

The Feeding of the 25,000

📖 Matthew 14:13-21

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A few weeks ago someone asked the question, "Should we preach the gospel in the context of the kingdom." We had a great discussion about that statement and I pointed out that even at the end of Acts Paul is preaching the kingdom. I'm not sure you can really preach the gospel correctly outside a kingdom context. In other words, it kind of gets distorted when you think of it outside the coming kingdom. You need to think heavily about what the criminal on the cross said in Luke 23:42 "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" And Jesus said what? "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise." The criminal clearly believed that Jesus was the King of the coming kingdom and here the King was on the cross and these are tied together. You can't have one without the other. Think about it. Can you enter the kingdom apart from the cross? There is no kingdom apart from the cross. Can you have the cross apart from the kingdom? There is no cross apart from the kingdom. And that is why there really is no other gospel. You don't have all these gospels. I think that when you think this through it is silly to think there are different gospels. There is one gospel and it incorporates the cross and the kingdom and everyone who believes is going to go through the cross into the kingdom. That is so important I don't think you can really understand much without that concept. Even the thief on the cross knew that. And here we are fumbling around 2,000 years later. Hardly anybody even has a concept of the kingdom other than heartburn and the gospel is preached so abstractly and we wonder why nobody cares. Honestly, if someone shared with you about pie in the sky you wouldn't care either. Think about it, we're ultimately being saved from the dominion of these sick, Gentile kingdoms into God's kingdom. That is not an abstract, impotent gospel. That is real and if you don't believe you are not going to have a place in that kingdom.

We're studying the fourth large section of Matthew, chapter 13, verse 53 through chapter 19, verse 2. This we've titled The Reaction of the King because this is the King's reaction to that generation's rejection of Him. We said there is a pattern to the King's reaction that emerges. What's that pattern? Opposition—Withdrawal—Training—Miracle and then more Opposition. This will keep up until He abandons the official leadership. The opposition is most evident in Matt 11 and 12 where that generation rejects John, the forerunner of the King, claiming he had a demon, and the King Himself, claiming He was Satan incarnate. Then in 13:53-58 we saw Jesus return to His hometown of Nazareth and here, too, He was opposed not only by the people of His own

hometown but also by His own household and so not many miracles were done there. However, enough were done that in 14:1-12 the news of His miracles reached Herod Antipas in his palace at Sepphoris and he interprets Jesus as John risen from the dead and so seeks to destroy Him. The point is there is opposition from every quarter and tonight we want to briefly review the opposition of Antipas and then go into Jesus' withdrawal, His training and another miracle. This time we're going to learn that a new purpose of the miracles emerges and this may be new for you so we want to key in on the miracle itself and why Jesus did this miracle.

In Matt 14:1 we met Herod the tetrarch. This was one of the three surviving sons of Herod the Great. He was known as Herod the "Fox" because he was a slick, conniving ruler. When Caesar divided up his father's territory he received the Galilee and Perea. Antipas was consumed with opulent living and building cities and great palaces so he didn't pay close attention to what was going on in his territories. That's probably why verse 1 says that it was not until this time that he heard the news about Jesus. When he finally did he was probably at his palace in Sepphoris just three miles away from Nazareth. In 14:2 His interpretation was that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead and now with miraculous powers. This, of course, is a strange statement and in order to explain it we spent some time getting acquainted with the interaction between Antipas and John the Baptist. We learned that Antipas had been married to the daughter of Aretas, the king of the Nabateans who shared forty miles of the border along his territory of Perea. The marriage made for successful political and economic ties. But when Antipas decided to go to Rome to resolve some issues regarding his building of the city of Tiberius he stopped to visit his half-brother Philip at Caesarea by the Sea and fell in love with his wife Herodias. He even secretly proposed to her. When he returned, wind of his proposal had reached his wife's ears and so she escaped to her father in Nabatea. Antipas then married Herodias. That is when, in 14:4, John started saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." John just went after this governmental ruler for breaking the Mosaic Law. His public pronouncement of Antipas' evil bothered both Herod and Herodias and so in 14:5 he wanted to put John to death but he feared the Jewish crowds because they regarded John as a prophet. So in 14:3 Antipas had him arrested, bound and put in prison. Mark adds the interesting fact that while John was in prison Antipas had lengthy discussions with him and though he did not understand everything John was saying he concluded that John was a holy and righteous man and so he kept him safe from the evil schemes of his wife Herodias. However, in 14:6, the day came that Herodias implemented one of her crafty plans. It was Antipas' 50th birthday and he arranged a lavish feast for all his commanders and leading officers. After they were half drunk Herodias sent her daughter Salome in to perform a *pas seul*, a provocative solo dance. In 14:7, this pleased the lustful Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Mark adds up to half of his kingdom. In 14:8 when Salome went to ask her mother what she should request she was pushed forward by her mother to request "the head of John the Baptist" on a platter. In 14:9, although Antipas was grieved because his demeanor toward John had changed, his pride and fear of criticism got the best of him and he gave the command to have John beheaded in the prison. In 14:11 his head was brought out on a platter and repulsively given to the girl who brought it to her bloodthirsty mother. The body was thrown out as refuse. In 14:12 his disciples came and

gave his body a proper burial and went and reported these things to Jesus. It is no wonder then, that in 14:1, when Herod heard the news about Jesus and His miraculous powers nearby in Nazareth that Antipas' conscience for his wrongdoing let to his interpretation in 14:2 that Jesus must be John the Baptist risen from the dead and returning to inflict punishment on him. What's the main point of this pericope? Matthew wrote about the opposition to John, the forerunner of the King, in order to foreshadow the opposition to Jesus, the King himself. Toussaint noted this interesting parallel: "As the imprisonment of John was the signal for the beginning of the King's official ministry (Matthew 4:12), so the death of John signaled the withdrawal and restriction of the Messiah's ministry."¹

We come to 14:13 and it is apparent that Jesus knew that because Antipas had opposed John he would now oppose Him. That is why we read the next step in the pattern. **And He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself.** Always when there is opposition at this stage He withdraws. Why did He withdraw? Why not face Antipas at this time? J. Vernon McGee made a big deal out of this. He argued, "The Lord withdrew because He knew that Herod's fear would break out into a frenzy and cause him to do something rash. The Lord Jesus knew this man and wanted to avoid an incident because His hour had not yet come."² So the reason was that it was not time for Him to die for the sins of the world. Jesus was controlling the exact moment of His capture and arrest. This is affirmed later when the Pharisees told Jesus, "Antipas wants to kill you!" and He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, behold I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal." The point is that Jesus was on a mission and He would not permit Himself to be arrested before that mission was complete. When you read these passages you need to catch that Jesus was in perfect control of everything that was happening. If you catch that it will foster great respect and admiration for the King.

So what He is doing here in verse 13 is escaping because it is not His time. It states, **Now when Jesus heard about John, He withdrew...in a boat. In a boat** and so He sailed across the Lake of Galilee probably in a fishing boat. What were these boats like? In 1986 a drought hit Israel and a fishing boat was discovered on the NW shores of the Lake of Galilee. The boat was dated to the 1st century AD and is now nick-named the 'Jesus boat.' It is on display at Kibbutz Ginosar on the Lake of Galilee. So we can safely imagine that it was a boat like this that Jesus and His disciples spent many hours fishing and sailing on. On this occasion Matthew says He took such a **boat to a secluded place.** The Greek word **secluded** is *ερημος* and means "a deserted place." It was a place away from the busy cities and villages that dotted the landscape along the shores of the Lake of Galilee. The Luke account adds that the particular place of seclusion was near Bethsaida. This was Bethsaida-Julias, so named after Caesar's daughter by Herod Philip, the half-brother of Antipas, who had formerly been married to Herodias. Edersheim says of Bethsaida-Julias, "It lay on the eastern bank of Jordan, just before that stream enters the lake of Galilee."³ Obviously then, what Jesus was doing was withdrawing into Philip's territory. This would enable Him to avoid any entanglements with Antipas, for again, it was not yet His time.

The Matthew account says **by Himself** but Mark 6:32, Luke 9:10 and John 6:3 all indicate that He went with His disciples. The point is that they were all going to a secluded place with the intent of being alone. Now that I've mentioned that Mark, Luke and John also record this event I want to make the point that this is the only miracle that is recorded in all four gospels. J. Vernon McGee said, "The feeding of the five thousand is the one miracle which is recorded in all four Gospels. For that reason alone it is an important miracle."⁴ This is commonly stated but one exception to this is the resurrection. It too is recorded by all four gospels.

Okay, the picture is that He set out with His disciples to a deserted place near Bethsaida-Julias, outside of Antipas' territory, to escape his fury and to be alone. Why are they wanting to be alone? Mark 6:30 adds that His disciples had just returned from a trip where they worked miracles and taught others and they did not even have any time to eat. They needed to give Him a report on the ministry. All in all, it's pretty clear that Jesus and His disciples were worn out from ministering and they all needed some rest.

But the middle of verse 13 says, **and when the people heard of this, they followed Him on foot from the cities.** So we foresee that they are not going to get the rest. Now you may wonder if Jesus and His disciples were sailing on the lake to Bethsaida-Julias and the people were walking on foot how could they follow Him? Matthew says **they followed Him.** The answer is because this place was well-known to **the people.** Jesus and His disciples had probably retreated there many times before.

In 14:14 it says that **When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd.** The **crowd** beat them there. Verse 21 tells us that the crowd was "About five thousand men..." and that is why people refer to this as the feeding of the 5,000. But it also adds, "...besides women and children" and so I refer to it as the feeding of the 25,000. Either would be a miracle starting with just a few loaves of bread and fish but the real picture is 25,000 people or more. I'm not going to spend time arguing the exact number but 25,000 is not a fantastical estimate. Whatever the exact number it is a high number and this proves that Jesus was still extremely popular with the people even though the leadership had rejected Him. But we may imagine that some of this multitude will have turned against Him by the week of the Triumphal Entry and will cry "Crucify Him!"

Some wonder why there were so many people in the area at the time. The area around the lake of Galilee was composed of a series of small fishing villages. Edersheim remarks, "The circumstance that the Passover was nigh at hand, so that many must have been starting on their journey to Jerusalem, round the Lake and through Peraea, partly accounts for the concourse of such multitudes."⁵ If he's right, and others agree, it was early spring and so people were already starting to make their trip to Jerusalem. The most popular route was to go around Samaria and that involved passing through this region and crossing the Jordan down into Perea before crossing back over the Jordan to go up to Jerusalem. If you have been there you have a good idea of what I am describing.

So though Jesus and His disciples were seeking some much needed rest and solace the picture is that the crowds were already gathered when they reached the shore near Bethsaida-Julias. In 14:14 we see something significant when it says that when **He saw** them He **felt compassion for them and healed their sick**. Remember that Jesus was already tired of ministering but His **compassion for them** outweighed His own need to rest. What Jesus had compassion for was the negative effects of the Fall that weigh heavily on men. Jesus sees it and is concerned about it. He is not cold and distant. We ought to have this same compassion for others suffering under the negative effects of the Fall. Because of it He **healed their sick**. Evidently people had brought **their sick** with them, knowing that Jesus could heal them. On this occasion He not only could but was willing to and He did so out of His **compassion for them**.

We might contrast this with the many false healing cults in our day. Jesus genuinely did heal as an authentication of His orthodox teaching and His messiahship. J. Vernon McGee said, "To compare what He did to the healing cults of our day is blasphemous."⁶ We need to take great care in understanding why Jesus healed people. He did so, on one hand to relieve the miserable effects of the Fall, but on the other hand, to authenticate His teaching, that it was from God and His messiahship. The people knew He could heal them and He may have healed thousands on this day alone. The fact that He could heal any malady revealed that He had the power to bring in the kingdom where the effects of the Fall will be virtually eliminated. These types of healings should then be viewed as a foretaste of the kingdom when sickness will be eliminated.

In 14:15 Matthew, this apparently went on for some time because it says **When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and the hour is already late; so send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves."** Matthew's emphasis is obviously on what happens next but we shouldn't gloss over his notice that a significant period of time passed during which Jesus healed people. However, is that all that He did? No, because in the parallel account of Mark 6:34 it says that when He first arrived "He began to teach them." So He was teaching and healing for a significant part of the day. Walvoord says, "After a long day of teaching and healing, the disciples counseled Jesus to urge the multitude to go away that they might find food in the villages nearby."⁷ The point again is that the disciples were already tired, hungry, and needed to rest. They had tried to get away but the people followed them and now Jesus had taught and ministered to them all day. They were at the end of their rope. They wanted those people out of there!

They even make an argument that Jesus should send them away; **this place is desolate**, meaning there is nothing here to eat, **and the hour is already late**, it's after dinnertime! Then they do not request that Jesus **send the crowds away** but command Him to do so. They are so exhausted that they step out of their role of disciples and try and take on the role of the Master. They wanted to have no more part in ministry. Just send them away. Walvoord noted that they had done this before saying, "As in the case of the Samaritan woman in John 4, and in the case of the little children who were brought to Jesus in Mark 10, so here they wanted to avoid

involvement in the need.”⁸ This is a great teaching about ministry. Ministry is extremely exhausting. You give, give and give. It hardly ever lets up because there is always a need somewhere. The disciples were saying, “That’s it, we can’t minister anymore. We’ve got to have some down time.” This is the situation which prompted Jesus to do a well-known miracle. The point of the miracle is, of course, to meet the needs of the people, but it is more than that, much more. The point is to train His disciples about the source of power to continue to minister when you are totally exhausted. If this point is missed the main point of the pericope is missed. Jesus is not just doing a miracle. He is not just feeding 25,000 people. He is doing this miracle to train His disciples about the source of power for ministry in the coming interadvent age.

In 14:16 **Jesus**, apparently somewhat annoyed, **said to them, “They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat!”** The Master re-establishes His position as Master and they as His disciples. The first thing He tells them is **They do not need to go away. They did not need to go away** because He was feeding them spiritually. This was food they needed. Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God! Jesus was giving them this essential, God’s word is what truly sustains men. We do need physical food, I am not denying that, we have a body that needs nutrition, but we are not only composed of physical bodies, we also have a spirit and it also needs nutrition. It is nourished by the word of God. That is what Jesus was giving them. The second thing Jesus tells His disciples is **you give them something to eat!** I am not absolutely positive what He meant by this. He could have meant one of two things. First, He could have meant you give them some physical food; you give them some bread. From verse 17 we see that this is how they understood Him and admit that they do not have sufficient food to feed such a multitude. **“We have here only five loaves and two fish.”** If this is the meaning, then Jesus seems to be teaching them that only He can supply their needs. This may be true in a sense but I’m not sure this is His intended meaning. Second, He could have meant you give them some spiritual food; you give them some teaching from the word of God; you minister to them. Again, from verse 17 we see that they obviously did not understand Him this way. But turn to Matt 16:5 to see that they often did not understand what He meant when it came to His usage of “bread” and how bread can refer to teaching. In 16:5 “the disciples came to the other side of the sea, but they had forgotten to bring any bread. And Jesus said to them, “Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” They began to discuss this among themselves, saying, “He said that because we did not bring any bread.” But Jesus, aware of this, said, “You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread? Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up? Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up? How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” If we catch what Jesus means here in His rebuke He may well be saying that what He really meant in 14:16 by **you give them something to eat** is you give them some spiritual food; you give them some teaching from the word of God; you minister to them because people don’t live on bread alone but

on every word that comes from the mouth of God. This is what Jesus was training them to do in preparation for His departure and the interadvent age. This, however, is exactly what they were tired of doing at the time. They wanted a break. They wanted Him to send them away.

But I don't think they understood Him and so in 14:17 **They said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish."** The text in John says there was "a lad" who had **five barley loaves and two fish**. The **barley loaves** were very small. The amount was about enough to feed the lad, that is all, not near enough for the large crowd. In the other gospels the cost to give everyone just a little food was quickly calculated by the disciples to be "two hundred denarii." Two-hundred denarii are about eight months' wages. The point is that they did not have near enough.

In 14:18 **He said, "Bring them here to me."** What was Jesus' point? Why bring to Him what is clearly not enough. Jesus wanted to reveal that as long as they gave Him all they had, even a small amount, He would make it sufficient to feed all. The point to recognize is that every one of us in ministry has only five loaves and two fish to offer. We do not have what is sufficient to provide for everyone's needs. But if we will give all that we do have to Christ, He will make it sufficient." That is what He shows next.

In 14:19, **Ordering the people to sit down on the grass**. The parallel in Mark 6:39-40 says that He ordered them to sit down in groups and they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. It was very organized to ensure that people did not miss what happened next. These groups were probably groups of families and communities that were traveling in caravans to Jerusalem for Passover. They may well have worn certain colors related to their town and these groups of colors would have dotted the hillside. The word for **sit** is "to recline." This was the posture for eating. The parallel in John 6:10 makes the point that there was "much grass," confirming that it was springtime. They were to probably lay down on their side on the lush grass.

It then says in 14:19, **He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds, and they all ate and were satisfied**. Normally when you take something and break it in half you have two smaller pieces. If you break those in half you get four smaller pieces and so forth and so on. It is not even realistic that if you did that enough times there would be enough for everyone to even have a speck. What happened in the breaking was not a reduction but a multiplication. The traditional location of this miracle from the 4th century AD is known as Tabgha. Tabgha is from the Greek *heptapegon* which means "seven springs." It is on the NW shore of the Lake of Galilee where seven springs enter into the lake warming the water and making the growth of algae and other food a popular fishing spot in the 1st century. During the 1800's the land was bought by some German Catholics. German archaeologists uncovered beautiful mosaics and built a Church there to protect them. Today if you visit you can see many mosaics, among them one which pictures two fish and a basket of five loaves of bread commemorating this site as the site of the miracle. Just a week or so after we visited the Church last summer several Jewish extremists vandalized and burned much of the church. In any

case, whether it was here or somewhere around here, Jesus did do this miracle. And when He had done it Matthew says **they all ate and were satisfied**.

It is important to recognize that Jesus could have done this all by Himself but instead He involved His disciples in this ministry. He asked them what they could give; they gave Him all they had, He took it and multiplied it and dispensed it through them to satisfy the crowds. This is always the order. You may not have much, the disciples did not have much either, but He asks you to give it to Him, if you give Him all you have as the disciples did, then He will make it sufficient. By this the people **all ate and were satisfied**. He had met their needs as He always does. The interesting thing is that He involves us in bringing this satisfaction to others.

And in fact, 14:20 indicates there was more than was necessary to satisfy. **They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets**. The people could not eat any more. Their bellies were full. Constable says, "Evidently each of the 12 disciples had a large basket (Gr. *kophinos*) and circulated among the crowd until his basket was full (cf. John 6:12–13)."⁹ The point of more being left over is simply to show that when He provides it's never just enough to satisfy but always more than enough. If you think of this as I think of it, this means that when a Bible teacher gives Christ all that he has, Christ makes it increase such that there is always enough there to satisfy those who are hungry for the spiritual truths of God's word. I would like to think it is that way here. It is hard for me to imagine that any human could eat and digest all the truth that is delivered in one single lesson taught here. So what is given is plenty to satisfy.

In 14:21 the number of those satisfied is then stated, **There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children**. As mentioned before, the total number could have easily been 25,000. Families in those days were larger than they are today. Jesus had at least six siblings. If all the men here had a wife and they all had on average three children there would have been 25,000 people. This does not seem like a wild estimate. There could have been more. People don't even care about this. They don't think the magnitude of what happened. To help a little it may be better to refer to this event as the feeding of the 25,000 rather than the 5,000. This was a fantastic miracle.

The parallel in John 6 concludes that the people recognized that a miracle had happened and said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." The Mishnah taught that when the Messiah came He would feed the people with bread from heaven as Moses had done (Deut 18:15). Therefore, when they saw this miracle they viewed Jesus as the prophet like unto Moses. This is none other than the Messiah.

The teaching then is that when we bring Him all we have, even if it is but a little, He is able to multiply it through us to have a far reaching effect. In this way we learn that in and of ourselves we are inadequate to minister to the needs of others but He is sufficient. When we recognize this we give Him all the glory.

Pentecost said, "This casts interesting light on Peter's subsequent injunction as to how the shepherd of God's flock will care for the needs of the flock by teaching the Word (1 Peter 5:2)."¹⁰ Peter, of course, was there, and he

must have thought about this later, particularly when you add the discussion that Jesus had with Him when he asked Peter, "Do you love Me?" And Peter answered, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you." And Jesus said to him, "Then feed My sheep." He repeated that three times. Quite obviously the way that a minister shows Jesus that he loves Him is by teaching His word to them. Such a statement shows that Jesus was planning to leave and in His absence His disciples would be left to teach His flock. But they would not be alone in this endeavor. What else did Jesus say? "And lo I am with you, even to the end of the age." It therefore seems better to understand the statement "you give them something to eat" as a command for His disciples to give them spiritual food to eat, to teach them the word. This was the primary point of the miracle. Toussaint says, "From now on the miracles are primarily for the benefit of the disciples in that they are designed to instruct them."¹¹ They were being instructed in the truth that they would be the one's responsible to feed His sheep. Barbieri agreed saying, "The significance of this miracle was intended primarily for the disciples. Jesus was illustrating the kind of ministry they would have after His departure. They would be involved in feeding people, but with spiritual food. The source for their feeding would be the Lord Himself... He would supply them, but the feeding would be done through them."¹² They did not understand this at the time but they did come to understand later.

In summary, in 14:13 we have the setting for the only miracle apart from the resurrection that is recorded in the four gospels. When Jesus heard that Antipas had John executed He knew that He was next and since it was not His time, He withdrew with His disciples in a boat to a secluded place near Bethsaida-Julias in the territory of Philip. He and his disciples had been heavily involved in ministry and they needed to give their reports to Him and they all needed to rest. However, when the people heard they were going to this place they followed Him on foot from the various cities that dote the landscape of the northern shores of the Lake of Galilee. In 14:14, when they arrived He went ashore and a large crowd was waiting for Him. When He saw them He felt compassion for them and healed their sick. The other parallels show that He also began teaching them. In 14:15, when evening came, the disciples were entirely exhausted. They came to Him and argued that this place is desolate and has no food and it is past dinnertime. Therefore send the people away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves. This was true but in reality they were tired of ministering. In 14:16 Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away." It seems most likely that He means they still need to feast on spiritual things but He could have meant that He could supply the physical food. He also said to them, "you give them something to eat." Again, it seems most likely that He means that His disciples should give them spiritual food but it could mean that He is trying to point out their inadequacy to meet the people's need. In either case in 14:17 they understood Him to be referring to physical food and when a lad was brought forth he had only five barley loaves and two fish, enough food for only the lad himself. In 14:18 Jesus said, "Bring them here to Me." In 14:19 He ordered the people to sit down in groups of fifties and hundreds and He took the five loaves and the two fish and looking toward heaven He blessed the food and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And in 14:20 they all ate and were satisfied. Not only had Jesus supplied enough but He supplied more than enough. They disciples circulated through the crowds and picked

up twelve full baskets. In 14:21 it is noted that there were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children which is easily 25,000.

What can we learn? First, ministry is very demanding because people always have needs. It often seems like it is never going to let up. It is common to want to quit. That is what Jesus' disciples wanted to do. Jesus Himself was tired and seeking solace. But He showed us that when we are tired and want to give up He is adequate and ready to meet the needs through us. Second, in ministry you have to learn that you are inadequate but if you will give all that you have to Him then He will make your ministry adequate. Third, the one who gets all the glory is Jesus Christ because He is the one that makes what little we have sufficient. Fourth, the purpose of the miracles in this period was to train His disciples for ministry during the present age. They did not understand this at that time but they came to understand it in time. Fifth, the primary purpose of ministry is to train people in the word of God. That is the spiritual food that men need. If that means feeding people food in order to give more time for teaching then that is worth it. But to feed people alone without teaching is not sufficient. Man does not live on bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God. The ultimate need is to provide man's spiritual needs with spiritual food.

¹ Stanley Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 190.

² J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible*, p 83.

³ Cf the quote of Edersheim from J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 232.

⁴ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible*, p 83.

⁵ Cf the quote of Edersheim from J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 232.

⁶ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible*, p 83.

⁷ John F. Walvoord, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p 112.

⁸ John F. Walvoord, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p 112.

⁹ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 14:18.

¹⁰ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 232.

¹¹ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 14:18.

¹² Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 14:18.