

# *Resourced for the Mission*

by Rev. Gregory Seltz

*From the Missional Bible Studies series of the Center for U.S. Missions*

Read Matthew 14:13-21. Key verse: “As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, ‘This is a remote place; it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy some food.’ Jesus replied, ‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’”

Every congregation in mission prayerfully struggles with resources—the people and monies needed for the work of sharing the Gospel. Our text speaks of first things first; namely, our knowing and trusting that Jesus is the source of all that we say and do. The question “Do we have enough resources to do the work Jesus has given us?” should be asked only after we have brought our present resources to Jesus for His blessing. Blessed, then resourced--this is the Christian mission focus.

1. What does this text say about the reality of mission and ministry? See v. 15. What is the “predicament” for the disciples?
2. Don’t we often find ourselves in similar situations in ministry? Can you name some?
3. What did the disciples do right?
4. What were the disciples missing? (v. 17) What did they fail to see when all they saw was “a few fish and some loaves?” How does Jesus’ statement, “You give them something” shake them up?
5. How Jesus deal with the “resource question” head on (v. 18)? What does this mean for us when dealing with our resource needs for ministry?
6. Jesus provides the resources, but who “delivers” them to the people? (v. 19). What does this tell you about Jesus’ desire to bless others through us?
7. For mission, why is it important to realize that Jesus is not our hero, but our Savior?

Heroes do great things, but they dominate; they win at all cost. They make other people realize that they are the winners and you are not. In this reading, we see that Jesus is not our hero; He is our Savior. Jesus invites us into

His excellence, His forgiveness, His love and salvation so that we can be such vessels to others (see 2 Cor. 4:5-12).

Jesus our Savior could dominate us with ease. Instead, He stoops to serve; comes into our flesh, washes our feet, dies on our cross, and gives us his life! He is a Savior willing to proclaim salvation, reconciliation, hope and peace, through broken vessels like us.

8. What does it mean to our mission that Jesus can work through us as we are? . . .

Jesus calls people to ministry, to service, to be proclaimers of His reconciliation and cosmic redemption. He ultimately is the message and the power (resource) for us in our mission work for others.

The greatness of the Christian message is the potential it proclaims for human beings! To be redeemed children of the Almighty God, to be made in his image and redeemed by his life, death and resurrection means that we are blessed to be a blessing. In Jesus, such things are true of us so that we might serve others with confidence and joy.

This is not some modern belief in self, but the truth of a Savior Jesus, who because of who He is and what He has done, believes in you! With that being true, even our inadequacies might be strengths in serving others.

*Jesus says, "Bring me your fish/loaves; bring me your voices, your minds, your arms, your legs; your time, talent and treasure; your lives in service to your community, to your friends, to your enemies . . . and watch what I will do with you! And if you need more, just ask!"*

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Accompanying Leader's Guide is also available from the Center for U.S. Missions.