

Matthew 14:13-21

If you could have more of one thing, what would it be? With school starting tomorrow, the grade school kids would probably say, "We want more summer vacation!" Is it just me or did summer go especially fast this year? I need more summer vacation.

If you could have more of one thing what would it be? You might say, "I want more money." Not in a greedy way. Maybe you get your paycheck every two weeks and let's say your pay check is \$1,500. And you kids are thinking "That's a huge amount of money! I've never dreamed of having that much money." But you parents know that it actually isn't a lot of money. It's not that much money because as soon as you get your paycheck you need to start subtracting. You need to subtract your mortgage payment and tuition and your bills, and it's all gone. I hope the car doesn't break. I need more money.

If you could have more of one thing what would it be? I grew up in a house with 7 kids (5 boys 2 girls). We were always saying we need more food. I always thought this feeding of the 5,000 was the most amazing miracle of Jesus because I remember how quickly me and my siblings could destroy three pizzas. My poor mother. I remember that sometimes it would be an hour after we had eaten and one of us would be snooping around in the kitchen and my mother would yell, "Kitchen's closed!" We always wanted more food. Matthew says that Jesus fed **"five thousand men, besides women and children."** I always thought the headline should have read, Jesus fed 5,000 CHILDREN besides women and men.

If you could have more of one thing what would it be? You know what I want more of? I want more time. I want to spend more time with my wife. I want to give my job enough time. I have all these books that I want to read but I'm a slow reader so it takes lots of time. I need more time. There was this battle in the Old Testament that the Israelites were winning and so Joshua prayed that the sun would stand still (Joshua 10:12-13). Every day I wish the sun would stand still because I need more time.

If you could have more of one thing what would it be? I sit in on the church council meetings and I just marvel at those men as they meet the challenges of the church and school. I see them rack their brains as they ask themselves how are we going to come up with the money to do things like fix the roof and pay the snow plowing bill?

You see the main problem in each one of these examples is that we have meager resources and a really big job to do. That's really the problem that the disciples were facing in the story today. They had five loaves of bread and two fish and they had to feed 15,000 people. Meager resources, huge job to do. And the crazy thing is that Jesus said, **"You give them something to eat."** Isn't that just unfair? **"You give them something to eat."** Do you ever feel like the disciples? Do you every think that Jesus has made impossible demands of you? "Jesus you've told me to be a husband and father and have a full time job and there are only 24 hours in a day." But here's the Big Idea: Jesus can take our meager resources and multiply them.

The bills somehow always get paid. The mouths around your table somehow always get fed. The tasks somehow always get done when they really need to get done. Jesus takes our meager resources and he multiplies them.

And I really hope that as we think about this story, we can look past the miracle and see the person in the center of it all. I hope that you can see this towering and yet humble man, who fed thousands, and healed lepers, and rose from the dead. I hope that sometimes you sit down and just think about Jesus. What did he look like? What would it have been like to spend a day with him?

You look at this interesting and enigmatic prophet, he seems to hold the secret to life, and you hear him say, "Follow me," and suddenly you realize, I don't need more money or more time or more food. I need more Jesus.

And unlike bread or fish or money or time, Jesus never runs out. **"He gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples," (Matthew 14:18).** Does that remind you of anything? It reminds me of what Jesus did at the Lord's Supper: **"Our Lord Jesus Christ on the night he was betrayed took bread, and he gave thanks and broke it and gave it to his disciples and said take and eat 'This is my body.'"** In the Lord's Supper Jesus gives us more of what we really need. He gives us more of himself.

But what about all those other things we need more of like time and money and food. Well one time Jesus said, **"Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well."**

There is one area here at St. John's where I thought that we had meager resources, but I've seen Jesus multiply those resources and that's in the area of Bible study and Sunday school. Jesus has multiplied those who are willing to teach so that this year we can offer a Sunday morning Bible which is specifically directed at every age group. We have Nicole Mielke watching the nursery so that you can drop off your little ones and enjoy Bible class. We have Missy Olson, a professional teacher, directing our Sunday school. We have a team of energetic teachers for Sunday school. We have Derek and Tammy Straight teaching a Bible class that is specifically for 7th and 8th graders. We have Tim Meilke and others teaching a Video based Bible study for our FYSH group. Jesus has multiplied our resources. And for the adults Pastor Lahmann is teaching a Bible class specifically directed at parents who are wondering how do I raise my children as Christians? How do I teach them how to pray? How do I make my family a Christ centered family?

Jesus has multiplied our resources. Not so that we can have more time or money or food. No he's done something much better. He has multiplied our resources so that we can have more Jesus.

Amen.