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Text: Matthew 14:13-21
Title: The Miracles of Jesus!

Intro: When Jesus heard about John the Baptist, He withdrew from the area of Capernaum by boat so the crowds could not follow Him. He went to a solitary place to be alone with His disciples. According to Luke 9:10, the solitary place was near Bethsaida on the northeast shore of the sea of Galilee. According to Mark 6:30-31, Jesus was compassionate toward His disciples, calling them to rest because they have been so busy ministering that they have not had time to eat. However, the crowds somehow found out where Jesus was going and followed Him on foot. They probably watched His boat and figured out where He was headed.

The miracle of feeding the 5000 men is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. This miracle is recorded in Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, and John 6:1-14. Each gospel writer gives description that paints a picture to show the purpose, pity, and power of Jesus the Christ.

The disciples have already seen Jesus turn water into wine, heal scores of people, calm a storm by just speaking to the elements that caused the storm, and cast out demons, but they still did not completely understand who He was. Noticed, Jesus made use of hungry crowds to reveal His person, purpose, pity, and power to His disciples and the people.

Miracles were also called signs, wonders, works, and power. Miracle is an event which unmistakably involve an immediate and powerful action of God designed to reveal His character or purposes.

Jesus meets a twofold need.

- I. He Healed the Hurting: according to verse 14 Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick. When Jesus stepped off the boat, He saw the mass crowd of people. Even in His deep grief over John the Baptist, He had compassion for them. The word “compassion” means to have the bowels yearn, i.e., to feel sympathy, to pity. Jesus’ compassion trumped His need for solitude.

Jesus shows us how to push aside personal hurt to minister to the needs of others. Questions: How much of your hurt can other people handle? Are your hurts pushing people away? There is healing for your hurt in helping others.

Why was Jesus moved with compassion? Mark 6:34 says, ***“He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.”***

- 1) Sheep without a shepherd have no direction. Sheep without a shepherd move aimlessly, wandering here and there, getting lost, and generally paying little attention to the danger around them. This was the spiritual state of the people in the text. We know this because the first thing Jesus did was teach the people. The

care they needed was foremost guidance in truth by the Son of God. Matthew Henry said, “The people in the text had no one to lead and guide them in the right way, none to feed them with good doctrine.”

- 2) Sheep with no shepherd are defenseless. Sheep have no defense mechanism. They cannot bite, growl, fly, or run. Sheep are totally defenseless. So, what does a sheep do when danger comes? It flees. When a predator approaches, the sheep will gather with others in a pack and run in circles in complete panic, just hoping that the predator will choose someone else. Without a shepherd to protect them, they will be picked off and eaten one by one.

Jesus healed their sick. In other words, He miraculously strengthened the frail and sick. The sick in the crowd were restored.

II. He Fed the Hungry: verses 15-21

The disciples approached Jesus to address the apparent hunger of the crowd. Verse 15 they said to Jesus, “This is a desert place, and the hour is already late.” Their concern led to a command. They issued a command in verse 15c clause—Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves some food. Out of concern for the crowd and Jesus, they issued Jesus a command. One writer said, “They felt responsible to bring Jesus back to reality—to prompt Him to act sensibly.” In other words, they thought that Jesus was so caught up in ministry that He failed to notice the time and had no consideration for their condition.

Jesus did not send the crowd away. Jesus said to the disciples, “You give them something to eat.” Jesus issued a command to His disciples. The obedience of the disciples was essential for the miracle. Obedience creates an expectation for the miraculous. Hear me, there is an unmistakable correlation between the miracles the Lord has performed in history and the unusual commands He gave those who obeyed Him. Over and over, He commanded believers to do things that might have seemed ridiculous at the time – perhaps to themselves as well as the others around them. The purpose for reading the Bible is for us to see that there is nothing impossible with God and to remind us that He will always provide for those who obey His commands and trust Him to keep His promises.

When we obey and complete His instructions the miracle is up to Him.

Jesus challenged His disciples to address the problem instead of ignoring it. The disciples were shocked by what Jesus commanded. Shocked because they were looking at the problem through the lens of scarcity. They said to Jesus, we don’t have enough, we can’t do it. Jesus wanted them to think not in terms of what they did not have but rather in terms of what God had given them. Jesus wanted them to look at the problem through the lens of plenty. The message is that if we embrace the challenge, bring what we have, no matter how little, then God will do the rest.

A. Shortage: verses 15-17

- 1) Shortage of food: We only have two fish and five barley loaves of bread. The two fish and five loaves were only a lad’s lunch. The lunch was not prepared

for a hungry multitude. Rev. Marvin Wiley said the lad's lunch consisted of two small sardines and five thin crackers. The small lunch was not enough to feed the multitude if it remained in the disciple's hands.

- 2) Shortage of ability: The Lord did not give them the power to perform a miracle of multiplying bread and fish. Instead, the disciples were to serve the bread and fish that Jesus multiplied. Church, we do not have multiplying ability. We have serving ability. As the Lord multiplies, we serve!
- 3) Shortage of imagination: the disciples did not see it possible. There are circumstances and situations that make us feel like two fish and five loaves kind of people. The two fish and five loaves feeling is when you feel overwhelmed, powerless, and hopeless. It is when you feel that more is asked of you than you can give. It is when you do not know what to say or what to do. The two fish and five loaves feeling is when you want to send folk away to fend for themselves. The two fish five loaves feeling is not just thinking you do not have enough but it is when you begin to believe you are not enough. Some of you have said I am not enough to make a difference, I am not enough to make an impact, I am not tall enough, I am not bright enough, I am not thin enough, I am not thick enough, I do not have enough. In your shortage you need to have an imagination for what could be.

Jesus taking the two fish and five loaves and looking up to heaven, He gave thanks and broke the loaves. With the elements in Jesus' hands, a miracle occurred. The bread and fish continually multiplied so that all in attendance ate and were satisfied.

- B. Surplus: verses 18-21 more than enough was available, for 12 basketfuls of broken fragments was left over. About 5000 men were fed on this occasion, plus many women and children, perhaps 15,000 to 20,000 in all.

Christ takes our contribution, however modest, and makes it enough. The source for enough is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.