

A Feast in the Wilderness

Matthew 14:13-21

Summary

Like the disciples in the story, Jesus intentionally leads us into situations where our resources are insufficient so we learn to depend on His provision. When faced with overwhelming needs, we often default to pushing the problem away, freezing up, or trying to power through in our own strength. Jesus is forming us into disciples that are aligned with His compassionate heart, acknowledge our lack, and bring our inadequacy directly to Him so He can enable us to be a blessing. What you have may seem insignificant, but in the hands of the Compassionate King, it is more than enough.

Sermon Outline

1. Introduction

- a. Following Jesus leads us to places where the brokenness of this world and the endless needs around us are obvious. Feeling inadequate in these situations is a deliberate, core feature of discipleship. Jesus intentionally leads His followers into impossible situations where He knows they do not have the resources on their own to fulfill the need.

2. The Story: A Feast in the Wilderness

- a. *The Humanity of Jesus:* Jesus withdrew to a desolate place to grieve the loss of His cousin and get some rest. In His humanity, He was like us in every way, yet without sin, experiencing sorrow and weariness.
- b. *The Compassion of Jesus:* When the crowds followed Him, Jesus responded with gut-level empathy. He was deeply moved from His inner being and had to do something about it.
- c. *The Disciples' Default Solution:* Faced with a hungry crowd in a desolate place, the disciples suggested sending them away to buy food for themselves.
- d. *The Confession of Lack:* Jesus commanded the disciples to feed the crowd, prompting them to present evidence of their lack: only five loaves and two fish.
- e. *The Miracle of Provision:* Jesus invited them to bring what little they had to Him. He blessed the food, broke it, and gave it to the disciples to distribute. This is a Kingdom pattern we find throughout history – God takes our nothing and turns it into something for us and for others.
- f. *The Result:* Everyone ate and was satisfied, leaving twelve baskets of leftovers. This demonstrated that Jesus is Yahweh, the All-Sufficient Provider for His people.

3. Application: Responding to Endless Needs

- a. *Our natural reactions to the gaps between demand and supply:*
 - i. Push it away: We dismiss the need because we lack the time, money, or emotional capacity.
 - ii. Paralyzed by it: We freeze up and do nothing because we think our contribution is too small or useless.
 - iii. Power through it: We rely entirely on our own strength and intellect, ending up bitter and burnt out.
- b. *Jesus is forming disciples who are...*
 - i. Aligned with His heart: He wants us to not just see, but feel the brokenness of this world. As we spend time with Him, our hearts beat in rhythm with His, moving us to compassion.
 - ii. Aware of our lack: He humbles us so we see our inability to solve the problems we face on our own and turn to Him for help.
 - iii. Enabled by His provision: We bring our lack to Jesus so He can enable us by His power. We are blessed to be a blessing.

4. Conclusion

- a. Jesus invites us to bring our exhaustion, broken relationships, and inadequate lives directly to Him. He takes the little we have, blesses it, breaks it, and does something great with it through us.

Song Lyrics to *These Crumbs are Yours*, By Scott Allen

I have these hands, calloused and dry.

I have these legs, stiff and sore.

I have this mouth, it's not eloquent.

I have this heart, weak and worn.

It's not much, I hope crumbs are enough

Lord take, and bless, and break.

This life of mine, it's all I have.

Oh take, and bless, and break.

Feed many through me Lord

These crumbs are yours.

I have these eyes, they've seen too much.

I have these ears, dulled down with time.

I have this mind, foggy and slow.

I have this soul, beaten and tired.

In your hands I'm more than enough

I'm blessed to be a blessing