

Luke 9:10-27

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

¹⁰ When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, ¹¹ but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

¹² Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him and said, “Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here.”

¹³ He replied, “You give them something to eat.”

They answered, “We have only five loaves of bread and two fish—unless we go and buy food for all this crowd.” ¹⁴ (About five thousand men were there.)

But he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each.” ¹⁵ The disciples did so, and everybody sat down. ¹⁶ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people. ¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

Peter’s Confession of Christ

¹⁸ Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”

¹⁹ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”

²⁰ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “The Christ [the Messiah] of God.”

²¹ Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. ²² And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

²³ Then he said to them all: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. ²⁵ What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? ²⁶ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷ I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”

* Perhaps the most stirring way of stating Luke 9:25 is Mark 8:36 in the NKJV: For what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?

Luke 9:10-27

1. Where had the disciples been? (Luke 9:6) What did they do when they returned? Why would they have wanted to be alone with Jesus?
2. In what situations do you really want to be alone (or with a small group of friends)? How do you feel when you are forced to be with a crowd?
3. What did the apostles want to do with the crowd? If you had been an apostle, how would you have reacted to the crowd's overwhelming need?
4. Why did Jesus say in Verse 13, "*You* give them something to eat"? Is this fair?
5. The feeding of the 5,000 is one of only three events recorded in all four Gospels (the others are Jesus' baptism and His death and resurrection). What does this tell you about it? Why is it so important?
6. What does Jesus' response to the crowd tell us about Him? What does it tell us about the disciples? What does it tell us about how we should live *our* lives? There are many deep lessons in this simple story; what are some of them?
7. Who did the crowds think Jesus was? How would you answer Jesus today if He asked, "Who do the crowds say I am?"
8. In what situations would you be uncomfortable in stating plainly that Jesus is the Messiah, the savior of the world, the son of God, and actually is God? Do you believe that absolutely, to your core, with every molecule of your body and brain?
9. Why do you suppose that Jesus strictly warned his disciples not to tell anyone about his heavenly identity?
10. What does it mean to you personally to "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus?" (Give a practical, real-world answer, not a spiritual, theological, la-dee-da answer.) How might you "lose your life for Jesus?"
11. Is there someone you can pray with for the purpose of denying yourself and following Jesus?
12. What celebrities or politicians seem to have "gained the whole world, yet lost their own soul?" How? Why?
13. What is the meaning of Verse 9:27 when Jesus says, "some standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God?"

4. Jesus already knew what He was going to do. In John, He asks Philip “Where shall we buy bread to feed these people?” He asks this to see if he knew, to stretch him. Is this deceitful or misleading? No. It is like asking your son, “OK, How are we going to fix the bike?” You know how you are going to fix the bike, but you want your son to use his head, come to some conclusion and act on it. In Mark, Jesus questions Andrew as to the amount of money to buy food. He replies 8 months wages, which clearly the disciples do not have. Jesus is showing them that there is no way they can solve the problem on their own.

This was a test designed to teach. Jesus wants them to deal with their own thoughts and their own solutions before He shows them what He is going to do. His goal was for them to come to Him and ask Him to do it.

5. By 1st Century standards, this was a HUGE crowd, bigger than most towns and much bigger than Bethsaida.

What do they have? Just a little boy’s lunch. Children were of little value in that culture. They weren’t even counted with the 5000. The significance of this is that God uses someone of no account to perform the miracle.

- What do we learn about Jesus? Jesus is the bread of life who can provide life and supply it for the world. This is demonstrated here and then stated in the next sermon/discourse (verses 9:23-27)
- What do we learn about the disciples? They are human and have human responses and weaknesses. What was their failure? They didn’t recognize their resource in Christ.
- What is the lesson for us? The biggest need that we have is spiritual (faith in God), not physical.

Other Lessons:

- Nothing is too small for God to use it. They didn’t think the little boy’s lunch was any help at all.
- Beware of limited thinking when we have the greatness of God at our disposal.
- Everyone got more than enough to eat and the leftovers were gathered up for future use.
- His strength is made perfect in our weakness. He wanted them to recognize that He was the resource. This is miracle 19, and they are telling the crowd to go away. When are they going to catch on? We do the same thing. We see God work in our lives and then when things get tough again, we have to go through the same process of trying to do it on our own , failing, being broken and then finally trusting in God.
- It is likely that others who had some food shared it as well.