

## “Little Is Much”

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Mark 6:30–44 [cf. Mt. 14:13–21; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–13]

Only two miracles of Christ are recorded in all four gospel accounts: His resurrection and the feeding of the 5,000, thus showing its significance.

➔ It's been a busy and tiresome day in the life of Christ.

- In the first part of Mark 6 Jesus sent out the twelve out on a preaching mission (vs. 7-13). barque
- John the Baptist was beheaded and John's disciples came to tell Jesus (Mt. 14:12).
- The Twelve return from their mission and report to Jesus the good things that happened (v. 30).

Everyone is tired. Jesus tells His disciples, “Let's take a break” (vs. 31-33). God recognizes our need for rest—“*He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust*” (Ps. 103:14). That is why He instituted the Sabbath.

So they go for a little vacation in a different location (v. 32). Jesus was planning a restful evening alone with His disciples. **But look who came to dinner** (vs. 33-34)?

➔ One thing a person must give up in the ministry is the right to privacy (v. 33). Full-time ministry doesn't keep “office hours.”

### I. **The COMPASSION of Jesus** (v. 34).

- Jude 1:22— *And of some have compassion, making a difference:*
  - A. **Jesus SAW.** The key to compassion is in the word “SAW.” With everything going on, He still took time to notice the needs of the people. Jeremiah says, “*Mine eye affecteth mine heart*” (Lam. 3:51). WHAT DID HE SEE?
    - B. **The people's NEED.** They needed a SHEPHERD. He is “*moved with compassion... because they were as sheep not having a shepherd*” (v. 34). ISAIAH 53:6— Shepherds **lead** and **feed**. That is what the multitude needed.
      - Jesus would be their Shepherd. Jesus wants to meet the needs of people who are hungry, hurting, helpless, or hell-bound.

- Jesus was motivated by compassion for people seeking truth.

### C. The Disciple's answer.

1. The **contrast** between Jesus' attitude toward the multitude and that of the disciples: Jesus **welcomed** them. But the disciples said, "*Send them away.*" We're supposed to bring people to Jesus, not send them away.

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Jesus "**SAW**" **5,000 needy souls** — The disciples saw **5,000 problems** and their insufficiency to meet their need. That is our problem. We're looking at the problems instead of people. We need to see people and what they need— They need salvation... they need Jesus... and without Him they will spend eternity in hell. That will give us compassion.

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2. The disciple's suggestion made practical sense... It was late... getting dark... the people had a long way to get home. "*Send them away.*"

➡ ***But Jesus had a better idea!***

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Former Michigan State football coach Duffy Daugherty tells about a winning field goal kicked by a young man named Dave Kaiser against UCLA many years ago. The game was in Los Angeles and the field goal gave Michigan State a 17-14 victory.

As Dave Kaiser came back to the bench to meet the cheers of his teammates, Coach Daugherty said: "Nice kick, Dave. But I noticed you didn't watch the ball after you kicked it. How come?"

Kaiser replied, "I was watching the referee to see how he would call it. You see, I forgot my contact lenses back at the hotel. I couldn't even see the goal posts!" That's our problem... We can't see God's goal posts— Multitudes in need of "*the Bread of Life.*"

## II. The **CHALLENGE to the disciples** (vs. 35-37).

- A. **Asking the impossible?** Instead on sending them away, Jesus challenges His disciples *“Give YE them to eat.”* “Feed them? With what? We don’t have food for this multitude of people.”
- Nothing is impossible when Jesus commands it. Faith in Christ enables it to happen. Jesus said, *“With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are impossible”* (Mk. 10:27).
- B. **Our problem** is never a lack of resources, but our lack of faith in the Lord who can enable us to carry out His will.
- God always puts His omnipotence behind His every command. God never commands us to do something without enabling it to be done.

### III. The **COMPLAINT of the disciples** (vs. 37-38).

- A. The INVENTORY (v. 38—*“How many loaves have ye? **Go and see**”*).
1. Jesus did not ask, “Do you have any loaves?” Jesus knew they had some. They needed to ACCESS it.
  2. God never asks for more than we have. Take inventory of what you have to offer.
  3. Never think you don’t have any thing to offer God. It isn’t about about what you have or don’t have. It’s about putting it into the hands of God and see what He can do with it!
  4. Do not focus on the circumstances (largeness of the task vs. lacking of resources). Focus on the command of the Master. Don’t focus on your insufficiency, but on Christ’s sufficiency!
    - 2 Corinthians 3:5— *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves ... but our sufficiency is of God;*

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Remember this: Jesus said, *“without me ye can do nothing”* (John 15:5). You can’t preach, teach, sing, help, or do anything worthwhile for God without Jesus’ blessing. Also, remember the Bible says, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* No, you can’t do it by yourself, but when you bring what

you have to Jesus and let Him bless it, the impossible becomes possible.

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#### B. The CONTRIBUTION.

- After doing an inventory of the food they have on hand, they find a boy willing to give his lunch of five loaves of bread (like biscuits) and a couple of *small* fishes (like sardines).
- THAT'S ALL JESUS NEEDED—"Little is much when God is in it!"
  - A little **stick** in Moses hand became "*the rod of God.*" It became a snake that ate up Pharaoh's snakes. Lay down the world's books next to God's Book and God's Book will eat up all the world's books.
  - A little **sling** in David's hand became a might weapon.
  - A little **suggestion** by a little maid to Naaman's wife.
  - A little **suburb** of Jerusalem became the birth place of the King of Kings (Mic. 5:2)!
  - A little **Scripture** (can make a great impact on the world);
  - A little **supper** of a little lad fed a multitude (10,000+). It wasn't the size of the lunch that counted, it was getting it into the hands of Jesus.
- When God blesses what is freely given to Him, no matter how small it may seem, He can work wonders with it.

#### IV. The **COMMAND** of Jesus (vs. 39-41).

- A. **God's ORDER:** Jesus instructed the disciples to "*make all SIT DOWN by company upon the green grass.*" That command was 180 degrees the opposite to what the disciples originally recommended (cf. v. 36). God's ways are not our ways.
1. God is a God of order (John 6:10 cf. Luke 9:14-15; 1 Cor 14:40). God is not the Author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33). He is organized. He is practical!
  2. Jesus didn't create a huge pile of bread and a pile of fish and allow everyone to help themselves ("every man for himself"). Organizing the multitude into groups of fifty made for an

easier distribution of the food. It would be easier to tell who had been fed and who hadn't been fed.

- B. **GOD'S METHOD:** Jesus works through people who follow His instructions.
1. ANDREW brought the lad...The LAD gave his lunch...The DISCIPLES organized the groups, and served the food. Jesus performed the miracle.
    - Jesus could have performed this miracle without the lad's lunch. He could have rained manna from heaven. Jesus could write the Gospel in the sky. But He has chosen to do His work through men, women, boys, and girls.
  2. The Lord doesn't need what we have. He wants us to give what we have to demonstrate our faith... our willingness... and our obedience. We need to do what we can do, then trust Him to do what we could never do on our own.
    - He will not do what you can do—You do what you can do and let Him do what you cannot do.

**V. The CATERING of the meal** (vs. 41-42).

- A. **He TOOK it** (v. 41). Jesus will receive whatever is given to Him, no matter how small or insignificant.
- B. **He BLESSED it** (v. 41). The idea is to bestow something in what wasn't there before (Gen. 1:22—bestowment of power to increase in kind; cf Gen. 27:4, 26-30).
  1. Jesus' blessing on our offerings and service is what makes it sufficient.
  2. God gives us His grace to enables us to accomplish what He wants.
- C. **He BRAKE it**. He divided the loaves and fishes to distribute among the multitude. Each disciple received about a half a loaf of bread and one sixth of a piece of fish to feed 400-500 people each!

- Brokenness usually precedes usefulness— A horse must be broken before it can be ridden. An egg must be broken before it can be eaten. A kernel must be broken before it can grow.
    - God broke Jacob’s thigh.
    - Gideon broke the pitchers so the light would shine.
    - Moses broke the rock to give forth water.
    - The woman broke the alabaster box to anoint Jesus.
    - Jesus body was broken on the cross to provide salvation.
    - The bread had to be broken to feed the 5,000.
  - Breaking is painful, but necessary. Psalms 51:17—*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*
- D. **He GAVE it** back to distribute (v. 41).
1. The disciples gave to the multitude. Before you can give, you must receive. Before you serve, you must be prepared. Before a teacher can feed the people, they must first be a partaker of the Word of God.
  2. Required FAITH. Imagine what it was like for those disciples to walk among the crowd distributing the food.
- E. **He SUPER-SIZED it.** Jesus took the little and turned it into a lot! Jesus took what was designed for one, “super-sized” it to be meet the needs of over 5,000. It was a “McMiracle.”
- So much for vegetarianism. The Lord knows what is best for our diets. He was no vegetarian.

**SUMMATION:** (vs. 43-44). No one went away hungry.

The story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 teaches us that anything placed in God’s hands, will be used in mighty and remarkable ways. What God did for this bread, He can and will do for you, if you will place yourself in His hands!

If we do our part, God will do His part, and God’s work will get done!

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#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Only two miracles of Christ are recorded in all four gospel accounts: His resurrection and the feeding of the 5,000, thus showing it's importance. What other parts of Jesus' life up to this point are the most meaningful to you, and why? [For example: His birth? Sermon on the Mount? The healing of the demoniac of Gadara? The calming of the storm? The woman at the well? Encounter with Nicodemus? The widow of Nain? Turning water into Wine? Healing of the centurions servant? Healing Jarius' daughter? The sinful woman anointing Jesus' feet?]
2. In what situations today might Jesus tell you to "*Give ye them to eat,*" when you would rather just "*send them away?*"