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Luke 9:11 When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.

Luke 9:12 Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place.”

Luke 9:13 But he said to them, “You give them something to eat.” They said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.”

Luke 9:14 For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each.”

Luke 9:15 And they did so, and had them all sit down.

Luke 9:16 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

Luke 9:17 And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

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Bethsaida: House of fish

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Pillars must be raised up: Jesus spent time alone with the Father, but He also spent time alone with His disciples. Indeed, He fed the five thousand (not including women and children), but not directly. He fed them through the disciples. He had a team of serving ones who grew to know Him and to know His heart, and to know themselves, and who were willing to be perfected.

There are several aspects related to this burden. Pillars have a close fellowship with older or more mature brothers and sisters. The apostles gathered together to Jesus to report to Him all that they had done and taught. There was a very good fellowship between the apostles, Jesus and one another. Pillars have many prayers and fellowship together. They are not independent.

Pillars dive into the church life. This does not just mean serving or laboring a lot. It means knowing as many brothers and sisters as possible, individually, one by one. Do I know the individual needs of the saints? If I don't know the needs, how can I serve? It is not a question of just doing many things, and speaking many things, but knowing the saints. The less I know the saints, the less I should speak. Do I spend time with the saints, to know them?

John 6:8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him,

John 6:9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?"

We may not have, but we need to know who has: The disciples did not have anything, but Andrew knew a lad (a little boy) who had five loaves and two fish. The Lord wants each individual believer to provide food. Even if we do not have, we may know a little boy (signifying a new believer with a pure heart) who has. Do I know someone who has something to offer to the Lord? We must know what new believers have from the Lord. Never assume the younger ones know nothing or have nothing. In fact, we need to wait for them to say something. This shows that it is impossible for us to meet every need. The older ones should never think they can meet every need. They need the younger ones and the newer ones to bless the church. Eventually, the little boy gave what he had to the disciples. This means that the newer ones also need the older ones. Both complement each other and together bless people.

The little boy had five loaves and two fish. These loaves were made from barley grown in the ground. The fish were caught in the sea. Both loaves and fish represent a particular living that is made by people (in this case farmers and fishermen). This indicates that we offer to the Lord who we are, according to the environment the Lord has placed us in. For example, a student lives among students. His or her offering to the Lord is necessarily, and quite naturally, fellow students that are contacted, and brought to the Lord. Often, we think that our offering is our time or money. This is not incorrect, but here in John 6, the offering is the barley and the fish, that is the people around us to whom we are related (our friends, our neighbors, our relatives, our coworkers). This is an uphill battle. It is not easy for one person to know and love the Lord.

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After having been sent out to preach the gospel and returning, the apostles told Jesus all that they had done. This is important fellowship because such fellowship will let the Lord know

1. The labor and the effectiveness of each of their gospel preaching exercises, which is a training for them,
2. The companionship developed the apostles in pairs;
3. The blessings and the challenges which the apostles had experienced;
4. The closeness of their relationship with people whom they had met.

For example, Mark 6:33 indicates that many people who came to meet Jesus knew these apostles.

Mark 6:33 Now many saw them going **and recognized them**, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

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Luke 9:13 **But he said to them, “You give them something to eat.”** They said, “**We have no more than five loaves and two fish**—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.”

The Lord desires very much the twelve apostles (us) to give the people whom they (we) serve something to eat (that is, the Christ in us).

The fact that Christ is in the people whom we serve (here a boy has five barley loaves and two fish) may be considered that **we (not only Andrew “John 6:8” but the twelve apostles) also have.**

Do we have five loaves and two fish (for example on LDs)

John 6:8 One of his disciples, **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother, said to him,

John 6:9 “There is **a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish**, but what are they for so many?”

Ruth 4:17 And **the women neighbors** gave him a name, saying, **A son has been born to Naomi**; and they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Luke 9:13 But he said to them, “You give them something to eat.” They said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.”

I think that many times, we like to counter what God says. Here, Jesus asked the disciples to distribute five loaves and two fish to the crowd. However, they argued that they did not have enough, and if they wanted to feed beyond, they would have to go buy food (which would have been a lot).

Even as believers, we tend to first think of our own capabilities. For instance, in the story, the disciples didn't trust Jesus at first. How could this small quantity of food feed this crowd? We often forget that even if we are limited, the Lord isn't. He has the power to turn ordinary things into extraordinary things. He uses the weak and the humble for His glory (1 Corinthians 1:27). No matter how small or insignificant we seem (like the five loaves and two fish), if we are willing to trust in Him and to sacrifice ourselves to God, that is when He can give us beyond what we expect and turns us into a fruitful resource for others.

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Luke 9:15 And they (**disciples**) did so, and had them all sit down.

Luke 9:16 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and **gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd**.

Luke 9:17 And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over **was picked up**, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

1. The Lord asked the service team (disciples) to distribute the food and collect the leftovers. They (we) need to be trained during services;
2. The Lord asked the people to be separated in groups (churches, groups and teams..) to be served (maybe in order to know and fellowship with each other). Thus, in the church life, we need to have service teams, companionsand avoid being independent.

Mark 6:43 And they (**disciples**) took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish.

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The Lord will not break what we do not have. He will ask us what we have. Do we have a plan? Do we have a burden for the church? If we have nothing, what can the Lord break?

Then, the Lord will break who we are (Matthew 14:19, Mark 6:41 and Luke 9:16). We may think that we have served well or spoken well or met a certain need. The Lord will break us to cause us to realize that we have nothing to boast about. Only the Lord can meet the needs. If I gave two hours of my time, or spent some money, or even contacted someone and brought him to the Lord, it was because the Lord told me to do it. I have no boast. Eventually, the Lord alone is the One who feeds and blesses.

After the Lord has broken who we are, He will ask us to give to others what He has broken. Sometimes, we may not want to give to others what He has broken. For example, we may labor on a passage in the Bible. Or we may write a powerpoint on a point that has touched us. Another brother may ask us to modify our presentation, to add or remove something. This may result in a breaking of ourselves. Are we offended? Or do we look at this breaking as a grace? Actually, this perfecting may be a blessing to us. If we take the grace, what the Lord has broken may feed many others. If we insist on being whole or untouched, what we have may not bless the church as much. Are we willing to be broken, to lose our soul life, to be able to feed others?