

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

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I hope that you patient friends will be still more patient with me as I talk again on the feeding of the five thousand. I've spoken twice before on it and this will be the third talk and I hope there will not be too much repetition though the first little point I want to make will be a bit of repetition. For it says in verse three that Jesus went up into a mountain. He went up into a mountain and there He sat. There he sat.

Now He withdrew, our Lord withdrew from the press of the people, and I'd like to say to you, I don't know whether it does much good or not, but I think maybe there will be those who will hear, but I'd like to say to you that there are some things you'll never learn with anybody else present.

I'm a church man and I believe in churches, and I love the fellowship of the assembled brethren, and there is much, very, very much that you and I can learn when we come on Sundays to the church and sit among the saints. But there are certain things that you will never learn when anybody else is with you. You will never learn in company.

Our Lord certainly, his disciples came unto him and he talked to his disciples, but it is also said in the 15th verse that Jesus departed into a mountain Himself alone so that He knew that there were some things you can never learn in company. So, He sat and there we have, I suppose, the epitome of inactivity. There He sat.

Now there can be an inactivity in the religious life which is plain laziness and there is very much laziness. I used to hear with a kind of sad smile the exhortations of the brethren in the little churches down in the West Virginia area years ago when they accused each other of what they called sitting on the stool of doolittle. You've heard that? Well, this sitting on the stool of doolittle, I've always had such a such a vivid imagination that I've tried to picture that stool, three legs I assume, and no back, and here was some dear old saint sitting down on that stool doing little.

Now there is such an inactivity, and I do not recommend it, and I told you last week that the Lord hasn't anything to say good about the sluggard. There isn't one lonely text in the whole 66 books of the Bible that says anything kind about the sluggard. He's always branded as being no good. So, the inactivity that arises out of sheer laziness has no place in the Bible.

And then there is an inactivity that arises from fear. People are simply afraid to do anything, and they figure that they can cut down and narrow the area of their peril by doing nothing. If they simply stand still, there will be less danger of their getting into trouble.

And of course, that kind of inactivity is no good either, in that it springs out of a wrong motive, and it has that element in it which God never forgives, or at least never overlooks, though He'll certainly forgive it, that of fear.

And then there is an inactivity also, which may come from lack of vision and confusion. People don't know what to do, because they don't know what to do, they don't do anything. Now I think very great sections of the church are in that condition. They don't know what to do, they lack vision, they've never seen anything, and so they don't know where to go.

They've never seen a path and they don't know where to find one. They have no highway stretching ahead, so they stand still because they don't know where to go, nor what to do. That kind of activity is not the kind recommended in the Bible, and it's not the kind our Lord practiced, nor His disciples.

But there is an inactivity which is the highest possible activity. I think I'll want to stop here and explain what I mean. I'm pointing out to you that there is a nervous activity, an effort to help people, which adds up to sterility and finally, inactivity. And then there is a suspension of the activity of the body, as when our Lord told His disciples to tarry until they were filled with the Holy Ghost.

And they did, and they waited on God. And the Old Testament is full of these expressions of waiting on God. It is good for a man to wait on God. Oh, wait on God, wait on God is the exhortation found often in the Old Testament Scriptures. And it meant to come before the presence of the Lord with expectation, and there wait with physical inactivity and mental inactivity.

Dr. Simpson wrote that song you just sang. Well, Dr. Simpson was a great evangelical mystic, and he got an awful lot done. But he was also a man who understood the deep workings of the inner life. And he had much to say, particularly in his hymns, about keeping still and waiting to hear what God would say to you. Be still and know that I am God was a kind of text of his, though I don't think I ever knew him to quote it. But the sum of it was what he taught.

And he taught the inactivity; there was a place where the mind becomes inactive. He wrote, cease thy thinking, troubled Christian, where the mind ceases to figure out its ways, and throws itself wide open to God. And the shining glory of God comes down into the life and imparts an activity.

Do you understand what I mean when I say that we can go to God with an activity that is inactive? We go to God with a heart that isn't in the flesh or in the natural trying to do anything but is going to God and waiting.

Now, the inner spirit is seeing and hearing and mounting up on wings while the outer physical person is inactive, and even the mind is in some degree suspended. And that was where Jesus took His disciples.

I know that He once rebuked a woman who was too active, and that was Martha. And I know that we sometimes add a good deal to what the Lord says. I remember in the Old Testament that when God punished anybody, and then anybody else saw God punishing that person and decided to get a few licks in on his own. God always punished the fellow that added too much.

When the Lord punished Israel, and then along came some nation and said, well, if God's punishing Israel, that'll be our cue. And so, they sent an army out and started, God turned on their army and he said, you won't add anything to My punishment, don't you add anything.

And I think sometimes that the Lord's kindly rebuke to Martha has been a cue for the preachers to abuse the poor little woman an awful lot. I think we've abused her too much. I thank God for the Marthas of the world. If it wasn't for the Marthas of the world, we wouldn't be so sleek and well-fed as we are now.

Somebody has to cook, and somebody has to do dishes, and somebody has to work, somebody has to do it. There has to be a few Marthas around certainly, and the Lord's rebuke to Martha ought to be enough. I don't think that you and I ought to add so many licks to the chastisement that the Lord gave us.

But here was Mary, and Mary was simply sitting. There's the same word is used, she was simply sitting at the feet of the Savior, and the Lord rebuked Martha for her nervous activity. She carried her activity beyond the point where it did any good, and she didn't buttress it and back it up by her spiritual inactivity.

Now the people came to Him, I note here. In the text they came to the Lord, and he was ready for them because He had been quiet and silent, and there alone had sat and meditated and looked upward and waited until the full charges of Divine Life moved down from the throne of God into His own soul. And He had gotten poised and like a violin tuned, and like a battery charged, and was prepared for them when they came.

Now my brethren, the failure today, there's no question about it, is religious activity that is not preceded by aloneness and inactivity. Aloneness, the getting alone with God and waiting in silence and in quietness until we are charged. And then when we are active, our activity amounts to everything because we have been previously prepared for it.

Now here were the people. I talked to you about them before, this great multitude of people without anything to eat, a great mob of them. They had charged out and followed the Lord, and they brought their babies along, and some people were old and some weren't very strong, and now they were three days on the way and their food had all run out, and there was no place to buy anything, and they were in need.

And our Lord said to Philip, whence shall we buy bread? Now what does that say to you and me? It says to us that our human Lord was concerned with the bread.

There never was a camp meeting yet that didn't have a kitchen attached. There never was a Pentecost anywhere that didn't have a cook someplace around the corner to feed the Spirit-filled saints. The Lord knows that we're human beings.

I'd like to have you get that. I don't want to relax you too much, and I don't want, certainly see any of you sitting on that stool of Doolittle, but I'd like to have you know that the Lord understands all about you. Do you ever have the feeling that; I wonder why God gave me a body and didn't give me wings.

My dear old Dutch grandmother, God bless her memory, she'd have made a good a good writer or something if she'd had a little more opportunity and come out of the hills there. But she used to imagine the strangest things. She said, I wonder why God, when He made us people, didn't give us just a nice coating and covering of feathers. She said it would have saved so much trouble. She said, just think of it, if we'd all had feathers, we wouldn't have had to worry about changing clothes, we wouldn't have had to worry about all this business styles and fashions and sewing. She said, a nice coat of feathers.

And I thought my grandmother was just a little bit off, but she wasn't. She was just using her imagination, and we have a right to do that if you wanted to know why we didn't have feathers. And I sometimes wonder why God gave us a body and tied us down here.

I knew one man that knew. He said that it was, God gave him 60 children, you know, and tied them to his coattail in order to keep him down. He ran an orphanage. But I think God gave us our bodies more or less as a discipline. I don't know what else they're for. They're a sort of discipline.

Emerson taught that, that nature had one function toward the world, for people, and that was to discipline them. But the body sometimes it gets a little out of hand, and it takes as much time and energy and care to look after this tabernacle as it does to look after all the rest of the family and your business too. And we wonder about that.

But I'm glad that God understands about it, and He knows. He gave us these mortal frames, and He expects us to take care of them. And when they got hungry, He said, whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? Now, the Lord is concerned about our eating.

Years ago, I preached a sermon on the, on the fact that there was no dividing line between the sacred and the secular. And then I wrote that chapter into the pursuit of God, which said, I called it the sacrament of living.

And I heard a talk today from the United Nations up here, I mean the World Council of Churches up here, and two men, one from South Africa, a bishop, and the other a layman from England, were talking. And they actually came to this thing that I have discussed, and I think disposed of most happily years ago, this distinction, this dividing line between the sacred and the secular. And they evidently hadn't handled it. They obviously hadn't read my book.

But anyway, I have never believed in the distinction between the sacred and the secular. If I ever did, I do no longer. I believe that eating can be as religious a thing as praying. I believe that it's just as spiritual to eat your breakfast as it is to have family prayer.

And I believe that the man who separates his breakfast from his family prayers is making an unnecessary division. And he is putting eating in one category, and apologizing to the Lord, and saying, I'm awfully sorry, Lord, but you know I have to eat now. I'll be seeing as soon as I'm through. But now I have to eat, and I'm sorry.

So, we divide up our work, the thing we do, our physical necessities. We divide them and put them on one side, and we put praying and singing and giving and Bible reading and testifying on the other side. And we say here on the other side, this is spiritual, and this is secular. And we try to walk the tightrope in between, a kind of a braiding, lacing in and out of the secular and the spiritual, apologizing to God when we have to turn aside for a little while to do something secular.

My brother, I've got a better way to live than that, and I can tell you that the Lord Jesus never made such a distinction. Never did he make such a distinction. He said he was the Lord. He was God himself. And He said, where can we get bread that these may eat?

And so, He broke the bread and gave it to them, and they ate, and the eating was as spiritual as the teaching had been. And the teaching and the eating were equally spiritual, and the praying that was before, the grace before meal, was just as spiritual, but no more so than the eating afterwards.

Now, if you can get a hold of that, it would mean a wonderful thing to you, that the Lord is the Lord of our bread, and the Lord of our eating, and the Lord of our bathing, and the Lord of our sleeping, and the Lord of our dressing, and the Lord of our working. So that when we work, we need not say, now, Lord, I have to work today, but I'll see you tonight. We do not leave God at the door as a man leaves his wife when he goes to work, but the Lord is with us, sanctifying everything we do, everything we do provided that it is honest and good.

Now, God doesn't sanctify the bartender's activities. No bartender can pray in the morning and say, now, Lord, be with me today, because God isn't going to work with a bartender. I'm sure of that, though I'm not so sure but what if things continue to go downhill as fast as they have been in the last few years, that we won't have a society of beer tender, bartenders and beer sellers.

And they won't have John 3:16 painted on the bottom of the cup so that when they drain the glass, they will see John 3:16. They say, why, these dear people are Christians. They're good Christian beer drinkers and bartenders. Look at, they've got a text. They've got a text on the ceiling. It says, the Lord is with thee, be not afraid. And as soon as they tip their glass up and it's empty, they're seeing a text on the ceiling. Don't say they're not Christian. You, why, you would condemn those dear beer guzzlers? Why, they've got a text on the ceiling. Of course they have their text in hell. Don't forget that.

But anyhow, the Lord is not going to bless the gambler and the bartender, but if your job is decent, the Lord is going to bless it. And if the Lord is in you, the Lord will be in your labors. Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? Now the Lord of glory said that. He didn't delegate it to a prophet or an angel, but He Himself was concerned with our eating.

And now these hungry people, here they were; it was Jesus' problem really. But you know, he made it Philip's problem. He honored Philip by taking him in with it.

I preached a sermon quite a while ago now in which I said the Lord was self-sufficient and didn't need us. And I bothered some people by that because I assume that they

thought the Lord needed them. And if they should retire or resign, the Lord would have to scramble around to find somebody else. What a low view of God that is, my brother. Could you get down on your prayer bones and bend your supple knee and cry to a God that needed you? I couldn't.

A God that needed me would be a God that had to have help from somewhere. He doesn't have to have me, and He doesn't have to have you. That's bitterness to some people because we have come to believe that we're indispensable. And when we go, there will be a great tree fall and leave a vacant place against the sky. Brother, I'm afraid that when some of us die, it'll be like a stalk of grass that was eaten by a grasshopper. Nobody noticed the difference anyhow.

But here were these hungry people, and the Lord was going to feed them, but He didn't want to just feed them and have it over with. He wanted some blessing to flow all around as a result of it. So, He picked out one of His disciples and He said to Himself, Now I'm going to take Philip in on this. I'm going to honor him by letting him be a part of this plan. And he helped Me work it out here, though actually I don't need him at all.

So, He encouraged Philip to tackle the problem along with Him, though He certainly didn't need him as was proved later on. But He nudged Philip a little and got him into a hard spot in order to reveal to Philip his own emptiness.

Now, my friends, it is never a waste of time to learn that you don't know something, and it's never a waste of time to learn how little you have. That is a very useful procedure. It's a positive victory when I learn the things I can't do, a positive victory when I learn the things I haven't got.

So, there is so little filling these days because there is so very little emptying these days. We don't stay to get empty, and so we cannot be filled. And the Lord cannot fill a vessel that is already full. But He has to empty and empty, and He had to empty this fellow Philip. He had to empty him in order that He might fill him. But Philip was full of his own ideas, and Philip couldn't have been filled because he was already full. And the Lord wanted to empty the man.

Very little is said after that about Philip here, nothing is said here at all about Philip. But I'm sure that Philip's face was red, and I'm sure that he was a much meeker and humbler man after that. And his obedience and his humility were far more perfect after this experience.

And Philip didn't acquit himself very well here. The Lord said, Philip, where are we going to buy bread that these may eat? And Philip revealed a type of mind, uninspired and uninspiring, calculating and altogether earthy. Here is what Philip did. When Jesus said, Philip, where are we going to get bread? Philip reached and took out his pencil and clicked the button and went to work. And he brought his pencil to bear on the miracle. He brought his little pencil and his sheet of paper to bear, and he became Philip the Calculator.

I don't know why we don't name people the way they used to. In the olden days, Middle Ages and previous to that, they named people according to what they were. And even in

country places up when I was growing up, they named people according to what they were. Black Simon Pennington was a man in our neighborhood. He wasn't any blacker, I guess, than I. He was a white man, but he was named Black Simon. Another one was called Little Simon.

So, there was Black Simon and Little Simon, they distinguished them. And if you'll look in history, you'll find one man called, what was his name? The Bald. Another man was named so-and-so, the Good. And then there was Alexander the Great. They named them according to what the characteristic was that strewed out of them.

And you can easily figure for yourself a hirsutic situation. That is how much hair the man had who was called so-and-so the Bald. We know his condition just by his name. You'd never want to run your fingers through his curl just because he was Philip the Bald. I think it was Philip, wasn't it? Philip the Bald.

Now, I wonder why we couldn't go to the New Testament and name some of these characters. Here would be Philip the Calculator, Philip the Mathematician, Philip the Clerk. And he took out his pencil.

And every Christian group has a boy with a pencil. I've sat on boards now for a good many years, good many years. And oh, there's rarely a board that doesn't have the Philip the Calculator present. When you suggest anything, he takes out his pencil and leans back a little and leaves a few streaks on the wall and comes up with a proof that you can do it. You can't do it.

When we built this church, we had this old mule barn over here, and we built this church. And that was 12 years ago or so. And when we started to build it, we had more Philips who said it can't be done. Can't be done. And they proved it. We built it and paid for it for in six years. But it couldn't be done. It just couldn't be done.

And I sit on boards. I suppose now, God willing, I'll be sitting on boards all the rest of my life. Brother Chase once said that he had been on the Ways and Means Committee ever since he was converted. And I have been on boards, little boards and big boards. And I will be, week after next, sitting on the board in New York.

And there's always two kinds of men. The man who can see the miracle and the man who can see the pad and the pencil. They even provide pad and pencils in our New York board. They got a little table there and there's a pencil and a pad. I wonder whether they expect us to use them or not.

Philip did. He took out his pencil, he went to work, and he said, how much was it here now? Let me see. He knew how much money he had. Two hundred pennies. And he counted the number of people, and he figured out how much he could buy with two hundred pennies. And then he cut the two hundred pennies worth of bread, knowing how much bread sold for, up into little slices, big enough to feed the five thousand, and turned to the Lord and said, two hundred penny worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little, period. And then he walked away. That was his contribution. It was one hundred percent negative. And if they'd listened to

Philip, they'd have dropped starving in the wilderness, and the glorious miracle never would have taken place.

Philip the Calculator, the man with a pencil, a dangerous man, brother, in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every suggestion that is made in the direction of progress is voted down by the calculators.

And then we come to the next man, and that was Andrew. And Andrew did a little better. Now Andrew made a timid suggestion, and he said, there is a lad here, and he has a little lunch, five barley loaves and two small fishes. And then added, but what are these among so many?

Now I wouldn't call Andrew a world-beater here. If he were living now, he wouldn't be what we call a founder, nor a promoter. That's sure enough. We've got so many founders now and promoters. We've got founders every place. I know because it says on the door, so-and-so, Founder. And we have founders, and we have promoters.

But Andrew wouldn't have done, because Andrew was only partly over on this side of the wonder, only partly. He looked around and said, surely this final tally at the bottom of the column isn't the end of things. He said, my brother Phillip here's a good boy and I like him, but he's a bit on the negative side.

And he looked that sheet over and so much bread for so many pennies, so many people sliced bread into so many. No, he says, no use. Merely be a little, a hollow toothful for each one. But he said, that can't be the end. Can't be. He said, there must be help someplace. And the man Andrew began to look around.

Now you're getting a little closer to a miracle when you can get a church full of Andrews. If you don't have anybody else, you have an Andrew or two. They usually have a footnote and they say, why there's a boy here that has a lunch and some bread and fish, but then after all that's not very much.

And there's a sort of a rising inflection in the voice as much as to say, well, somebody come to my support and help me a little. If I can just get a little encouraging word from somebody, I think I can go someplace. That's Andrew.

You're getting a little warmer when you're like Andrew, brother. Phillip was cold as ice. He had his adding machine, and he proved conclusively nobody was going to eat that night, and he could show you. But Andrew looked around and said, well, we got to start. Got a little lunch here, a little basket, a lad, a boy.

Now I have never been able to figure out how that boy ever managed to hang on to that lunch. Boys that I know would have been, would have had it eaten by nine o'clock the first morning and here it was the third day. But he still managed to hang on to a little lunch. Maybe his good mother had given him a little extra. He still had it. Three loaves, three slices. They weren't really loaves; they were simply glorified pancakes. That's all they were, five of them, I'm sorry, five. And two small fishes.

Now, this was the lad. Andrew didn't have anything himself, but he knew somebody that did, he thought, might help out a little bit. He'd have been a help on any board because at least he was looking around for a fellow with a lunch.

And there was a little note of hopefulness here and a little faith. I know what the Lord means when He says, sheep. All you have to do, brethren, to kill a church is to begin to talk it down. That's all you have to do. Just let the sheep begin to bleat the blues and the thing will die in no time at all. Just begin to bleat the blues.

I used to tell a story about a power of suggestion. A healthy, robust extrovert who never knew he had a stomach nor a heart nor any other organ. He walked around healthy as a horse on the earth and some fella came along and said, you know, the power suggestion's tremendous and they got to arguing about it in the country store and so they decided to work it on this fellow.

And a half a dozen men fixed it, so they met this big healthy boy on the sidewalk. The first man that met him ran up with a smile to shake his hand and then dropped a smile and shook his hand very carefully and said, good morning, John. Don't, uh, feeling so well? Oh, sure, he said. He just exuded all over the place. Sure, he said, feeling well. He said, I, I'm glad. I thought maybe when I first saw you weren't looking so well.

And then about a block further down, the second fella met him, and he rubbed it in a little further than the third fella met him and the fourth. And by the time he'd met the fifth rascal, his feathers were down, and he went limping off home, pale and discouraged and said to his wife, I got to see a doctor. She said, why? He said, well, I don't know. I'm not feeling so good.

And so, he showed up at the old family doctor's office and cooled his heels there and waited. And he was as healthy as they come. But the prior suggestions put him in the doctor's office. And if the doctor had only been a bit pessimistic, it could have landed him right in the hospital.

You know, there is in medical circles, a disease. I don't know the name of it. I always forget the name of the thing, but it means a heart disease induced by a doctor. Now, you know the Latin on that, I don't, but it means a disease of the heart that has been induced by a doctor's suggestion.

A fellow goes in, you know, and he's overeating or something. And the doctor looks at him and says, you look like a coronary to me. And the poor fella gets scared to death, and they rush him around and electroplate him, I mean electrocardiogram him, and fix him up. And the first thing he knows, he begins to go slowly up the stairs. And he let three streetcars pass before he'd run for one. There's nothing wrong with him, but he has a heart condition induced by the suggestion of a physician who didn't know any better. Doctors themselves, they got that name. I didn't invent it.

And you know, churches are like that too. You can talk a church down and one fellow will meet another fellow and say, things aren't going so well, are they? No, not going so well. In other words, they're not going so well. No, that's what I've been hearing. Just had heard it five minutes before from another fellow. And then another fellow meets

another, still another fellow and says, oh, have you heard what the talk is? And pretty soon they have talked the church down.

And the calculators and the clerks and the mathematicians, they've seen the pencil, but they haven't seen God. They figured things out, but they haven't figured God in. And we have so much of this in the day in which we live.

Brethren, it's time we at least find an Andrew or two that can look around for the tokens, for that's all this lunch was. It was merely a token. It wasn't very much. It wasn't enough for more than one. The little boy had saved it up, saved enough that he expected his lunch to last him, and he had that. It would have done with a little water on the side to wash it down. But after all, it was only a token. It didn't amount to very much. But Christ took that inadequate token, and He made it enough for 5,000.

My brethren, oh, you know, I told them, quoted the little passage I got from the dear old Walter Hilton who lived back before Shakespeare's time. He was talking about how we ought to serve God and how much we ought to give and how we ought to go about serving God. And he said, I'll give you a little rule. And he used the old English word mickle, meaning much. He said, mickle have, mickle do. Less have, less do. Nothing have, at least have a good intention.

Oh, I can't think of a better rule than that. If you've got mickle, that's much, do much. If you haven't got mickle, but scarcely anything, then just do what you can. And if you haven't anything, then, have a good intention. Andrew at least had a good intention and a lunch, a token. He was on God's side at least far enough. He was optimistically inclined. But the lad was caught in the middle. Andrew didn't have anything, but he knew a boy who had.

And so the little boy was caught in the middle. And it doesn't tell us at all about how they got that lunch. It says Jesus took the loaves. It doesn't say how He got the loaves. It says, He took them.

Now, it doesn't mean that He took them away from the boy by force, certainly. Ordinarily this lunch wouldn't amount to very much, but the circumstances made the lunch vitally important to the boy. Jesus had shown the importance of food by saying, if I dismiss these now, they'll go fainting on the way. He knew there was no food between there and their homes, and He knew that they had to have it. It was vitally important.

And this little lad had something vitally important here, important to him. Yet, he surrendered it to Jesus. I know he did. I've read too much about my Lord to believe the Lord took it away from him by force. He never takes anything by force.

So, He must have gone and smiled and said, boy, would you like to help all this crowd and happy little boy looked up and said, certainly Master. Well, He said, let me have your lunch. And the boy grinned and handed it to Jesus.

And Jesus said, all right, tell him to sit down. And they sat down in an orderly tiers and rows. They sat down and Jesus took the bread and blessed, lifted up His heart and said, O God, bless this little scene. Bless this, this little optimistic note of hope, bless this

token of belief. And then He began to spread it around, fill the baskets, empty baskets. Where did He get those empty baskets? Those were the lunch baskets of the people that had eaten theirs, all the food.

That's where He got His baskets. Plenty of baskets around there, but only one lunch. And the Lord took the one lunch and multiplied it into enough for 5,000 because the lad surrendered his lunch to the Lord Jesus.

Now I briefly bring this to a close and ask you a question. Where do you stand? Are you a Philip, an Andrew, or the lad? Philip was so good at figures that he figured the situation out and didn't figure God in. And Andrew was a little nearer. He didn't have anything himself, but he thought he knew where he could dig up something. And it worked. And then there was the lad. He hadn't much, but what he had, he gave. What he had, he gave to the Lord Jesus, and the Lord Jesus Christ made it sufficient.

Now there we have it. Which side are you on? There are those who are convinced that the Lord can't do anything. They have their good reasons. They're sure of themselves. They've got it figured out. And then there are the uncertain ones whose hearts are on the right side. They don't think that that lunch is enough, but they think it's something.

And then there's the lad who says, If I give you this, Master, I don't eat. But I like the way you do things, and I'm ready to go along with you. So here, take it. He didn't know in surrendering his lunch that he was going to feed all the five thousand and have enough for himself.

And don't you suppose that when the Lord had to send a basket full to the lad, He put an extra piece of fish on? I think He did. It's quite in keeping with the ways of the Lord. Put a little extra bread in the basket of the fellow who had given his all. I know He does that in spiritual things, and why shouldn't He do it with a lunch?

Well, there are some lessons from Jesus feeding the multitude. And I recommend, with the coming on of the fall days, and the return of the children back to school, and the coming home of people, and the coming of students, and the presence of persons who will be here in larger numbers, who in turn will reach others in times to come, I recommend that we ask God for at least the grace of Andrew.

And instead of a dead end, a cold calculation that says, No, it can't be done, period, that we at least begin to look around for some tokens of the grace of God. And we'll find those tokens. You may have a token like that and don't know it.

You think the lad knew he had the key to the miracle? He didn't know it, but he had it. He carried it in his lunch basket and didn't know it. He'd lugged it for three days and didn't know it.

You may have in your hand this night the key to the future of how many souls? You may have tonight in your hand, without knowing it, the key to the salvation of tens and even hundreds, yet if you only knew it. And if you'll only surrender it and let the Lord have it. Say, Master, I only have a token, only a little, only this token. But take it, Lord Jesus, take it. And the Lord will take it. How He multiplies it, I don't know, but He can do it and He

will do it and He does do it. But He has to have the lad, and He has to have the willing heart and He has to have the surrendered lunch. Let us pray.

O Lord, our Lord, this night, here we are in the midst of a great, dangerous, ugly, dirty, sin-infested world, full of crime and sin and danger and death. And all around, among the bushes, there are hungry sheep. There are men and women who daren't be sent away. They're here in this city. They're here even around this neighborhood. We daren't send them away. We daren't prove that we can't feed them. We daren't, we dare not say it can't be done.

O God, our God, Thou hast given us a token of Thy grace. Thou hast given us a little beginning. We pray, help us to surrender it to Thee tonight in devotion, in sacrificial surrender. And let Thee take what we have, our minds, our tongues, our money, our abilities, and touch it with a miracle and bless it and break it and give it.

O God, we pray Thee that before the snow flies, we may yet see in this fellowship added numbers plus increased spirituality plus mounting faith plus deeper devotion plus holier living and plus more radiant worship.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, raise up some Lazaruses that will be the advertising we need. We can spend our money by going to the newspapers and telling people we're over here. But we remember Thou didst raise Lazarus from the dead. And they came from everywhere to see the man that had been dead and lived again.

O God, we pray thee in the next weeks, find some drunkards and restore them again to sanity and health. Find some worldlings and cut them loose from the bondage of iniquity. Find, we pray Thee, some who are now bogged down and mud and sand flats of the world. Float them off, we pray, by the coming of new grace and raise them from the dead again. That the people may say this man was dead and lo, he liveth.

Raise us up some Lazaruses, O God, we pray, and some Martha's and some Mary's and some Paul's and some who are now turned against Thee but will soon be turned toward Thee. Great God, help us over these days just ahead.

And we pray Thee that we may mount up with wings as eagles. We pray that we may run and not be weary, that we may walk and not faint. We pray that Thou will help us not to look back at the things that have been. But Thou hast said, say no more, talk no more of the things that have been. Lo, I do a new thing, now shall it spring forth. We pray that Thou who art the God who maketh all things new, will begin to make things new in our fellowship, in our Sunday school, in our choir, in our pulpit, in the pew, and on the board and in all of the Christian fellowship.

Great God, we pray Thou do new things among us. We pray that some of our sick may be miraculously restored to health. We pray that some who are now dragging around the edges and keeping their family divided may surrender and unite the family in the grace of God.

We pray thee that sulking, stubborn men may bow on their knees and beat their breasts and say, my God, what a fool I've been, and I'll surrender my all to Jesus. Here, take my little all, the token of thy grace, bless it and give it.

God, we pray for Jesus' sake thou will convert our young people. We pray for Jesus' sake that Thou will send or bring in or cause our people to become so concerned that they will bring in the unchurched mobs that mill around Englewood, the crowds that are everywhere, but in the churches where the gospel is preached.

Now, Father, we are trusting Thee. We pray send us out with our eyes upward and our hopes cheerful and our beliefs strong that we shall yet see the goodness of God in the land of the living, and we wouldn't forget to thank Thee for everybody that's gotten help over the last weeks, these cruelly hot summer days with humidity incredibly high and our minds dull from the pressure and all the hindrances and obstacles, yet there are some whose faces are bright with what thou hast done for them even recently.

Thou hast been good, O God, otherwise we'd have fallen apart and flown apart by centrifugal force and been scattered over a thousand acres. Thou hast kept us together. Thou hast blessed us. Thou hast preserved the unity of our Christian assembly, and we like an army are ready to march. We like a club of players are ready to go out to do battle. Lord God, like farmers are ready to till the soil, like carpenters to build, like fishermen to fish. We only ask, bless what we have, Lord, bless what we have, bless what we have.

Let's remain in an attitude of prayer, please.

How many would like to say something like this? Now trying to word somebody else's request makes it awkward, I know, and I may miss it, but it's something like this. You will say, O Lord, I've been a little on the blue side and certainly I've been negative, and I've lived a pretty negative life, but I'm sorry, and I believe that there's hope, and I don't have much, but I have a little, and what I have I'm ready to surrender, and I want Thee to take it and take me and begin to do something in my family and where I work, where I am going to soon be in school. Lord, I want Thee to take that and bless it and break it. I don't know how you'll do it,

Lord, but I just want Thee to know that I'm on your side, and I'm optimistic about it, and I have hope, and I'm cheerful and expectant, and I want Thee to take what I have, and I promise that I'll obey, and I'll walk with Thee, and I'll expect.

And I want prayer. I want prayer that this might become real in my life, that I may like Andrew have hope, and like little lad, I may give some practical meaning to that hope by surrendering a token at least to be used as Thou will. Amen.