at the expense of the person behind them in line.

Here's an intriguing reality: *scarcity controls people, but it never touches God*. He lives above limitations; he exists in the dimension where there is always enough, with reserves left over.

There's a story from Jesus' years of public ministry that is so familiar that it has likely lost its potency with us. Labeled “The Feeding of the 5,000,” it was cited in all four Gospels as an event worth including in their executive summaries of the greatest life ever lived.

Pretend you're hearing it for the first time. From Matthew's account:

...the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.”

Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

“Bring them here to me,” he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve

basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.” (Matthew 14:13-21)

The need was food for 12,000 hungry people; the supply was a lunch bag with five small loaves and two dried Tilapia (the native fish from the Sea of Galilee). The instruction from Jesus could not have been more clear: *“You give them something to eat.”*

The pushback was immediate: the 12 Apostles knew that their inventory wouldn't allow them to fulfill the order, so they dismissed God's will for them as fanciful, but impossible.

Feeding the crowd was inconsequential; teaching these Kingdom leaders a lesson they would need for the rest of their lives as they pursued their Calling was the big take-away. What was it?

Here it is, for them and for us: *when you finally get clear about what God wants you to do, expect your resources to be inadequate.* That's where faith comes in: *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)* **God uses our scarcity to prove his sufficiency!**

So... where is the fear of scarcity holding you back from the power of obedience? Faith is the bridge from what you have to what you need, and *it's the basis for God's miracles in your life!*

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