

Sermon Outlines

The Feeding of The Five Thousand (3)

“Bring them hither to me.”
Matthew 14:18

This is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Why? It was a turning-point in the ministry of Christ. It marked the end of the year in Galilee, the preparatory stage of His ministry, and introduced His real work. It was a crowning hour and yet to Jesus was a sad and bitter hour, for in spite of the miracle many went away, and only the few remained. In this miracle was a symbol of the work of Christ (see John 6).

I. *The Perishing World*

1. Weakness - Then, through lack of physical food; now, through sin and loss of presence of God.
2. Weariness - Then, it was evening and the crowds had journeyed far; now, the world is jaded from wandering.
3. Want - Then, of evening meal, for when hungry nothing but food satisfies; now, “Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee.”

II. *The Powerless Church*

1. Insufficiency - Then, of food to supply crowds; now, of spiritual resources for a starving world. All that could be done in human power was to “send away.” But where? It is the same today. But again, where? (See John 6:68)
2. Inability - Then, to buy food. Was it money or opportunity that was lacking? Perhaps both. Now, in the presence of heathenism, pagan civilization, indifference, worldliness, sin - no spiritual food to offer. Our shameful condition unwarranted by available provision of grace.
The Request - “Send them away”; the Reminder - “Give ye”; the Rejoinder - “What are they”
(See John 6:9)

III. *The Perfect Saviour*

1. The Command - “bring”. There must be sacrifice, complete and lasting - absolute obedience.
2. The Secret - “to me”. The disciples were in the presence of Power Incarnate.
3. The Blessing - “blessed.” Work ineffectual without benediction of the Father.
4. The Supply - “they did all eat and were filled.”
Even fragments left over; was it coincidence that there were twelve baskets, as well as twelve disciples?

Conclusion

Christ could have performed this miracle without assistance from His disciples. But He chose to work through them, and He chose today to work through us. Instruments must be fully yielded. Christian work is in exact proportion to the devotion of God’s people. Christ must be all in all or not at all.

. . . . *W.H. Griffith Thomas, D.D.*