



**Spring 2025**

**Elisha:** Seeing the Hand of God at Work

**To be used with Session 2:** God's Hand in Meeting Our Needs

**Sermon Title:** Jesus is Our Provision

**The Point:** God provides for our needs.

**Scripture:** Matthew 14:13-21

**Connection with the Study:** To complement the Bible study “God’s Hand in Meeting Our Needs,” this sermon focuses on the feeding of the five thousand recorded in Matthew 14. In this passage we see Jesus meeting the physical needs of people that could not be met apart from His miraculous provision. Jesus chose to work through His disciples, allowing them to participate in the great work He was going to accomplish. Through this example, Jesus set a beautiful precedent for all believers. Even now, God continues to work through His church to meet our needs, both physical and spiritual, and when we are responsive to His calling, He can accomplish more than we imagine possible.

**Introduction:** The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle that is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:31–44; Luke 9:12–17; John 6:1–14). This miracle stands out as one of the most astonishing events in human history, and is a reminder that God provides for our every need in every situation. These people had followed Jesus to a ‘deserted’ place with no thought of what came next, including where they would get food. Oftentimes, following Jesus will require us to trust that He will provide the most basic needs. Imagine a person who was ‘thinking ahead’ on that day, afraid to follow Jesus into the deserted place because they needed to stay close to home and not miss a meal. Their practicality would have caused them to miss out on one of the world’s greatest miracles. The choice for us remains today. When Jesus leads us to an unknown place, are we willing to follow and trust Him, or will we miss out on the miraculous?

### **1. A need acknowledged (Matt. 14:13-14).**

Jesus attracted a crowd wherever He went, and that came with logistical challenges. In the first-century world, there was no feasible way to feed thousands of people gathered in the same place for long periods of time. Those who followed Jesus into remote places large enough for this kind of crowd were placing themselves far from food sources. However, Jesus was focused on a greater need and went about healing their sick. Jesus saw both physical and spiritual needs, and He addressed them both.

**Lifeway**

This passage states that Jesus had compassion on this large crowd, and that is why He began healing them. What a blessing to us that Jesus sees our immense need for all kinds of healing, and instead of turning away from us in disgust or blaming us for our own deficiencies, He goes about bringing us healing. As His people, we also must be defined by our compassion for others and be prepared to serve in any and all situations as God gives us opportunity.

## **2. A need too big to address (Matt. 14:15-17).**

All of this ministry work was exciting, but the disciples were practical men, and they were getting nervous. They had a lot of people on their hands, and they knew at a certain point these people would become hungry. At the end of a long day, they were likely hungry themselves. Their response to these facts is a practical one: send these people somewhere else. It made sense; the need was too big for them to fill. But what they did not understand was that no need is too big for God, and these people were exactly where they needed to be.

Jesus not only ignored the advice but gave the disciples the impossible task of feeding the people. Notice that He does not reassure them that things will be “okay,” nor does He tell them that He will just perform a miracle. He tells His disciples to give them food. Of course, outside of the miraculous, this is impossible. There is no way to feed people with so little food. Yet Jesus was not looking to utilize their ability. He was looking to utilize their faith.

## **3. A need fulfilled (Matt. 14:18-21).**

In this passage Jesus spoke words that we will do well to remember daily. When the disciples gather up all the food they can find, which was not very much, Jesus told them to bring what they had to Him. The disciples may have been wondering what good that would do. Maybe they questioned whether Jesus fully understood the dilemma, but did they expect the miraculous? Jesus took what the disciples gave Him and was able to do more than anyone could have possibly imagined.

Jesus took the very little that was offered and turned it into something amazing. In the same way, we can look around us and see needs that we cannot fill. We don't have the time or supplies to fix the problems that need fixing. Yet Jesus asks us to work. He asks us to bring Him what we have, to put in the effort to assess what we can offer, and then He can take it and work the miraculous through us. We have our limits, but God does not. Jesus could have produced bread from anywhere, but He chose to use what was available to do things only He could do.

**Conclusion:** We all experience times when we feel we are beyond help, beyond hope. Situations seem unbearable and any remedy seems impossible. Yet our God is capable of going above and beyond our expectations, doing things that we could never do on our own, meeting our needs in a way that only He can do. Scripture proves this time and time again, and believers through the centuries affirm this to be true. We can look to Him to fulfill our needs through His church, just as He fulfilled needs of the five thousand through His disciples and the small offering they had to bring. God promises that although we may not ever have everything we want, in Him we will

**Lifeway**

always have everything that we could ever need.

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