

From Empty to Overflowing

Text: John 6:5–14

Supporting Texts: Matthew 16:25; John 6:35; 2 Corinthians 9:6–11

Bottom Line:

What feels too small in your hands can become more than enough in the hands of Jesus.

Key Idea:

Jesus does not ask us to be enough. He asks us to become available. When we offer Him what we have, He does what only He can do, and our lives move from empty to overflowing.

READ

Read **John 6:5–14** aloud.

Jesus sees a hungry crowd and asks Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” Philip calculates the need and concludes there is not enough. Andrew notices a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but he also sees the impossibility: “How far will they go among so many?”

Then Jesus takes the small lunch, gives thanks, distributes it, and everyone eats as much as they want. The leftovers fill twelve baskets. The miracle reveals more than Jesus’ power to provide bread. It points to Jesus Himself, the true Bread of Life.

DISCUSS

1. When you see a need that feels overwhelming, do you usually try to fix it, avoid it, calculate it, or give up? Why?
 2. Philip sees the crowd and immediately does the math. Where do you tend to measure possibility only by your resources?
 3. The boy’s lunch was small, ordinary, and poor-person food, yet Jesus used it. What does that teach us about what Jesus can do with ordinary availability?
 4. What are some “lunchboxes” people protect today: time, money, comfort, reputation, career, gifts, relationships, plans, or future?
 5. Why is it hard to believe that letting go can lead to fuller life?
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COME AND SEE

Jesus Sees the Need Before We Do

The crowd is hungry, but Jesus is not surprised or overwhelmed. John tells us Jesus already knew what He was going to do. The need was real, but it was not greater than Him.

See also: **Matthew 9:36; John 2:24–25; Hebrews 4:15–16**

Jesus Tests Our Trust

Jesus' question to Philip exposes the limits of human calculation. Faith does not pretend the problem is small. Faith remembers that our resources are not the final measure of what is possible.

See also: **2 Kings 4:42–44; Mark 10:27; 2 Corinthians 12:9**

Jesus Uses What Is Offered

The boy does not have enough to feed the crowd. But Jesus does not ask him to produce a miracle. He asks for what is available. In Jesus' hands, small is not insignificant.

See also: **Exodus 4:2; Judges 7:2–7; 1 Corinthians 1:26–29**

Jesus Reveals Himself as the Bread of Life

After the miracle, the people recognize that Jesus is more than a teacher. Later in John 6, Jesus explains the sign: "I am the bread of life." He is the One broken and given for the hunger of the world.

See also: **John 6:35; John 6:51; Luke 22:19; Revelation 7:16–17**

FOLLOW ME

1. Name the Need That Feels Bigger Than You

The disciples saw a crowd too large, a place too remote, and resources too small.

- What need around you feels overwhelming right now?
- What need in your own life makes you feel empty, inadequate, or powerless?

Reflect:

What overwhelms you does not overwhelm Jesus.

2. Examine the Illusion of Ownership

The sermon reminds us that one of our earliest instincts is “Mine.” As adults, we still protect our bigger lunchboxes.

- What are you most tempted to clutch tightly?
- Where do you say “my” in a way that keeps Jesus from using it?
- Is there something you are trying to save that may actually be keeping you empty?

Read **Matthew 16:25**.

What does Jesus say happens when we try to save our life for ourselves?

3. Ask, “What’s in My Lunchbox?”

Jesus does not ask you to give what you do not have. He asks what you will do with what is already in your hands.

- What time, gift, story, relationship, experience, home, money, or encouragement could you offer to Jesus?
- What feels too small to matter?
- Where might Jesus be inviting you to become available rather than impressive?

Prayer Prompt:

“Jesus, this may not seem like much, but I offer You _____.”

4. Trust Jesus with the Outcome

The boy offered his lunch, but Jesus did the miracle. The disciples carried the bread, but Jesus multiplied it.

- Where are you confusing your calling with Jesus’ role?
- How can you serve faithfully without carrying the pressure to fix everything?
- What would change if you believed your role is availability, and Jesus’ role is sufficiency?

Reflect:

You are not called to be Jesus. You are called to become available to Jesus.

5. Move from Empty to Overflowing

Everyone ate “as much as they wanted,” and twelve baskets were left over. Jesus does not merely give everyone a bite. He satisfies.

- Where are you spiritually hungry right now?
- What have you been using to quiet your hunger without truly satisfying it?
- How does Jesus, the Bread of Life, meet the deeper hunger beneath the surface need?

Read **John 6:35**.

What would it look like this week to come to Jesus before reaching for lesser bread?

GO AND BE

This week, take one small step of availability.

Offer What Is in Your Hands

Choose one thing from your “lunchbox” and place it before Jesus:

- one hour to serve,
- one meal of hospitality,
- one financial gift,
- one word of encouragement,
- one story of pain God can use,
- one step toward leading, mentoring, teaching, or helping,
- one act of care for someone who is hungry for hope.

Feed on the Bread of Life

Before you offer anything to Jesus, receive from Jesus.

Each day this week, pray slowly:

“Jesus, You are the Bread of Life. Satisfy the hunger beneath my striving. Free me from clutching what I cannot keep. Make my life available to You.”

One Question to Carry

Ask this each morning:

What is in my lunchbox today, and how can I make it available to Jesus?