

Stewardship

Gary Presbyterian Church

Scripture

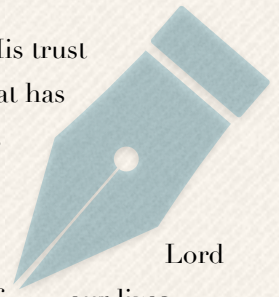
Matthew 14:14 When [Jesus] went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. 15 When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." 16 Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." 17 They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." 18 And he said, "Bring them here to me." 19 Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20 And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. 21 And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. NRSV

Devotion

Throughout scripture we encounter these moments when the desperation of scarcity is overcome by the faith someone has in God's abundant mercy. Though Jesus' disciples have been with him long enough to know better, when he asks them to feed the crowd they reply with reports about their scarcity. They have only five loaves and two fish.

Jesus, ignoring the report of scarcity, takes the loaves, looks to heaven, gives thanks, and

begins to distribute the food. His trust leads him to give thanks for what has been given, rather than to focus on the things that are missing.



This impulse of the Lord can bless us in so many areas of our lives. What if we were to give thanks for gifts received and then be willing to share them even when it seemed like our gifts would not be enough to solve the problem? My five loaves and two little fish may seem a paltry contribution to address the enormous needs of our world. But God has a way of taking our modest contributions and multiplying their impact.

When I was in seminary I heard the president of the seminary say that according to a UN Hunger study, that if 3% of the world's resources were redistributed . . . we would end death by hunger. As it is millions will die of food-insecurity and hunger-related illness this year. Ending world hunger seems like a staggeringly large problem, but if many of us offered our five loaves and two fish, I wager it would be a much smaller problem. To do that we will have to stop being the kind of disciples who are focussed on how little we have, and become the sort of disciples who get busy joining the Lord in feeding the hungry.

Prayer

Lord, may we learn from you to trust and to take our gifts, give thanks, and then share them that you might be glorified by our generosity and we might grow in grace. Amen.