

# Feeding the Five Thousand

by C.I. Scofield

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*Jesus shows that with Him, anything is possible, and that we should not measure our possibilities by our limited resources.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:36, Matthew 14:14, Matthew 19:26, Mark 6:39, Luke 7:13, John 6:8, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 4:11

**Topics:** "Divine Compassion", "Supernatural Ministry"

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## Description

C.I. Scofield preaches on the compassion of Jesus towards the hungry multitude, emphasizing how Jesus' motive was always compassion in His miracles. He highlights the disciples' impertinence in giving advice to the Lord and the divine order in ministry, where God works through man to reach others. The sermon also delves into the loneliness of Jesus despite His acts of healing and teaching, showcasing a commentary on human nature and the disciples' lack of understanding of the supernatural power available through Christ.

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## Transcript

(Matt, xiv:13-23.)

### I. The Analysis.

1. The compassion of Jesus (verses 13, 14).--Mark tells us the cause of our Lord's compassion: "Because they were as sheep not having a shepherd." He adds, also, that, "He began to teach them many things." There is grave danger in the allegorizing habit, which must always find some occult meaning in our Lord's miracles. Again and again the Scriptures ascribe compassion as His sufficient motive (Matt, ix:36; xiv:14; xviii:27; Luke vii:13; x:33, etc.).
2. The super service able disciples (verse 15).--This is the first recorded example of the habit of giving advice to the Lord--a habit which is all but universal among disciples today. It is, of course, a mere impertinence (Luke viii:45; John xi:39; Matt, xvi:22.)
3. Anything, plus the Lord Jesus, is enough, verses 16-21 (See below).
4. The divine order in ministry (verse 19).--From the Lord, through man to men, is ever the divine order. It began with the incarnation, when "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," to be "made of a woman," that through a man He might save men. It is continued in this present church-age when the glorified Lord is giving gifts--"some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and

some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. iv:11).

5. The loneliness of Jesus (verse 23).--It seems incredible that of all whom He had that day healed, taught, fed, not one refused to be sent away--that not one followed even afar off, and then crept near to the lonely One in the darkness. What a commentary on human nature!

## II. The Heart of the Lesson.

"Bring them hither to me." How amazed the disciples were when Jesus said of the hungry multitude: "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" they asked (Mark vi:37). But Philip was of opinion "that two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little" (John vi:7).

Clearly the thing could not be done. The Lord had forgotten the slenderness of their resources. He was suggesting the impossible. So they would set Him right, and bring the matter to an end by plainly telling Him the facts. "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?" (John vi:8, 9). That, of course, settled the matter, for the church had not yet reached the point of suggesting a pink social, or a Trilby party to increase its resources, nor, indeed, was there time.

But no, the quiet command came: "Make all sit down by companies on the green grass" (Mark vi:39). And then He "took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven. He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude"--and, oh, wonder of wonders!--"they did all eat and were filled; and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full."

How this story repeats itself! For we are forever measuring the possibilities of Christian life and service by our five loaves and two fishes of resource, forgetting that we are a supernaturally redeemed folk, set to live by an ethical standard which is impossible to mere human nature, and to perform tasks absolutely impossible to the natural man. Think of the command given by the risen Lord to a handful of illiterate Galileans, to evangelize the world! Was any enterprise so vast ever committed to resources so inadequate? We are always forgetting that with God all things are possible.

The deeper truth is that there has never been a generation since Pentecost to which that enterprise was impossible. And to-day, in this present generation, disregarding entirely the professing church with its boundless wealth, it is entirely possible for ten thousand devoted Christians to evangelize the world if only they will put themselves and their resources into the power giving hands of Christ.

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