

Provision, Prophecy, & Partnership

John 6:1-15. Matt. 14:13-21. Mark 6:30-44. Luke 9:10-17.

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Recap & Purpose.

Following a busy season of ministry and sad news, Jesus and the disciples rest and serve.

- a. (VV. 5 & 14,15) The miracle points to Moses, that points to Jesus. (Exodus, Deuteronomy)
 - i. Law & Manna.
- b. Question – What's the difference between giving to Jesus 5 or 100 loaves?

1. Our Incapable Hands.

- a. Illustration: Positive confession vs the bankruptcy confession.
- b. Text: VV. 5-9. Impossible, too little, it is not the best decision...
- c. Previous text: "The harvest is plentiful, but the labours are few."
 - i. Salvation or Ministry.

2. His Capable Hands.

- a. Illustration: A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands vs a basketball in my hands.
- b. Text: VV. 10. "Just do It" (By Jesus)
- c. Previous text: "Therefore, ask for the Lord of the harvest to send workers."
 - i. Resource or Labourers.

3. His Miraculous Hands & Our Servant Hands.

- a. Spurgeon's Illustration: The feast and the servants.
- b. Text: Result. (manna in the desert) & God of order (Jethro's advice)
 - i. Previous text: Rewards.

4. Rewards.

- a. The multitude & disciples were provided for.
- b. V. 7 – just a bite. Vs V.12 – they all had enough.
 - i. Avoiding the waste.

Conclusion – Key Takeaways.

- a. Salvation: Jesus is the bread of life.
- b. Ministry: The disciples share the bread of life.
- c. Morality: Grace & Empathy.
 - i. Homework: to watch Dallas' video.

Introduction.

Everybody knows this miracle of the multiplication of the bread and fish, and there are two ways you can approach this miracle: the wrong way or the right way.

- The wrong way: when you love the *supply* but you use the *Supplier*. The bread, the need... And that ends up becoming “my” bread and “my” need – with the promise that “Jesus will fulfill ‘my’ need.” (Side note, sometimes the *needs* are actually *wants*.)
- The right way: when you emphasize the Supplier. Because at the end of the day, this story is pointing to Jesus. As soon as you read that Jesus multiplies bread for the multitude, your mind should go to the manna in the desert. You know that the people of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years, and they were provided with a miraculous bread given by God all those years.

In Deuteronomy 18, Moses prophesied that God would raise to the nation of Israel a prophet like him – people should listen to him. Jesus is the one the whole world had been waiting for.

Before we jump into the text, I want to ask a question:

Does it make any difference, if you give Jesus 5 or 100 loaves?

TODAY’S SERMON.

1. Our Incapable Hands.

The world teaches you “positive confession.” If you confess things, things happen. That’s not what this story tells you, as a matter fact, it tells you the opposite. Here the disciples learned how to confess their bankruptcy. When they realized they didn’t have the means, that’s when they became eligible for the miracle.

Application: Whatever we have, no matter how much, it will always be “too little.” Think about salvation, and it must be by grace – because on our own, we can’t make it to heaven. Think about ministry, and it must be by grace – because on our own, we can’t make it.

“The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are fewer...” Especially in ministry, the need will always supersede the supply, so that the church learns that Jesus is the one who “builds his church” – not men.

Whether ministry or salvation, my brothers and sisters, when we confess our incapability, Jesus offers us his capable hands.

2. His Capable Hands.

A basketball in my hand means nothing. A basketball in Michael Jordan's hand means the NBA championship. It all depends on the hands that hold the supplies; if ordinary things are entrusted to Jesus, extraordinary miracles happen.

The 5 loaves and 2 fish in your hands means just that. However, if you give them to Jesus, 5 loaves and 2 fish can turn into a massive supply.

Application: Let us confess our incapability, and let us entrust the little we have to Jesus, because he does the multiplication – he gets the job done.

“Ask for the Lord of the harvest to send more workers to the field.”

As you think of the massive need, we are reminded that Jesus is in the business of multiplying not just resources, but workers as well.

3. His Miraculous Hands and Our Servant Hands.

Charles H. Spurgeon paints a beautiful image about this miracle: He paints it as a banquet where there are the host (Jesus) and the servants (disciples). Jesus, as the supplier of the miracle, communicates that he is the Lord and Saviour. The disciples, as the servants, are the dispensers of God's grace.

- The Manna – (Exodus 16:4) *“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘I will rain down bread from heaven for you’.”* The miracle itself points to the Old Testament. When Jesus performs a similar miracle that happened under the leadership of Moses, the multitude gets the confirmation that Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of the world foretold long ago.
- Jethro's Advice – (Exodus 18:17-18) *“What you are doing is not good... You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people.”* Jethro advises Moses to delegate leadership. You can't see this in John's Gospel, but all other gospels says that Jesus made people take seats in groups of 50 each and delegate service to the disciples. Which is a direct reference to Jethro's historical advice to the nation of Israel.

4. Rewards.

With an unlimited God, there is an unlimited provision. It wasn't just a little bit of food; it was a full-course meal. The multitude was composed of 5,000 men, plus women and children; that could easily be 10,000 – 20,000 people! And they went home *satisfied*.

With Jesus, everyone is provided – both the multitude and the servants. As a matter of fact, the number 12 clearly depicts the 12 tribes of Israel; in other words, Jesus is the Saviour of God's people. He who puts his faith in Jesus will be provided eternally by the Bread of Life.

Application: It deeply touched me when the Gospels said, "let nothing be wasted..." In our day and age, we have plenty of food, and we are guilty of wasting food from time to time. That shouldn't be.

Conclusion – 3 Takeaways.

1. Salvation – Jesus is the bread of life: This story does not point us to the supply; it points us to the Supplier.
2. Ministry – The disciples share the bread of life: Here it is important that I answer the question raised in the beginning of this sermon, does it matter if I give to Jesus 5 loaves or 10 loaves of bread? The obvious answer is, NO. Go to any church, and you will find out that they always lack something – for example, some churches have money, but they lack young people, and some churches have people, but they don't have property or financial means. Whether we have 5 or 100 loaves, at the end of the day, the church is built by Jesus' miraculous power, not our own power. Jesus urges us to entrust him our "5 loaves and 2 fish" and to open up our hearts to serve.
3. Morally –
 - i. Grace: With so little, Jesus takes food and gives thanks. The disciples "mumbled" that the food wasn't enough – in the Greek, the idea is of a humble supply, e.g., "little fish." Jesus had a different approach; he gave thanks in the little.
 - ii. Empathy: The disciples were trying to send the crowd away; Jesus was pulling them closer and feeding them. Selfishness says, "I don't care about your need, because I already have enough trouble myself;" empathy says, "I care about your need, because I also deal with the real life – therefore, I want to help you."

"In the heart of this beautiful miracle, there is the heart of God, filled with grace, empathy, and power."

- Homework: Watch this video, [Five Loaves and Two Fishes | Dallas Jenkins | 2024](#)