

Luke 9:10-17

¹⁰ Then the apostles returned and reported to Jesus all that they had done. Taking them away privately, He withdrew to a town called Bethsaida. ¹¹ But the crowds found out and followed Him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and He healed those who needed healing.

¹² As the day neared its end, the Twelve came to Jesus and said, "Dismiss the crowd so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside for lodging and provisions. For we are in a desolate place here." ¹³ But Jesus told them, "You give them something to eat." "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered, "unless we go and buy food for all these people." ¹⁴ (There were about five thousand men.) He told His disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." ¹⁵ They did so, and everyone was seated. ¹⁶ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, Jesus spoke a blessing and broke them. Then He gave them to the disciples to set before the people. ¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

Berean Study Bible

1

Problem? What problem. Luke 9:10-17

Can you see the problem?

Problem of period. 12a "day near its end"

Problem of people. 12b "the crowd"

Problem of place. 12c "desolate place"

Can you see the solution?

Problems are solved by the people we have. 13a "You give them"

Problems are solved by the resources we have. 13 "five loaves... two fish"

Problems are solved by the blessing Jesus gives. 16a "spoke a blessing"

Can you see the satisfaction?

Satisfaction comes when problems are solved. 17 "all... satisfied"

Satisfaction comes because problems are small that solutions. 17 "twelve baskets"

2

What do you need, and what do you need to do about your need? Luke 9:10-17

The principles of human need.

Jesus first addresses my social need. 11 "He welcomed"

Jesus then addresses my spiritual need. 11 "spoke about the Kingdom"

Jesus lastly addresses my physical need. 11 "needed healing"

The principles of personal need.

Understanding what people are. 12 “dismiss the crowd”
Understanding what people need. 12 “lodgings and food”

The principles of solving need.

I can be part of the solution. 13 “You give them something”
I have enough to start the solution. 13 “five loaves... two fish”
I don’t have enough to complete the solution. 16 “blessing”

3

How to say, ‘I care about you’. Luke 9:10-17

The Apostle’s care for the crowd.

They spoke to Jesus on their behalf. 12a “the Twelve came to Jesus”
They expressed concern for their physical condition. 12b “lodging and provisions”

The Lord’s care for the Apostles.

He told them to put theology into practice. 13a “You give them something”
He told them to bring order from chaos. 14b “Have them sit in groups of fifty”
He gave them [food] to distribute. 16b “He gave them to the disciples to set...”

The Lord’s care for the crowd.

He welcomed them. 11b “He welcomed them”
He gave spiritual care. 11b “spoke about the Kingdom”
He gave physical care. 11b “healed those who needed healing”
He gave food to the hungry. 17a “ate and were satisfied”

4

How many were fed? Count again! Luke 9:10-17

5,000 men. Plus, women and children. (Matthew 14:21). Or, just twelve!

The entre. 9:10-11

Jesus ‘fed’ the disciples. 10 “taking them away privately”
Jesus ‘fed’ the crowds. 11 “spoke to them about the Kingdom”

The main course. 9:12-17

Jesus ‘fed’ the disciples with an instruction. 13a “You give them something”
Jesus ‘fed’ the disciples with a realisation. 13b “We have only”
Jesus ‘fed’ the disciples with a demonstration. 16 “spoke a blessing”

The desert. 9:17

Jesus fed the crowd to their satisfaction. 17a “ate and were satisfied”
Jesus ‘fed’ the disciples with leftovers. 17b “twelve baskets”

5

Chew on this. Luke 9:10-17

People mostly give us problems to solve. 12 “in a desolate place”
Jesus often gives us problems to solve. 13 “You give them something”
Jesus always helps us solve our problems. 14-17 “blessing... satisfied”

6

What is your name? Luke 9:10-17

Name the problem. 12 “desolate place”
Name the resources. 13 “five loaves, two fish”
Name your blessings. 16 “spoke a blessing”

7

God can't see a problem, so what are you looking at? Luke 9:10-17

Delusion – There's nothing I can do!
Disciples' solution – send it away. 12 “Dismiss... they can go”
Jesus' solution – personal responsibility. 13a “You give them”
Confusion – What can I do?
Disciples' solution – no enough. 13b “we have only”
Jesus' solution – it is enough. 15 “have them sit down”
Participation – What will I do?
Sharing with Heaven – blessing. 16 “spoke a blessing”
Sharing on earth – abundance. 16-17 “disciples distributed... picked up”

8

This is the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Or is it? Luke 9:10-17

The miracle of the crowd
The miracle of the crowd who would not go home.
The miracle of the small boy
The miracle of the small boy who was not hungry.
The miracle of the small boy who gave away food.
The miracle of the blessing
The miracle of Heaven's work on earth.

There is no miracle until Jesus blesses the resources. 15 “spoke a blessing”
There is no miracle until the disciples participate. 17 “disciples set before the people”

9

How to be blessed. Luke 9:10-17

My resources need to be blessed, then broken.

First speak a blessing. 16 “spoke a blessing”

Then act by breaking. 16 “and broke”

My circumstances need to be blessed, then broken.

First speak a blessing. 11 “spoke about the Kingdom”

Then act by breaking. 14 “groups of about fifty”

I need to be blessed, then broken.

First, I am declared blessed.

Then, I act in brokenness.

10

How to turn ‘problems!’ into ‘no problem!’ Luke 9:10-17

Complementary reading: my blessings, Ephesians 1:3-14

When I am facing big problems, I am never alone. 9:10-12

My biggest problems can be people. 11-12 “crowds... crowd”

My biggest problems can be place. 12 “a desolate place here”

My biggest problems can be provisions. 12 “lodging and provisions”

When I am holding small resources, I am never bereft. 9:13

My bigger problem is I don’t know the scope of my blessings. 13 “You give”

My bigger problem is I don’t know the depth of my blessings. 13 “we have only”

My bigger problem is I don’t know how to use my blessings. 13 “unless we buy”

When I am being held, God’s answer is my abundance. 9:14-17

My problems are smaller when I break them down. 14-15 “groups of fifty”

My problems are smaller when I speak blessing. 16 “spoke a blessing”

My problems are smaller when I face them. 16 “set before the people”

11

How will you handle this problem? Luke 9:12-17

Every problem has multiple solutions. 9:12-13

Option A. Send the problem somewhere else. 12 “send the crowd away”

Option B. Fix the problem here and now. 13 “you give them something”

God’s solution helps me understand the problem. 9:13-14

Know my human limitations. 13 “you give them something”

Know my human resources. 13 “five loaves, two fish”

Harness the power of partnership. 14-17

Partner with the problem. 14 “sit in groups of fifty”

Partner with the Master. 16 “gave thanks”

Partner with the team. 16 “gave to disciples to distribute”

12

Give up. Give in. Give out. Luke 9:10-17

Giving from open hands

Giving from an open heart

Giving from Heaven opened

13

Houston, we have a problem. (Apollo 13 movie) Luke 9:12-17

We are in a place where no one can help us. 9:12

The problem is here and now. 12 “Dismiss the crowd”

No one is coming to the rescue. 12 “desolate place”

We are asked to take personal responsibility. 9:13a

My responsibility. 13a “You give”

Minimum responsibility. 13a “give them something”

We have only limited resources. 9:13

We lack short-term resources. 13 “we have only”

We lack long-term resources. 13 “unless we go”

We need to break down, and look up. 9:14-16

Separate the components. 14 “groups of fifty”

Speak a blessing. 16 “spoke a blessing”

We need to work as a team. 9:16-17

We act in partnership with God’s people. 16 “to disciples... to distribute”

We act in partnership with God’s blessing. 17 “baskets left over”

Unmet expectations. Luke 9:12-17

Look at this miracle from the point of view of the bread and fish. Idea: Dialogue the two fish talking to each other as the miracle unfolds. (Broken, but still all there. Then multiplied!)

Humble beginnings with low expectations.

Blessed, then broken was not my expectations.

Achieving abundance beyond my expectations.

Other possible titles

Give us this day our daily bread.

Guess how many for dinner!

The Bread of Heaven gives bread from heaven.

I didn't seek that coming.

Small package. Big surprise!

Yes, we have more than enough.

When I'm all out of answers.

Is it a little, or is it a lot?

Share in the blessing.

From what a small boy can hold, to what twelve men can hold.

The blessing of Jesus is not enough! v16 "spoke a blessing *and....*"

Do you, or do you not, want your abundance?

Can Jesus bless that!?

Where there is no pizza delivery available.

Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!

How to really bless someone. v16 "spoke a blessing"

Doing the impossible takes just that little bit longer.

Music and songs

Songs based on this text

Break thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me. H 276

With a prayer You fed the hungry... Love incarnate. Ot 38

Songs about bread, fish, food, drinking, or feeding

Are you thirsty? Are you empty? ...Living Water. (Getty) Ot 76

Fishers of men. (Newsboys)

I thirsted in a barren land... Drinking at the springs of Living Water

Like the woman at the well... Fill me up.

The trumpets sound... The feast is ready to begin (Kendrick)

Songs about God's provision

Jehovah Jireh, my Provider. MP 354

My God is so big... There's nothing my God cannot do.

Our God is a great big God. TS 1475

You are the vine, we are the branches. SiS 678

Songs about blessing

Blessed be the Lord God Almighty. 407

Blessed be the name of the Lord (Moen).

Blessed be the Rock of my salvation.

Blessed by Your name (Redman). Ot 42

Come bless the Lord. 82

May God's blessing. MP 460

Is your life... Make me a channel of blessing. H 647

Stand and bless the Lord (Fettke). Ot 91

Stand up and bless the Lord. Ot 71

The Lord liveth... Blessed be the Rock.

There shall be showers of blessing. H 697

When upon life's billows... Count your blessings. H 723

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion

1. When does an object, an event, or a person become a problem?
2. List 3 reasons why you think God lets us have problems.
3. Suggest why Jesus reduced the crowd to groups numbering just 1% of its original size.
4. Why should a blessing be spoken aloud, rather than just thought?
5. There are multiple examples of blessings bestowed, but without any record of what was actually said (eg. Mark 10:15-16, & Luke 24:50). Why do you think the words said were not recorded?
6. In the priestly blessing (Numbers 6:23-27), which is your favourite line, and why?
7. Read John 13:17. How can we be blessed if no blessing is spoken?
8. What is a key purpose of blessings (2 Corinthians 9:8)?

Titles from other preachers

Thankful for not enough (Harold Miller, New Hope Baptist Church, Covington, Georgia)

Making bread with no dough (Mark Barber, Riverview Circuit UMC, Tennessee)

Never judge your problem in the light of your own resources (several preachers. Origin: ?)

The only word Jesus doesn't understand (David Dykes, Green Acres Baptist Church, Texas)
(The word is 'only', v13)

Notes and illustrations

Apart from the miracle of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle that is recorded in all four Gospels.

It may not surprise you, but McDonalds has never won any award for its Fillet-of-Fish burger. (Nor for any other of its products.) But the humble Panania Fish Market has on its menu a genuine award-winning Fish Burger for only \$6.50.

The disciples did not see 5,000 people. They saw 5,000 problems.

“He blessed” or “He gave thanks” v16 is εὐλόγησεν [Strongs 2127] “bless”

Plan for a church lunch to coincide with this sermon.

Matthew 14:13-21	Mark 6:30-44	Luke 9:10-17	John 6:1-15
<p>¹³ When Jesus heard what had happened,</p> <p>he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.</p>	<p>³⁰ The apostles gathered round Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught.</p> <p>³¹ Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.’</p> <p>³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.</p>	<p>¹⁰ When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done.</p> <p>Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida,</p>	<p>¹ Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias),</p>

<p>Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed those who were ill.</p> <p>¹⁵ As evening approached,</p> <p>the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so that they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.'</p> <p>¹⁶ Jesus replied, 'They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.'</p>	<p>³³ But many who saw them leaving recognised them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.</p> <p>³⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.</p> <p>³⁵ By this time it was late in the day,</p> <p>so his disciples came to him. 'This is a remote place,' they said, 'and it's already very late. ³⁶ Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.'</p> <p>³⁷ But he answered, 'You give them something to eat.'</p>	<p>¹¹ but the crowds learned about it and followed him.</p> <p>He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.</p> <p>¹² Late in the afternoon</p> <p>the Twelve came to him and said, 'Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here.'</p> <p>¹³ He replied, 'You give them something to eat.'</p>	<p>² and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing those who were ill.</p> <p>³ Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. ⁴ The Jewish Passover Festival was near.</p> <p>⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming towards him,</p> <p>he said to Philip, 'Where shall</p>
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			<p>we buy bread for these people to eat?’ ⁶ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.</p> <p>⁷ Philip answered him, ‘It would take more than half a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!’</p>
	<p>They said to him, ‘That would take more than half a year’s wages!</p> <p>Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?’</p> <p>³⁸ ‘How many loaves do you have?’ he asked. ‘Go and see.’</p>		<p>⁸ Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up,</p>
<p>¹⁷ ‘We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,’ they answered.</p> <p>¹⁸ ‘Bring them here to me,’ he said.</p> <p>¹⁹ And he told the people to sit down on the grass.</p>	<p>When they found out, they said, ‘Five – and two fish.’</p>	<p>They answered, ‘We have only five loaves of bread and two fish – unless we go and buy food for all this crowd.’</p>	<p>⁹ ‘Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?’</p>
	<p>³⁹ Then Jesus told them to make all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.</p>	<p>But he said to his disciples, ‘Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each.’ ¹⁵ The disciples did so, and everyone sat down.</p>	<p>¹⁰ Jesus said, ‘Make the people sit down.’ There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there).</p>
<p>Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke</p>	<p>⁴¹ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke</p>	<p>¹⁶ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke</p>	<p>¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as</p>

<p>the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.</p> <p>²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied,</p> <p>and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.</p> <p>²¹ The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.</p>	<p>the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all.</p> <p>⁴² They all ate and were satisfied,</p> <p>⁴³ and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish.</p> <p>⁴⁴ The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.</p>	<p>them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people.</p> <p>¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied,</p> <p>and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.</p> <p>¹⁴ (About five thousand men were there.)</p>	<p>much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.</p> <p>¹² When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.'</p> <p>¹³ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.</p> <p>¹⁴ After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, 'Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.'¹⁵ Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.</p>
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