

“Five Loaves, Two Fish, and 20,000+ People”

Luke 9:12-27

Nov. 6, 2022

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12 Now the day was ending, and the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the crowd away, that they may go into the villages and countryside and find lodging and get something to eat; for here we are in a desolate place."

13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat!" And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we go and buy food for all these people."

14 (For there were about five thousand men.) And He said to His disciples, "Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each."

15 They did so, and had them all sit down.

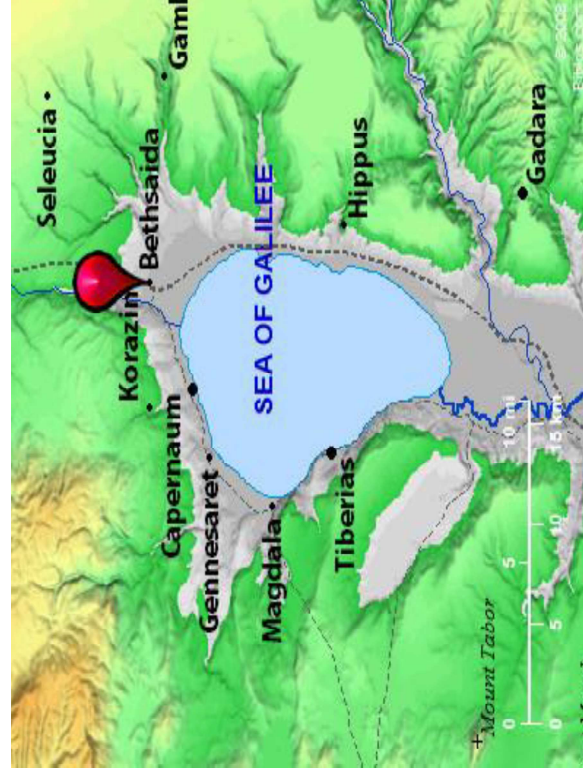
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- This was late afternoon.
- Jesus is about a year and a half into His 3 year ministry.
- The 12 are not being rude or mean here.
- They care about the crowd and want them to get food and a place to sleep.



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- Jesus could have created a 5 course meal and had it appear right in their laps.
- But He wanted to use people. He wants to use us.
- He gives them a command.
- They said, "we essentially have nothing."
- They had no resources by themselves. No food, no money.
- But they had God's Word and they had Jesus.
- They could have recalled 2 O.T. accounts:
 1. Elijah and the widow – I Kings 17:7 – she had a little oil and a little flour and God multiplied it with plenty left over.
 2. Elisha and the 100 men – few loaves and some grain. God multiplied it with plenty left over.

John 6:1-10

- 1 After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias).
- 2 A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.
- 3 Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples.
- 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.
- 5 Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?"
- 6 This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.
- 7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little."
- 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him,
- 9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?"
- 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

When God is going to do something wonderful

He begins with a difficulty...

when He's going to do something very wonderful,

he begins with an impossibility!"

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- 14 (For there were about five thousand men.) And He said to His disciples, "Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each."
- 15 They did so, and had them all sit down.
- 16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the people.
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"five thousand men" – ἀνῆρ – male, husband. Not ἀνθρώπων – mankind (both men and women.) We've got 20,000 – 25,000 people.

Matt 14:21

21 There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children.

Acts 4:4

4 But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Matt 16:9-10

9 "Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up?"

10 "Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up?"

- Jesus does this very orderly. Has them sit down.
- No pushing, or shoving, or grabbing for food.
- 100 groups of 50 men + women and children.

16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the people.

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- Jesus gave thanks to the Father, who is the source of all food.
- So God used the disciples.
- **"kept giving them"** – imperfect active indicative – continuous action going on in past time. It just kept coming and coming from His hands.

• **Note:** This is instant creation – no need for making the bread or raising the fish. Jesus created out of nothing. Gen. 1. The fish and the bread showed age, maturity.

• Bread and fish would have been perfect, incredibly delicious.

"Ethel, I have to get this recipe."

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- They were totally filled up, they just can't have another bite.
- That's the way God works –

John 10:10

10 came that they may have life, and have it **abundantly**.

Luke 6:38

38 "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and **running over**."

- There was enough left over for a basket for each of the 12.

5 loaves + 2 fish = not enough

5 loaves + 2 fish + Jesus = MORE THAN ENOUGH

- This is the only miracle, other than the resurrection, that is recorded in all 4 gospels.

God takes something insignificant . . . and makes it significant.

- Dust is insignificant
But in the hands of the Creator it became man
- The Jawbone of donkey is insignificant
But in God's hands Samson killed 1000 enemies.
- 5 smooth stones are insignificant
But in God's hands David killed Goliath.

18 And it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

19 They answered and said, "John the Baptist, and others say Elijah; but others, that one of the prophets of old has risen again."

20 And He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."

21 But He warned them and instructed them not to tell this to anyone,

22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."

23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?

26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

27 "But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

Luke tells us who Jesus is -

The announcement that He would be born.

His conception.

His virgin birth.

The testimony of angels.

Zacharias.

Elizabeth.

Joseph.

Mary.

Anna.

Simeon.

His genealogy.

His baptism.

The affirmation of the Father.

The affirmation the Holy Spirit.

Testimony of Satan – "If (since) you are the Son of God..."

His triumph over Satan and temptation.

His teaching.

His miracles.

His power over demons, disease and death.

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- After this incredible miracle, it is time for a test and some application.

- Not uncommon for Jesus to spend time alone in prayer with the Father. Luke records 7 times.

- Their answer is the same as Herod's questions.

- Those answers must have been what was floating around.

- Luke has been making a clear case of who Jesus is.

- Look what he has presented so far

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Matt 16:13-16

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

- This is the question of the ages, "Who is Jesus?"
- It really is not that hard. It depends on where you look for the answer.
- Peter says, "You are the Messiah of God."

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22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."

- Why did Jesus say this? Because He did not want to hasten His death before its time.
- He wants to fulfill His ministry.
- **Think about it:** People and their actions play a determining and influencing role in the plans of God. God uses us and our actions to bring about His will.

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- Look at the structure of these 4 sentences . . .

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- 3 explanatory "For's"
- These will answer what it means in verse 23 to "deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me"

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- 1 thing needs to be made very clear: These verses are not the gospel. In the previous verses Jesus asks who He is. That's the gospel. He is the Savior. He is One who forgives sin and gives eternal life. Salvation and justification comes as a result of believing in Him. If you say these 4 verses are requirements for salvation, then you turn salvation by grace into salvation by works. (Lordship Salvation)
- Now Jesus turns to discipleship. This is how we are to live after we are saved.

23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

"if" - first class conditional "if" - if and it is true.

"deny himself" – set aside his personal goals, his priorities, ambitions, desires, and will. It is to abandon self.

2 Cor 5:15

15 and He died for all, so that they who live might **no longer live for themselves**, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Gal 2:20

20 "I have been crucified with Christ; **and it is no longer I who live**, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,

"You know I think it's one of the interesting contrasts in our day and age that we read about popular figures. How often in biographies and in news articles about popular figures — whether they're political leaders or whether they're celebrities — do you hear anyone in those articles or in those news clips or videos about those popular figures do you hear anyone draw attention to their character of self denial? When's the last time you read a newspaper article about a current political figure or a celebrity which trumpeted the self denial of that individual. It's just unheard of in our day and age."

- Ligon Duncan

We are more concerned about self-fulfillment than self-denial.

We are more concerned about our happiness than holiness.

23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

"take up his cross" – a criminal under Roman law was forced to carry his own cross to his crucifixion (death). He bore the shame, the ridicule, the contempt, the humiliation, the reproach of the world when he carried his cross. It is a decision. He counts the cost. He then carries the burden of that cross to his death.

"daily" – you must voluntarily do it each day. It must be fresh. You must be willing to suffer when it comes.

*2 things the disciple must do each morning: 1. Take up his cross. 2. Put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6).

Rom 8:36

36 Just as it is written,

"FOR YOUR SAKE **WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG**; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."

1 Cor 15:30

30 Why are we also in danger every hour? 31 I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily.**

"follow me" – look at the example of the Lord Jesus.

24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

- Verse 23 will be demonstrated in the life of the believer in 3 ways:

1. You will live a paradoxical life.

You lose by saving and you save by losing.

1. You give up what the world provides, to gain what Christ provides.
2. If you gain what the world provides, you lose what Christ provides.
3. What you lose now, you gain in eternity.
4. What you gain now you lose in eternity.

***The believer will demonstrate his self-denial when he understands what has value and what does not.**

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep
to gain what he cannot lose."

- Jim Elliot

26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

3. You will live a passionate life.

1. When someone is passionate, everyone knows it.
2. Why would anyone be ashamed of Christ? They lack conviction.
3. At the Second Coming, we do not want Christ ashamed of who we are and what we have done.

***The believer will demonstrate his self-denial and cross-bearing by the passionate, unashamed life he lives for Christ.**

27 "But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

- What is this verse saying?
- This is a reference to what is going to happen next – The Transfiguration (a preview of the Kingdom of God in which the 3 disciples saw Jesus in a glorified state that will be His in the Kingdom and talking to Moses and Elijah.
- **"some"** - Peter, James, and John.
- This is not a reference to the Second Coming which some believe took place in 70 AD.

Matt 24:32-34

- 32 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;
- 33 so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.
- 34 "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"

2. You will live a prudent life.

How wise is it to acquire all that is in the world in your lifetime, but lose your life for eternity in hell?

1 John 2:15-17

- 15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
- 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.
- 17 **The world is passing away**, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

2 Peter 3:10

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

***The believer will demonstrate his self-denial when he resists the allurements of this world because he understands eternal values.**

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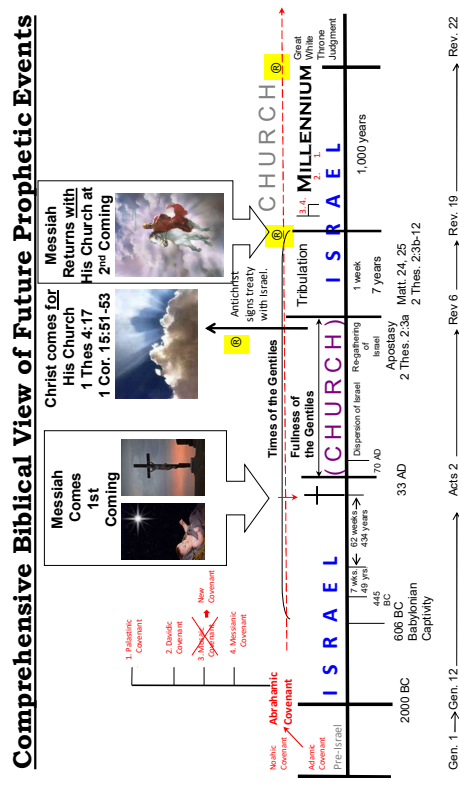
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☉ = Resurrection

Application

1. Whatever God commands, He also provides the means for its accomplishment.
2. The question of who Jesus is, is made difficult because the answer is sought, not in the Bible, but in every other wrong place.
3. Discipleship is the abandoning of self, the willingness to bear a daily cross, and the desire to live a paradoxical, prudent, and passionate life for the Lord Jesus Christ.