

(God Can Solve Every Problem) Multitude Fed

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes that God can solve every problem through His compassionate provision, as illustrated by the miracle of feeding the multitude.

Duration: 55:11

Scripture: Proverbs 11:24-25, Matthew 10:8, Matthew 14:13-15, John 6:9, John 6:14

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Divine Providence"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of surrendering one's life to God and partnering with Him in His work. He uses the story of a little boy who became a blessing to thousands by offering his five loaves and two fishes to Jesus. The speaker highlights that Jesus chose to work in partnership with humans rather than creating food for the multitude out of nothing. He encourages listeners to serve God by relying on His resources and not their own. The sermon also discusses the four actions Jesus took with the loaves, which symbolize what God wants to do with our lives: giving thanks, blessing, breaking, and multiplying.

Transcript

On the subject, God can solve every problem, and we're looking through the miracles found in the Gospel of John. There are eight miracles that John has selected under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Among all the hundreds or perhaps thousands of miracles that Jesus did.

And these eight miracles, John called signs, not miracles. The word miracle never occurs in the Gospel of John. The other Gospels use the word miracle, but I don't know whether you've noticed this, that John never uses the word miracle.

And that's significant. He calls them signs. John chapter 2 verse 11, the miracle of the turning of the water into wine in Cana of Galilee.

He says, is the beginning of signs that Jesus did. And from that I understand that every miracle was a sign. That means it had a meaning.

It had a spiritual meaning. An application for our life today. And that's what we want to try and understand.

And since John selected eight out of all the thousands of miracles Jesus did, these eight must be quite significant. To teach us some things that we need to know. We looked in our first study at the miracle of

turning the water into wine mentioned in John chapter 2 verses 1 to 11.

Then in the second study we looked at the healing of the royal official's son mentioned in John 4, 46 to 54. Which is one of those miracles, there were a number of them, where the person who was healed did not have faith. But someone else, in this case the father, had faith for his son.

Like the demon possessed boy's father. Or the Canaanite girl's mother who went to Jesus and said, please give me the crumbs that fall from the table. Or the Roman centurion who had faith for his servant.

So I was saying that sometimes if a person doesn't have faith, you can have faith for that person, for your son or daughter. And then the third miracle we saw in our third session was in John chapter 5. Where we read of this lame man who had been lame for 38 years. Lame because of sickness, not born lame.

And lying there with nobody to help him, a picture of a born again Christian who's got life but who can't walk in the spirit in victory. And whom Jesus came and touched and healed. And how he got into conflict with the Pharisees because he did not follow their religious rules.

And we want to look today at the fourth sign which is found in John's gospel chapter 6 verses 1 to 15. And this is the miracle of the multitude being fed with five loaves and two fishes. And in every one of these miracles as I said there's a message that the Lord wants us to get.

And we want to try a number of things that the Lord has to say in all of these. It's not just one truth but a number of truths in these signs that are described in John's gospel. Now this is by the way is the only parable, the only parable mentioned in all four gospels.

Now you know that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Matthew and John were disciples. Mark and Luke got their information from other disciples. And I'm sure they had access to many many stories of miracles.

The Holy Spirit inspired them to write what they did. We believe each of the gospels is inspired by the Holy Spirit. And under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he decided to describe one parable four times.

And this is it. So there must be something in it if it has to be mentioned four times in the gospels. And when we compare each of the parallel passages in the other gospels we see some wonderful truths.

For example when we read the same incident described in Matthew 14. We read there that this incident took place immediately after Jesus had heard that Herod had chopped off John the Baptist's head. As he got that news and there it says in Matthew 14.

You know Jesus was so human. Someone who had faithfully served him as his forerunner suddenly his head was chopped off. It'd be someone like I mean if you were to hear one day that someone whom you love very much.

Someone who had stood true to the Lord his head was chopped off. That's how Jesus felt at that time. And it says in Matthew 14 he withdrew to be alone.

Just like you'd want to withdraw to be alone. He wanted to be alone with the Father. He was human.

But when he withdrew to have a little time by himself. It says this great crowd saw him going towards Bethsaida and they followed him. And he didn't tell them well please leave me alone for a little while.

I want to get over this. He wasn't like that. It's one of the wonderful things I see about Jesus' life.

He was always willing to be inconvenienced. Nicodemus could come to him in the middle of the night. How did he do that? He didn't know Jesus at all.

He was a total stranger. But that's the impression Jesus gave when he moved around with people. I'm available.

I'm available to be inconvenienced. And we see that particularly in this incident. That at a time when he wanted to be by himself and he saw the multitude come.

The Bible says in Matthew 14 that he looked at them and he had tremendous compassion. If you look up the word compassion in a concordance in the Gospels. You'll find it comes a number of times in Jesus' life and ministry.

He was a person who was moved with compassion. Whenever he saw people. Whenever he saw people who were sick.

When he saw people who didn't have proper shepherds. Who he had their shepherds were the Pharisees. Who looted them of their money by various methods.

And led them astray. Gave them a hideous picture of God. And controlled their lives and put fear into their hearts.

And he was moved with compassion. And he taught them. He was moved with compassion when he saw this multitude.

And he taught them. He saw them not as we see them. He saw them as many of them lonely.

Many of them beaten in life's battles. Many of them having made a mess of their lives. Not knowing where to turn.

And he had compassion on them. He saw many of them lonely. Even though they would sit maybe in big synagogues like this.

With many people around. But still lonely. Afraid to expose themselves to others.

Feeling inferior. And in many ways troubled. Difficulties.

Maybe some of them had financial difficulties. Maybe some of them had sicknesses. But he saw them as people who suffered.

Not people to be criticized. When the devil looks at people. He looks at them in quite a different way.

He would look at this multitude and find all types of things. He could find fault with every single one of them. But when Jesus looked at them.

He looked at them with compassion. And I want to say that the devil is just the same today. And Jesus is just the same today.

He's the same yesterday, today and forever. As he looks at us right now. I want to say he doesn't look at you with critical eyes.

He doesn't look at you to condemn you. He looks at you with compassion. And if you're not sure of that fact.

The devil will be able to harass you. And make you feel condemned. And afraid of God.

And all that. That's why you need to read these passages in the gospels. Where Jesus looked with compassion on his people.

He looked with compassion at people who had been. Who had fallen in sin repeatedly and been defeated. He looked at them as people whom Satan had bound.

Whom God had created to be kings. People who were supposed to conquer. And overcome in life's battles were defeated.

Because Satan had gripped their lives. Led them astray. Because they didn't have shepherds.

Religious. But their leaders were leading them completely down a wrong path. Not delivering them.

And Jesus had compassion then. And he has compassion today. So these are the two ways in which the devil and Jesus look at people.

And now I want to apply that to ourselves. See you and I when we look at people. It could be individuals or a group of people.

We can look at them with either of these two ways. That depends on who we are closer to. If you're closer to the devil.

We look at everyone we meet with critical eyes. Something to find fault. Something to accuse them about.

Maybe some community of people you don't like. You'll find something to accuse them about. Oh yeah the devil's got things too.

He's got enough data to put into your head. To tell you what's wrong with this group of people. And this particular community is always like this.

And that person's like this. And your neighbor's like this. That's the devil.

And when you. It's not when you're tempted with such thoughts. We're all tempted.

But when you accept those thoughts. And those become your thoughts. Now I want to say whether you know it or not.

You're hand in glove with the devil. You're in fellowship with him. And that's the reason why perhaps there's so many problems in your life.

Because. You're in fellowship with satan. And it's so easy to move away from that.

And to fellowship with Jesus. And say Lord I want to look at people. The way you look at them.

Even if the Lord's done a wonderful work in you. And you're saved. All the more you should be like Jesus.

Look at people with compassion. The Pharisees were not like that. They had tremendous Bible knowledge.

But they didn't know how to look at people with compassion. And that's why they couldn't minister to them. How is it that.

With Jesus everybody felt comfortable. Little children felt comfortable with him. They were not scared to come to him.

Sinners felt comfortable. Because he was like that. Women felt comfortable.

They knew that he'd never take advantage of them. And everyone felt comfortable with Jesus. Because he gave that impression of one who understands your problems.

And that's the first thing we need to see here. This great multitude was following him. He wasn't thinking like many preachers would think today.

Well imagine how much I'd get if I pass a offering bag to this multitude. He wasn't thinking like that at all. He was thinking of their need.

And that's the spirit of Christ. Great multitudes were following him. Even though they were perhaps following him with selfish reasons.

It says here in John chapter 6 and verse 2. And great multitude was following him. Because, not because they wanted eternal life. Not because they were wanting to partake of God's nature or any spiritual reason like that.

It says here very clearly. They were seeing the signs which he was performing on those who were sick. You know when we come to God initially.

Most people come with very selfish reasons. And the wonderful thing about our God is. He accepts us even when we come with those selfish reasons and motives.

Jesus didn't turn them away. Just because they came with those motives. It's like the prodigal son who.

He came to the father's house. Not because he had a great love for his father. It came because he was hungry.

That's what he said. I'm hungry here. Why should I stay here? Let me go to my dad's house.

He went back for food. And his father welcomed him. That's what Jesus said in that parable.

But he hopefully. That prodigal son as he stayed there. And he saw his father's love.

He didn't continue to stay there for food. He became devoted to his father. And that's the change the Lord seeks to bring about in us.

Even though initially. We came to the Lord seeking something for ourselves. Some gain from this gospel message.

Something from Christianity for ourselves. The Lord will accept you. Even with that.

Maybe you come for healing. Maybe you come for financial help. God will accept you.

But hopefully over a period of time. You don't stay on with the Lord for that reason. And it says here that.

Jesus went up in the multitude on the mountain. And there sat with his disciples. And when he saw this multitude.

Matthew says he was preaching to them the whole day. The whole day. And they were without food.

Probably without breakfast. Probably without lunch. And late in the evening.

He saw this great crowd. And he said to Philip. Where to buy bread that these may eat.

Now you see something there. That the Lord who had taught them. And healed them.

He had given them the message of God. He had healed their sicknesses. Was now concerned about their food needs.

And one of the wonderful things we see in this miracle or sign. Is the fact that Jesus is concerned about our material needs. About our food.

The food that we set on our table. You know sometimes people can give us the impression. Well God's not concerned about all that.

He's concerned about victory. And overcoming sin. And things like that.

I want to tell you that's true. He's concerned about that. But he's concerned about your earthly needs.

Down to little things like food. Having enough food on the table. For yourself and your family.

We got to believe that he's concerned. Jesus taught us to pray. Our father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And give us this day our daily bread. In that wonderful prayer. He included a prayer for food.

It's not unspiritual to ask God for material necessities. For earthly things that we need. And that word daily bread includes everything else that you need.

For life on earth. Clothing, housing, education. In order to get a job.

So that you can earn your daily bread. It includes all of that. And here we see the Lord's concern.

It wasn't that they came to him and said we're hungry. No. He saw their need.

And he said we got to get some bread for these people. And there we see the lack of concern on the part of the disciples. In Matthew's gospel we read the disciples said send them away.

Let them go and find something for themselves. It's too much of a headache trying to feed these people. Send them away.

And that's man's attitude. You know anything that will cause me inconvenience. Send them away.

Let's not deal with them. But the Lord's attitude is not that. He says no.

You feed them. Don't send them away. But feed them.

And there we see the attitude of Jesus. It's wonderful to know that he hasn't changed. And in any situation that we ourselves are in any type of material need.

Remember this. What you hear today. That the Lord knows and he's concerned.

And he's interested in providing our material earthly necessities. That's one of the wonderful truths that we see here in this message. In fact there are another time he fed four thousand.

And there again that time we read. And you read that in Matthew 15. That they'd been traveling with him for three days.

Three days. They were listening to him. And without food.

Men, women and children. And he fed them that time too. And it's not only our earthly needs.

I love that passage where. In the last few verses of Matthew 17. Where we read that people came to collect the tax.

And they came to Peter and said. Doesn't your master pay taxes? And Peter came to them. Came to Jesus.

And Jesus said sure. I do pay tax. And he told Peter go to the go to the sea.

And catch the first fish. That you can. And in the mouth of that fish.

You'll find a golden coin. And then you find a coin. And then.

Use that. To pay your tax. And mine.

There's something wonderful about that. That Jesus wants to help us to pay our taxes. Imagine that.

That he'd even do a miracle to help us pay our taxes. It's not just our earthly necessities. Even something like taxes.

See all these things are written in scripture. It's amazing. The lessons we can learn.

From these miracles. For our daily earthly life today. Christianity is a very very practical.

Religion. It's not something just. Up there a pie in the sky in the future.

It's right now in daily earthly life. Jesus is interested. And that's one of the wonderful things.

We see in this. And he asked Philip. Where can we buy bread? Verse 5. It says he.

Jesus lifted up his eyes. And he asked Philip. Where can we buy.

Bread that all these may eat. And it says here that he was testing him. God tests us.

To see which way does my mind work. When I face a trial. Now which way is.

Philip's mind going to work. And there are only two options. It's either money or God.

Jesus said that once. He said in Luke 16 13. There are only two masters in the world.

Now the average Christian thinks. That the two masters are God and the devil. But that's not what Jesus said.

If you read Luke 16 13. He said the two masters are God and mammon. And mammon is a word.

Which is used to refer to money. And material riches. Property and anything connected with wealth.

Let's say God and wealth. Those are the only two masters he said. And Jesus knew.

Men like nobody else knew. And knowing man thoroughly. He said there are only two masters.

Man chooses to serve. One of two. And you can't serve both.

God and earthly wealth. God and money. And he tested Philip to see which way his mind would go.

And sure enough. His mind went towards money. How much will it cost me.

If we had to feed all these people. And he calculated. And he said well.

It's going to cost 200 verse 7. It's going to cost him. It says in verse 6. Jesus was saying this to test him. Because he already knew what he was going to do.

And he tested him like he tests us. And Philip said 200 denary. That's a lot of money.

One denary we read in another passage of scripture. Was the wages for one. For a laboring man for one day.

So 200 denary would be. You know the laboring. The wages for nine months.

So he calculated and said. We need that much money. We don't have it.

And then one of his disciples. We read here. In Andrew verse 8. Came to him and said in verse 9. There is a lad here.

Who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are these for so many people. And you know that Jesus took that.

And fed the multitude. And did the miracle. Actually Jesus was so different.

From so many preachers. You know a lot of preachers. They would feel that.

Well once we have taught the people. Now it's their job to give me money. Because I preached to them.

And on top of that. If I heal them. Definitely we can pass the bag around now.

But not Jesus. You never once see. Him passing a bag around.

To take a collection for himself. People gave him money. Voluntarily that was another thing.
But he never sought. To use his gifts. Whether preaching gifts.
Or healing gifts. To make any profit for himself. That is the thing.
That marks a true man of God. There we see Jesus was different. And I believe those.
That's the thing. That marks an anointed man. And that's the only type of man.
I would ever want to listen to. A man who has decided. That between these two masters.
God and money. He's only going to serve God. Not both.
And so we see here. That even though Jesus. Had taught them.
Even though Jesus had healed them. He went further. And said I'm going to feed you.
Now the disciples were not wealthy people. They were poor. They were fishermen.
They'd given up their jobs. Jesus grew up as a poor carpenter. And I've noticed.
You know I've had the opportunity. To work among extremely poor people. And rich people in India.
And I've noticed one thing. That is the poor. Who are far more hospitable.
And far more generous. Than the rich. I've seen that throughout India.
You go to these poor little villages. And sit in their huts. And they'll go.
They will deny themselves. Everything possible. To give you a good meal.
That's how they are. The rich. Are usually selfish.
Checking up their bank balances. And wondering how much they have to spend. Just like you know.
Philip. How much will it spend. If I invite this person for a meal.
Or something like that. This is the type of calculation. That goes on in their mind all the time.
Now I want to say to you. That this is the type of thinking. That God wants to deliver us from.
God's called us here to bless people. And when we're called to bless people. It's going to inconvenience us.
It's going to cost us money. But God will never be in debt to you. I'll tell you that.
I've served the Lord full time for 37 years. And I want to tell you. God's never been in debt to me.
I live in a poor country. I lived all my life in India. That's where God's called me to.
And that's where I live. And I want to say to you. God has never, never been in debt to me.
Never. I've gone and worked among these poor people. And never taken any money from them.

They're so poor. But God's taken care of me. And I want to say to you.

That if you seek to serve others. Even if you have to spend from your own pocket. To bless others.

To serve them. You'll experience a joy. Which nothing else in this world can give.

And God will replace what you spent. Always. It's a heart of compassion.

That God is trying to give to all of us. Towards one another. To get rid of this calculating attitude.

That we have. We don't seem to be calculating. When it comes to spending on ourselves.

You notice that? It's usually when we have to spend on others. That we calculate. How much is it going to cost? I want to say.

I want to show you a verse. Which you're probably not familiar with. But it's a very lovely verse.

It's been a blessing and a challenge to me. In Proverbs chapter 11. And verse 25.

Proverbs chapter 11. Verse 25. It says.

The generous man will be prosperous. And he who waters will himself be watered. And in verse 24.

It says. There's one who scatters. And yet increases all the more.

Wonderful. That's what Jesus taught his disciples to be. He turned around to them once and said.

You have received freely. Give freely. All of us have received many, many things.

Not only from God. But from many other good people around us. Many things freely.

Learn to open your palm. And give. When you see other people.

Who are in need. That's one of the lessons we learned from this parable. And that's what he was trying to teach his disciples.

Don't be so calculating Philip. Don't think how much money it's going to cost. Don't think how inconvenient it's going to be.

Serve. And God will increase your gifts. When you seek to serve.

It is inconvenient. We read later on. These 12 disciples had to feed these 5,000 people.

I don't know how many hours it took. They themselves were hungry. And yet they had to go and serve the others.

But that's always God's way. And if we're not willing to be inconvenienced like that. We might as well not ask God to give us the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

I remember hearing a story. Of a man who had a healing gift. I mean a real healing gift.

Not a. Not a psychological gimmick. Like a lot of people do use today. Pretending to have the gifts of the healing.

Now he was not one of these big public. Crusade type of people. He was a person who was very spiritual. Simple humble person. Who lived in a little place. And he had this gift.

And he would visit homes mostly. Pray for the sick. And they were healed.

It's a genuine gift of healing. One of the gifts of the Spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. But you know what happens to a man who has that type of gift.

There are tremendous demands on his time. When people know that a man's got a genuine gift of healing. There are all types of people who call him up.

And want him to come here. And want him to come there. And the amount of inconvenience he had.

And he didn't make money out of it either. One day when the phone rang at about 2 o'clock in the morning. There was an emergency.

And somebody called up and said. Can you please come and pray for someone in their home? He said sure. He's ready to go.

But he put the phone down. And he said Lord. Can you please stop these people from calling me at all these odd times.

And the Lord said sure. He took away his gift. And he still went around praying.

And gradually. Everybody heard. Nobody's being healed now.

He's lost his gift. Nobody called him at 2 o'clock in the morning anymore. Because they knew he had nothing to give.

And as time went on. He repented. He fell on his knees before God.

And said God. I'm willing to be inconvenienced. Give me that gift again.

Some of you are seeking for gifts to serve the Lord. You're seeking for power. Seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

You see some other anointed person. And you say boy. I wish I had that gift.

I wish I could preach like him. Or heal like him. Or do something like him.

You don't realize what a price you'll have to pay. Are you willing to pay that price? You'll be inconvenienced. Jesus was inconvenienced day and night.

He couldn't have time for himself. There was no privacy. Even when he retreated to have time for himself.

5,000 people would come. And the disciples. Would always say send them away.

Send them away. Jesus said no. Give them something to eat.

There's the difference between a spiritual man. And religious people. We have a lot of religious preachers in Christendom today.

Very few who are spiritual. God's looking for spiritual men. And women.

In his church. And that's what he tried to convert those disciples into. And that's what he's trying to convert you and me into.

And so we see here. There was this little boy who had brought his lunch with him. Five little loaves.

Small little loaves. And two little fish. That his mother had probably packed for him to take.

To have lunch. Just for himself. And I don't know how they found him.

Probably the disciples asked anybody who's got food. And this little boy said yeah I've got. Are you willing to give it? And he said sure.

And that little boy's story. Went down in all the four gospels. Because he gave everything to Jesus.

He didn't hold back anything. He didn't give 10%. He didn't think oh well.

If I give up all. What will I eat for lunch? If he had not given. If he had kept it to himself.

It would have fed one person. Him. But when he gave it to the Lord.

He fed perhaps 10,000. You know there must have been 10,000 people here by the way. Because it says.

There were 5,000 men alone. The men alone. Are worth 5,000 verse 10.

And that's made clear in other gospels too. There were women and children in addition. It was probably 10,000 people there.

And learn something from this. That when you keep what you have for yourself. You'll satisfy yourself.

One person. When you give it to the Lord completely. It can bless thousands.

And that's one lesson that we learned from here. That God could use a little boy. Because he was not calculating.

He was not thinking. If I give all of this away. What will there be left for me? He says.

Well it's not much. But if you can distribute this among these 5,000, 10,000 people. I'd be happy to share it.

I'll get a little crumb. That's enough for me. Think of a little boy.

I don't know maybe 12, 13 years old. Wonderful. When all these disciples were there.

And they were all calculating. I praise God for the examples in the gospels. Where Jesus uses ordinary people.

Like this little boy. Not gifted. How much of the Bible did he know? You know God's not looking for people with great capabilities.

And I want to say to all of you. Some of you may feel. Well how can God use me? Well he can use you.

Even if you're a little like this little boy. If you learn to give all that you have. And say Lord this is not much I have.

But you can use it all. Those are the type of people Jesus commended. You remember that widow who had only two mites.

And she gave it to the Lord. I don't mean that you got to take your entire bank account. And put it in the offering.

That's not what I mean. It's a question of an attitude in our heart. Where we say Lord.

I don't want to live for myself. I have time. I have energy.

I have years ahead of me. To live on this earth. I want it to be wholly yours.

I'm not talking about being a pastor. Or being in full-time Christian work. I'm just saying about being totally available to God.

You can be in a secular job. But totally available to God. Your time is God's.

Where he tells you how to spend your time. He tells you how to spend your life. And you give your ambitions to him.

You take your five loaves and two fishes. Your ambitions. Your plans for the future.

And your time. Your energy. Don't just think of money.

Think of all the other things you have. And say Lord it's all yours. It's all yours.

I don't want to spend my time in a way that. When I get into eternity. I'm going to have a regret.

About how I spend my time. I want to urge you my dear brothers and sisters. Be careful.

About how the God of this world. Who's got control of the media. And the entire entertainment system in the world.

Begins to neutralize your witness for Christ. By getting you interested so much in entertainment. That you never become spiritual.

That you drift along in your earthly life. Without being useful to God. You got to watch that.

We need relaxation. Sure we're human beings. We need to go for outings and picnics.

And things like that. That's fine. And we need relaxation at home too.

But if you don't ensure. That that doesn't go overboard. I see a lot of that today.

I see young people. Who are so taken up with sport and entertainment. Christians who don't know the scriptures.

Now how in the world can God use them. When they are older. If they don't know his word.

If they don't get to know God. If they have no time to wait on him. And hear what God is trying to say to them.

Because they're so taken up. Not with evil things. I'm not talking about drug addicts and drunkards.

I'm talking about people are taken up with legitimate things. Who haven't given everything to God. They do give them a little time.

They give them a little time on Sundays. And they give a little bit of time. Maybe one or two days a week.

But God's not master of their time. They haven't like this little boy said. Lord it's all yours.

You can do what you like with it. Yeah he knows that you got to spend. Perhaps nowadays 10 hours a week.

Or 12 hours a week in your place of work. He knows all that. I'm not talking about those times.

Which you are essential. For your work or other things you have. You have to take care of your family.

I'm talking about all the extra time you have. Even after you've had time for relaxation. And etc.

etc. Don't you want your life to count for God. Like this little boy.

He gave everything. And it says here that Jesus took this. And he took those loaves.

And it's very beautiful. He did four things with those loaves. And I think of that as a picture of what God wants to do with my life and your life.

He first of all took this completely dedicated offering. And gave thanks to the Father. And I believe that's the first thing that God will do.

That Jesus will do when you've given yourself to him completely. There'll be a thanksgiving. That the Lord has.

For you're having given your all to him like he gave his all for us. And then secondly. He blessed those loaves it says.

And God will do that. He'll put his hand upon us and fill us with his Holy Spirit. And then thirdly.

He broke them. That's the third thing he does with us. He didn't distribute the loaves before he broke them.

Some people have been blessed. But they're not willing to be broken. By being broken I mean.

Where God allows your earthly plans to be crushed. Where he allows your reputation to go perhaps. Like his own reputation went.

They call him the prince of devils. When God allows people to spread false stories about you. Just like they spread false stories about Jesus.

And that can be a breaking. And other situations and trials and pressures. Those are the processes by which he breaks the loaves.

And then. He distributed them. It's only then that the multitude was fed.

When it was blessed and then broken. And we read here in verse 11. That Jesus gave thanks.

He distributed to those who were seated. And likewise also of the fish. As much as they wanted.

I love those words. You know we read in another place that God gives us what we need. Not what we want.

But sometimes he gives us even what we want you know. Not just what we need. As much as they wanted.

God has given us richly many things to enjoy. He's not stingy in his giving. Remember that.

Men are stingy but not God. God gives liberally. As much as they wanted.

Wonderful words. We got to get all these wrong pictures of God and of Jesus out of our heads. That religious people have told us.

And that the devil has told us for so many years. And get a correct picture of Jesus. From the Gospels.

As much as they wanted. That's how he gave. We saw this morning how he made 150 gallons of wine.

At a wedding. Imagine 150 gallons of wine. That's how he does.

Whenever he does something. He does it in grand style. And gives people as much as they want.

And it says here that they were filled. They were satisfied. And then Jesus said to the disciples.

Gather up the leftover fragments. That nothing be lost. There's something beautiful here.

You know I was saying these disciples were concerned. Whether there'd be something. You know they saw all these hungry people.

Eating, eating, eating. As much as they wanted the loaves and fishes. And I can imagine these hungry disciples.

Saying I hope there'll be something left for us. By the time these folks have finished their eating. It's quite natural.

They were just like us. Hungry people distributing food. And people saying I'd like a second helping.

And I'd like a third helping. And these disciples had never seen it before. And they wondered whether there'd be anything left.

But because they served the Lord so selflessly. Not thinking of their own hunger. But distributing, distributing.

Going around giving people a second helping. A third helping. Being inconvenienced.

You know what the Lord did? At the end we read. There was so much extra that Jesus had made. That it says in verse 13.

They filled 12 baskets. And he told his disciples. You know this is for you.

One for each of you to take home. That's how God rewards his servants at the end of the day. And I want to tell any of you.

Say to any of you who are serving the Lord. Denying yourself. Sacrificially.

People don't know about it perhaps. The way you're allowing yourself to be inconvenienced. Not getting any return for it here on this earth.

The Lord will have a basket for you. When you come to the end of your life. And you stand before him.

And even on earth. He will provide you more than enough for your needs. He said he'll give a hundredfold.

To those who have given up lands, houses. Anything for him. He's always like that.

And so the disciples went home with a basket. To their families. It was wonderful to see that.

One of the lessons we learn here is. Which Jesus wanted his disciples to learn. Is that if you live for yourself.

Like I said if this boy had just lived for himself. And not told anybody about what he had here. He'd have fed himself.

But because he gave everything to the Lord. He fed ten thousand. Jesus said if you seek to save your earthly life.

You lose it. But if you're willing to lose it for my sake and the Gospels. You'll find it.

One of the greatest saints. I personally think the greatest saint. That India has ever seen.

Was a man who lived a hundred years ago in India. Called Sadhu Sundar Singh. Now Sadhu is an Indian word for saint.

Sundar Singh was his name. He was from the Sikh community. Folks who have turbans.

And he hated Jesus. He tore the Bible as a young man. But he was converted when he was a young boy.

Seeking God in his room. At the age of fourteen and a half. He saw a vision of Jesus in his room.

And he was so surprised. Because he expected to see some other heathen God. When he's seeking God.

He saw Jesus face to face. And he was converted. And his whole life was changed.

And he spent the rest of his life. Till the age of forty one or so. When he died.

Taking the Gospel to. Mainly to Tibet. He'd crossed the Himalayas.

Mountains. The northern part of India. That is the highest mountains in the world.

The Himalayas. He'd go over that. To the land of Tibet.

Where the Gospel had not gone. Where almost everyone was a Buddhist. And preach the Gospel to them.

He'd go there frequently. Well he tells in one of his trips. He was traveling with a monk.
Across the snowy mountainous parts. They wanted to reach a village. In those hilly areas.
Where everything was snow. Before sunset. Because.
Once the sun had set. The winds would be so cold. That the cold would kill them.
And so they rushed. To reach the village before sunset. And on the way.
As these. As Sadhu Sundar Singh and this monk. Was traveling together.
This Tibetan monk. They saw man's body lying on the ground. On the snow there.
They thought he was dead. But when they turned him around. They found he was still breathing.
And Sadhu Sundar Singh. So we can't leave this man here. He said.
We can't leave him to die. But the monk said. If we take him.
That's going to slow down our process. Our progress. And we'll never reach that village in time.
All three of us will die. So well let's leave him. But Sadhu Sundar Singh said.
No. We can't leave him. He was a Christian.
So. He told the monk. You go ahead.
I can't leave this man to die here. He took the man on his shoulder. And carried him.
Of course. It slowed down his. Progress tremendously.
And the monk went right ahead. Rushing towards the village. And after a little while.
Sundar Singh saw. The Tibetan monk's body. Lying on the snow.
He turned him around. And he was dead. Dead of the cold winds.
It had become much colder. Than they had anticipated. And then he began to wonder.
How is it that these cold winds. Killed this man. And didn't kill me.
And then he realized that. Because he was carrying this body. The effort and the energy.
Had produced heat in his body. That protected him. And the one he was carrying.
From the cold. And he is to say this story. And say.
The words of Jesus are true. If you seek to save your life. You lose it.
But if you are willing to lose your life. For my sake and the gospels. You'll save it.
That's how it is. And that's what we learn. From this story.

Your life connects with almighty power. When it's totally surrendered to him. It can bless thousands.

This little boy. Became a blessing to thousands. The other thing we learn here.

Is how Jesus always does things in partnership. He who created the worlds from nothing. Could have created food for a multitude.

From nothing. Right? Sure. But he didn't do it.

He wanted to do it in partnership with a human being. He wants to reach the world. In partnership with you.

And me. There are millions of angels in heaven. Who'd be ready to go to any part of the world.

And preach the gospel. But they don't have that privilege. Because of one reason.

They cannot speak from experience. About what the blood of Jesus Christ has done for them. Whereas you and I can.

He wants to reach needy people. In partnership with us. That's the great message.

In this passage of scripture. Here's a great multitude of people. And there's a much greater multitude in the world today.

He wants little boys. He wants disciples. Who are willing to forget about their own need.

And serve others. And he'll take care more than abundantly of your need. At the end of the day.

Because when everything is surrendered to Jesus. Your life comes in contact with his almighty power. You know one of the wonderful things.

The Lord spoken to my heart from this passage. Many a time when I have to preach God's word. I say Lord.

What shall I give the multitude? Sometimes I don't even have five loaves or two fishes. And the Lord's told me. You're not in the production business.

You're in the distribution business. You don't have to produce. You only have to distribute what I give you.

Give your all to me. And I say Lord you can have it all. You can have my mind.

All these brain cells. I don't want to use this mind for. The world.

There are enough people using their minds for the world. I want this mind to be totally available to God. To understand his word.

To understand his ways. And to communicate that to other people. But Lord I don't have a word very often to share with them.

What do I have to do? What did the disciples do when their baskets were empty? They go back. And get some more. A full basket.

And go and distribute it to people. And it would be empty again. They go back again.

And that's what the Lord told me to do. Whenever you feel empty. When you don't have anything to give to other people.

Whether in a meeting. Or in a worship service. Or in a house.

When somebody comes to visit you at home. And you're speaking personal conversation to somebody. Come to me.

I'll give you what you need to give them. You know you can do that. That's the way God wants us to serve him.

He does not want you to serve him out of your own resources. This is one of the most liberating truths that set me free. I don't have to serve God from my own resources.

I'm not in the production business. I'm in the distribution business. All I have to do when I'm empty is to come back and say.

Lord my basket is empty. Fill it up again. And I can distribute again.

You can do that. If you've given everything to the Lord. The five loaves and two fishes.

And I want to say one last thing. It says here that when the people saw this miracle. They said this is really verse 14.

The prophet who has come to the world. And they wanted to make him a king. Verse 15.

But he withdrew into the wilderness. Into the mountain by himself alone. That's really something to withdraw.

When everybody wants to make something big of you. We've seen it consistently. Even in the earlier studies we had today.

That Jesus would disappear after doing a miracle. He never wanted to be a king. He came to be a servant.

He never came to rule over people. He came to serve people. The son of man didn't come to be ministered unto.

But to minister. And that's the way he has shown for all of us. As long as we are on this earth.

We're not supposed to be kings. We're not supposed to exalt ourselves over other people in any way. And if you can remain all your life.

After God has used you to bless thousands. Multitudes. If you can walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

That when they come to make you a king. You run away. And say no.

I'm called to be a servant. If you can live like that till the end of your days. You live the most useful and the most blessed life.

That any human being can ever live on the face of the earth. Do you want to live like that? God will help you. Let's pray.

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