



THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST BIBLE OUTREACH

+234 80 2327 0222

2 Kolex Close, Off Adeshina
Road Ijeshatedo-Surulere,
Lagos.

gcbo.com.ng



DAILY DEVOTION

THE JOURNEY OF FAITH: PART 5.

Pastor A.S.O Olaleye

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John 6:1-13 (NIV)

“Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed Him because they saw the signs He had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with His disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward Him, He said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?’ He asked this only to test him, for He already had in mind what He was going to do. Philip answered Him, ‘It would take more than half a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!’ Another of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, ‘Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?’ Jesus said, ‘Have the people sit down.’ There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, He said to His disciples, ‘Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.’ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.”

Do you need God’s provision in some way? Financial needs? Relationship needs? A miracle, maybe? Give God WHATEVER you have and let Him multiply it. Apart from the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. That shows us that God really wants us to learn the powerful principles from this miracle. In fact, when you compare the story in each of the gospels, you will see that there were four possible solutions for the problem the disciples and Jesus were facing – how to feed such a crowd.

One solution given by the disciples in Mark’s account was to send the people away. Get rid of the problem. However, Jesus knew how hungry the people were, and there was no time for travel since it was already evening.

Another option came from Philip. He suggested buying food, but that only raised more problems. Where would they get it, and how would they pay for it? Philip counted the cost, and it added up to about 200 days' wages to feed them. Even that, he said, would not be enough to satisfy their hunger. For Philip, money was the answer, and they didn't have enough.

A third idea came from Andrew. Andrew canvassed the crowd and found a little boy with a sack lunch that was willing to donate all he had for the cause, five small barley loaves of bread and a couple of small fish. But then, reality set in, and Andrew said, "...but how far will they go among so many?" (John 6:9). You have to admire Andrew, though. Whenever you read of Andrew in the Bible, he is always bringing someone to Jesus. Still, his faith was tested by the reality of such a small portion divided among so many. How often the need seems greater than the supply!

Finally, Jesus spoke up. I love this part of the story. When he asked Philip in the beginning, Where can we buy bread to feed all these people, the Bible says, He was testing Philip, for He already knew what He was going to do! He always does! Jesus took the little boy's lunch, gave thanks to God, and gave it to His disciples to distribute to the people. Not only did the people eat all they wanted, but the Bible says the disciples collected 12 baskets of leftovers! Even when the demand seems greater than the supply, 'little' is 'much' when God is in it! Nothing is too difficult for God! His word promises that He will supply all our needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus! (Phil. 4:19).

When we're walking The Jesus Way, God will often test our faith so that we may learn to trust in Him even when we don't have the resources to do what He says. In those tests, we only have to offer Him what we have and let Him do the rest! He already has in mind what He wants to do. What a story this little boy must have had to tell his mother when he got home! God wants to write such a story in your life. If you want to see a miracle in your life, offer to God what you have and let Him use it however He wants.

Prayer:

O Lord, as I go in the journey of faith, help me to give you all I have, use it to bring increase to my life in Jesus name.