

“How many loaves do you have?”

A. Intro: *Simon Peter's viewpoint of this miracle*

B. Sermon in a Sentence: *Spiritual fruit multiplies when we entrust everything to God.*

C. Context of Mark 6 and Summary of Today's Message from Mark 6:30-44

The context for this miracle is a mixed period of Gospel opportunity and opposition, including Jesus' visit to his hometown of Nazareth, commissioning the Twelve for a short-term Gospel mission of their own, and a recap of Herod's treachery toward John the Baptist.

As the returning disciples share their mission experiences with Jesus, he prepares to take them aside for some needed rest. But the crowds continue to pursue Jesus for more miracles and insights, setting up today's lesson in faith for the disciples and us.

D. TODAY'S BIBLE PASSAGE: Mark 6:30-44 (NIV)

³⁰ The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. ³¹ Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. ³³ But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

³⁵ By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. ³⁶ Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

³⁷ But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

³⁸ "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five--and two fish."

³⁹ Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³ and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴ The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

E. My Reflections

Walking in Peter's sandals was a good way to understand the meaning behind one of Jesus' most well-known and well-documented miracles. Despite the disciples' short-term success in carrying out Jesus' mission, they are still accustomed to seeing their world through a natural, rather than supernatural, lens. Jesus' question challenges their assumptions about how to approach impossible circumstances and shows our need to yield our expectations and resources to Him. When we live as grateful, faith-filled disciples, we need never fear or become frustrated.

This was a timely message for me as the demands of our new virtual methods of doing ministry have been extra demanding. God challenged me again to see them from His view -- as opportunities to entrust our church (and my varying duties) to His capable hands. I'm sorry, Lord, for drifting in this simple but very important discipleship principle. You are Lord, and I am so thankful for your greatest gifts: Faith, Hope & Love. May our church keep learning this lesson, as well. **A little can be a lot in Your Hands.**

What do you have which God wants to multiply during these homestay weeks? Ask Him each day to show you how to redeem the time, talents, treasures, title (reputation or influence), testimony, and temple (body) He has given to you, for His glory and for the Gospel. – *Love in Jesus, Pastor Richard*

LIFE APPLICATION STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What has been the most challenging part of your schedule and needs during this season of physical distancing? Why?
2. When have you experienced Jesus challenging your perspective and presumptions about how and when to respond to a situation? How did He challenge your faith to go deeper?
3. In the space below, write out your schedule and tasks for the upcoming week. Pray over each segment and ask the Lord for how He wants to transform the ordinary events of your life into an extraordinary opportunity for growth in your faith.

This Week's Schedule or Tasks	How God wants to grow your faith through this.

4. How are you doing at surrendering your resources to God's multiplying power (consider things like tithing, education, career aspirations, "free" time, skill development, accumulated treasures, your reputation, your Christian testimony)? What area will you invite God to transform this week? How? Who will help you in accountability toward being more sanctified in this area?
5. Spend time praying for others you know who are learning to surrender to the Lord.