

Daily Devotional, November 26, 2020 Thanksgiving Every Day

“And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.” – Matthew 14:19-21 (NIV)

One of the most amazing and compelling scenes in all the Gospels is the feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21). This miracle shows the compassion and power of Jesus as he provides food for the large crowd who had followed him into the wilderness. The Disciples wanted to send the crowd away so that they could go back to the nearest towns to feed themselves. This crowd had followed Jesus from the city, and they brought little to no provisions with them, eager only to learn from Him. When it became late in the day and time for *physical* nourishment, as they had just been *spiritually* fed, all that was found were five loaves of bread and two fish.

The feeding of the 5,000 demonstrates more than Jesus' compassion and power, it also shows his true humanity. Matthew 14 starts out with the death of John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus. After learning of John's death, Jesus withdraws himself to be alone in reflection over his sorrow and to mourn the loss of John. I can only imagine how deeply saddened Jesus was at John's passing. The feeding of the multitude happens while Jesus mourns the loss of someone who was special to Him.

In the middle of Jesus mourning the loss of John and feeding his followers, Jesus demonstrates an important lesson to us all. In Matthew 14:19 we read Jesus, "Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves." Jesus stopped in the midst of all that was burdening him and expressed thanksgiving to God. In the middle of sadness and being chased by crowds, Jesus demonstrated that there is always something to give thanks for, no matter what the circumstances.

We often find ourselves in the middle of difficult situations. Sometimes trouble surrounds us, but even during trials, there are so many reasons we have to be thankful. Today, while life seems unfair due to having to spend time away from family and friends unlike other Thanksgiving celebrations and it hasn't felt like much of a year to celebrate, take a moment, stop, and give thanks anyway. Stopping to give thanks in spite of our trials and anxieties is a way to remind ourselves – we already have all that we need. In fact, by putting our trust in Jesus, we have *more* than we'll ever need!

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank You for providing all that I need. I praise You for Your goodness. Help me to not be overwhelmed with discontentment, insecurity or doubt. Fill my heart with joy no matter what my circumstances may be. May Your Holy Spirit guide me to be a good steward of what I have been given. All that we have is Yours, Lord. In Jesus name I pray. Amen