

Title: Power To Change I
Speaker: Fred May
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John 6: 5-6, 8-9, 11 (NLT)

⁵Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, “Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?” ⁶He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do.

⁸Then Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up. ⁹“There’s a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?” ¹¹Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted.

A. What makes a personal contribution significant/ meaningful?

1. A willingness to be self-sacrificial

Matthew 18:3 (NKJV)

³and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven

- [the child's ability to do role play, or imaginary role reversal - allowing one to 'feel' the implications for/on behalf of another party
i.e. empathy and compassion (NB of mission)]

2. The willingness to risk

- Performance failure, misunderstanding, rejection etc

3. Seeing Christ as ‘first receiver’, not the person/ people

Matthew 25:40 (NLT)

⁴⁰“And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’

**4. Knowing how much Christ prizes a meaningful contribution – that He longs to reward us!
As well as the people who’d bless us!**

Matthew 10:42 (NLT)

⁴²And if you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded.”

Mark 9:41 (NLT)

⁴¹If anyone gives you even a cup of water because you belong to the Messiah, I tell you the truth, that person will surely be rewarded.

5. Adopting the heart of the 'faithful steward'

Matthew 10:7-8 (MSG)

"Don't begin by traveling to some far-off place to convert unbelievers. And don't try to be dramatic by tackling some public enemy. Go to the lost, confused people right here in the neighborhood. Tell them that the kingdom is here. Bring health to the sick. Raise the dead. Touch the untouchables. Kick out the demons. You have been treated generously, so live generously.

- having our generosity shaped by our sense of gratitude and appreciation/ our grasp of 'grace'
- showing more respect for the 'precious' than for the 'valuable'

Mark 12:41-44 (NLT)

⁴¹Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. ⁴²Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. ⁴³Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. ⁴⁴For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."

6. To commit one's personal contribution by faith – i.e consciously and deliberately; and to release completely – to 'let go and let God'

B. The corrupted contribution

1. To understand the power and danger of the natural ego-attachment of the 3 fat 'elephants in the room' of personal politics viz, power, sex and money

1 John 2:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world.

2. Toleration of the 3 deadly enemies

Galatians 6:3-4 (AMP)

³For if any person thinks himself to be somebody [too important to condescend to shoulder another's load] when he is nobody [of superiority except in his own estimation], he deceives and deludes and cheats himself. ⁴But let every person carefully scrutinize and examine and test his own conduct and his own work. He can then have the personal satisfaction and joy of doing something commendable [in itself alone] without [resorting to] boastful comparison with his neighbor.

- pride/ conceit
- self-deception
- competitiveness/ strife

3. Lack in the relational skill of sober self-assessment/ spiritual wisdom

Romans 12:3 (AMP)

³For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him.

Philippians 3:6 (NKJV)

⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless

Galatians 1:13 (NKJV)

¹³For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

1 Corinthians 15:9 (NKJV)

⁹For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God