

# Kingdom Math

by Tim Conway

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**Scripture:** Matthew 14:13, Mark 6:30, Luke 9:10, John 6:1, Acts 1:8

**Topics:** "Trusting God's Provision", "Faith in Action"

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## Description

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## Transcript

If you would, please open your Bibles to John chapter 6. I actually was an engineer for a number of years before I began pastoring, and so I like math, I like science, and I'm intrigued by biblical math. And I want us to think about some numbers today. Brethren, I had you turn to John chapter 6, and this portion of Scripture we're going to look at is where Jesus feeds the 5,000.

Do you know the Apostle John tells us when he gets all the way to the end of his gospel, he says that Jesus did many miracles. He did many other signs. And you say, other than what? He did many other signs.

Well, other than the ones that were written. If you know John, you know that there's basically seven wonders, seven miracles, seven actual historical events that John presents to us. And what John says is, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book.

So he wrote seven. You think about this. You go a chapter later, and he actually says, were every one of these to be written, he says the books that would be written, they couldn't be contained in this world.

What's my point? Just this. John, think about John. Now, I know he's being led along by the Spirit of God, but John is confronted with this.

I am going to give these people something so that they may believe. You remember why? He tells us why these things were written. Why were they written? That we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Okay, you think about this. John, he touched him. The Word of Life, he touched him.

He was with him. He looks over the whole gamut, and he says, being led by the Spirit. But that didn't remove his thinking capacity.

He was thinking, out of all that I saw. I mean, I don't know if he could have even known he was going to be penning this record that would last to this day. Probably he knew.

Probably there was some idea. Jesus seemed to be preparing the apostles for the writing of the Scriptures. Out of everything, all the signs, all the wonders, he reaches in and he pulls out seven.

And here's the thing. As I think about this, what ones would you pick? I mean, wouldn't you pick the things that are most calculated to move people, to shape people? I mean, I think I would. I mean, I would look for the things that are most important for a person's faith.

And listen, have you ever noticed when it comes to the Christian life that some things are more important? If I'm John, I would have picked the most important thing. I look at Scripture and I recognize there are some things that are more important. Above all these, put on love.

There are things that are more important. You know, the scribes and the Pharisees, they were hypocrites. What did they do? They neglected the weightier matters of the law.

The weightier. Aren't there some things in the Christian life concerning our faith that are weightier, that are more important? If I'm John, I'm looking for the weighty things. What are the weighty things? What are the things that really are necessary to record? And you know what I find? Out of the seven things that he recorded for us, one of them, when Matthew's over there thinking, well, I'm going to strive to reach maybe with a Jewish flavored letter, what ones am I going to pick? And he goes after this one.

And there's Mark. He's got more of his concise approach. He goes after this one.

Luke, Theophilus, I'm going to tell him about the 5,000. And then John. Here's the thing.

John, out of all seven, this is one. Out of the Scriptures, this is the only one that all four of the Gospel writers record to us. I look at that.

I mean, one of the ways that I would gauge importance in Scripture is one, that it even made it there at all. But then two, repetition. I mean, if you want to gauge the importance of something, God is holy, holy, holy.

I mean, the reality is holy works once. Peter, do you love me? Peter, do you love me? Listen, I know you typically don't read all four Gospels in one sitting. So you don't feel the repetition perhaps.

But I'm wanting you to feel this. I'm wanting you to feel that somehow, some way, this must be weightier. And here it is.

I mean, there must be something fundamentally basic to the Christian life in this event for this to be recorded like it is. Something essential to our faith. Because that's why John's writing.

He wants us to believe something about this Jesus. And so here it is. Something about this account really matters.

And so that's just kind of where I want us thinking about this as we go into this. Because brethren, I'm convinced of this. If this has been recorded like this, brethren, what I fear sometimes, it's just like what John the Baptist said, there is one standing among us whom we know not.

Like we don't really know him as we ought to. And there's something in this account that I think really needs to move us. We need to feel the weight of.

So let's look at it. John's version of this. I'll reference the other synoptic accounts, but let's just gather this one in.

John 6 verse 1. After this, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain and there he sat down with the disciples.

Now the Passover, the Feast of the Jews, was at hand. Here's what I especially want you to see. Lifting up his eyes then and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat? He said this to test him.

If you've got the KJV, to prove him. Okay, this is a test. Philip is being tested.

He said this to test him for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him. 200 denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, there's a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many? Jesus said, have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down about 5,000 in number. Jesus then took the loaves and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated.

So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost. So they gathered them up and filled 12 baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

When the people saw the sign that he had done, they came and they said, this is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world. Now brethren, John says something very interesting here that none of the other gospel writers tells us. Where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat? He said this to test him.

So listen, if this is recorded for us in every one of the gospels, four times God wanted us to have this. You have to think there's something in this test that's really critical to each of us. In fact, you have to believe that it's a test that we all have to face.

A test, a critical test. Matthew loves to tell us in both the feeding of the 5,000 and the feeding of the 4,000. He's the one gospel writer that likes to tell us that it was 5,000 men plus women and children.

I mean you figure, were there probably 5,000 women as well? Maybe 10,000 children? You recognize what's happening here. Philip, look at this crowd of maybe 20,000 people. Where are we supposed to get bread to feed all of these? I mean, this isn't an actual historical account.

Philip was there. You can put yourself in his shoes. Wow, this is a lot of people.

And kind of a default mechanism kicked in. I mean, you know, it says that the Lord knew what he was going to do. Obviously, he was not looking for counsel here.

He knew what he was going to do. He was asking this for the sake of Philip's faith to test what it was made of. And have you noticed that? God does not bestow faith other than he means to test it.

And that's what's happening here. Now, it did test his faith and the fact is it proved to be little. But you know that Jesus did not mean for it to stay little.

Notice Philip's response. Look at verse 7. Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough. Now, you know what's interesting about that? When you go over and you look at Mark's account of this, it says that they all said, all the disciples said, two hundred denarii would not be enough.

Which makes me think, wait, where did that number come from? You know, if it was just Philip and it was just one man, it's maybe he just thought of that number. When they all thought that number, when they're all talking that number, that makes me think that this amount came from somewhere. I'll tell you what I think.

I'll tell you, I think Philip's default knee-jerk reaction was, Judas, what's in the bag? I think that's what was in there. That's why they were all saying it. And they all looked, default mechanism.

How are we going to feed them? Look at the wallet. What do you got in your pocket? That's exactly where he went to. The automatic response.

Hey, Judas, what's in the bag? So typical, such a default mechanism for all of us. Money. You know, the reality is, what should Philip have started doing? I mean, look, we're talking about signs that are supposed to convince us something of who this Christ is.

You know what he would have been? Wow. He turned water into wine. Remember that, guys? Remember that guy's son he healed? Do you remember that girl he raised from the dead? He should have started counting Christ's miracles.

Instead, he's counting pennies. Brethren, that is so typical for us. That is so typical to put our eyes.

You see, we say, we walk by faith, not by sight. But look what Philip's proving. And Philip is us.

I mean, we have to admit that. He's us. These disciples are us.

Because we're made of the same stuff, aside from the Spirit coming down and doing such things in us, like we're done at Pentecost. Brethren, we're like them. So prone to unbelief.

So prone to just... Brethren, you know what's happening here? These brethren are being schooled. And Christ is the schoolmaster. This is exam day.

And there's a test. And this is a math test. And it's multiple choice.

And it's only one question. I mean, look, in engineering school, if we would have got a test with one question, three multiple choice, wow, that's great. It would be great, unless you failed the test every single time.

You just didn't realize what the answer was. Ay, ay, ay. This... I don't want to be this.

Here's the possible choices. A. What's the... Let's deal with the question on the test first. Where are we going to get sufficient to feed these? That's the question on the test.

Okay. Here's your multiple choice. There's three possible answers.

A. The 200 denarii we got over here in the bag. B. Maybe they have something in their own pockets. Where do you get that? Mark's account, Jesus says to all of them, you, plural, give them something to eat.

They all said to him, shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat? And they said, basically in the account, send the crowds away. Go in the villages, buy food for themselves. You see the two.

200 denarii, send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves. So basically it's the money we have or the money they have. And what's C? C is Christ does a miracle and we feed them with no money.

That's the C. Two ways are worldly and two ways are normal. And brethren, if there's anything about this account that you ought to begin to see right off, Jesus does not want us to do things like the world does. He doesn't want us defaulting to the worldly way.

He doesn't want us to be a normal people. That's why I come back to this. We have one standing in our midst that we know not.

When we find ourselves defaulting to worldly methods, it's just simply because there is one standing in our midst and we don't know him as we ought to know him. And that's what this account is all about, that we come to that place. You see what they did.

They direct what's money all about. I mean, money is just simply something man stamps out. Man's been doing.

It's what man creates. It's what man can buy. It's what man can do.

They default to trusting man. But what is the Lord's way? Immediately causes our trust to move in a whole other direction. Immediately.

Look, this doesn't mean that money doesn't play a part in our lives. I recognize that it does. But oh, how automatically we just tend to measure everything by what we can do.

Brethren, I'll tell you what the easiest thing in the world to do is. Just send the crowds away. Send the people away.

That's what they wanted to do. Send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food. Next, in verse 8, one of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

He said, there's a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they for so many? Don't you like that? What are they? You see, this was definitely said to test them. One of the things that he does want us to see is that with our own resources, this thing is impossible from the outset.

Jesus tells us, he tells us to go into all the world. Brethren, you know this. The people of God today are the people with the true bread.

He tells us to go feed the crowd. He tells us to feel every creature under this sun shining out here. We are supposed to take the gospel to go to the nations and make disciples.

How can we do that? Brethren, we begin to get our math right when we're formulating the equation. And we put the factor in there for ourselves. And it's a poverty factor.

We're what we have. Brethren, that's so fundamental to the equation that we recognize. Yeah, Lord, we don't have what it takes to get this job done.

I recognize that just there's nothing by themselves. There's nothing in my prayers. There's nothing in the preaching.

There's nothing in our fellowship. Nothing in my doing. Nothing in my going.

Unless the Lord take that little bit, that little pitiful barley loaf, those two little fishes, unless He takes it and He puts His blessing on that. So often, you know what we do? We basically take our poverty and we put it in the equation. Plus our unbelief equals send the crowds home.

We can't do it. Brethren, if there's one thing that strikes me in the time that I've been in your country, this is the land that sent forth my heroes. William Carey and even some of them didn't go forth like Spurgeon or Lloyd-Jones.

They're my heroes too. John G. Payton went to the New Hebrides. Hudson Taylor.

I mean, I've stood at Carey's grave. I've felt... Oh, brethren, we have a responsibility. We're the ones that are supposed to take the bread out.

And what we don't want to do is say, well, we've got so little because the churches are shrinking. How many churches we hear? Well, they've got eight members or they've got 40 members. We can take this little thing.

Sorry, we can't help. What churches in America or the churches in Canada, the churches somewhere else, they'll deal with it. They'll make this happen.

And brethren, we calculate our own little resources. And I feel it. I feel it.

I feel the smallness of our numbers, the smallness of our financial ability, the smallness of the gifts that God has given. There's just the smallness. And it's all the more multiplied that I feel it in the depths of my soul coming over to this side of the ocean.

I feel it. Brethren, what can happen is, we just simply get our eyes glued on these meager resources and we just are convincing ourselves the math doesn't work out. We've got to send the crowds away instead of looking to omnipotence.

Instead, like I keep saying, there's one in our midst, brethren, that we hardly know. The very one who has done this recorded it for us four times so that as we walk through this life, we would have some idea, hey, he's with us. That Christ is with us.

He recorded this for a reason so that we might get our math right. Here's kingdom math. Kingdom math, five loaves plus two fish minus, subtract all they filled themselves with, 20,000 people maybe, equals 12 baskets.

That is kingdom math. But we don't hardly know it. We're not convinced that math works.

We're not convinced it's even true. Feed 4,000. Brethren, when you look at these accounts, the reality is, this math is the math of Christ's kingdom.

That's what he wants these guys to figure out. There is a Christ factor in our math that we've got to include here. Undoubtedly, this is the most repeated miracle in Scripture for one simple reason.

We just simply are so prone to be filled with doubt and unbelief and forget kingdom math. And if you pay really close attention, if you want to pass your math test, you want to notice something. He specifically says this, that he fed, he tells, he has the disciples recount this at a certain place.

And we're going to talk about that in a minute. But guys, do you remember? How many loaves did I feed 5,000 with? Five. How about the 4,000? Seven.

You see there's some kingdom math there. Feed 5,000 with five loaves, have 12 left over, 12 baskets. Feed 4,000 with seven loaves, have seven baskets left over.

You see something there about that? The more they begin with, the less they end with. They start with seven, they end with seven baskets. They start with five, they end with 12 baskets.

Do you get something? You get a clue about kingdom math? The smaller you start with, the more they had in the end. Brethren, do you recognize this? That when you drop down from 5,000 to 4,000, there was no advantage. The advantage was feeding the 5,000, not feeding the 4,000.

You ended up with far more to take home as leftovers when you fed more people. You see, it's never an advantage to send the crowds home. It's never an advantage to try to take the bread to as few people as possible.

Do you see something about the kingdom math here? Brethren, we save nothing by reducing the number of the people that we serve. The thing about kingdom math is somehow things got added to by subtracting. The very opposite that you would think.

It's like kingdom math is the guy that gives away becomes all the richer. The guy that hoards what he ought to give away, he just becomes poorer. See, that's the kind of kingdom math that comes out of Proverbs.

That's the reality. And you know what we get in this account? Three seemingly unnecessary aspects to the account. See, what do you mean? Well, you think about this.

Did Jesus really need the five loaves and the two fish? Did He need His disciples to even produce that? Certainly power was there to create all this food out of nothing had He desired it. That's one thing. The second thing is, did Jesus know exactly how much each one would eat? He did not have to create leftovers.

And then the third thing is, He did not need to collect those leftovers. Brethren, there's a reason behind all of these things. And you know what it is? It's so that in later days, Philip could have been there saying, yeah, yeah, the Master, He asked me how we're going to feed all those people that day.

You know, I couldn't tell him. I couldn't tell him. We brought our little... He involved us.

It's amazing. He involved us in it. And He actually had us pick up those baskets.

And I remember carrying that basket one, that first time, one for each of the disciples. I remember carrying it. Just that one basket was far more than we started with.

I'll tell you if I was convinced of anything looking in that basket, He did it. He did it all. Brethren, He included them in that because He includes us.

And it's not our little... Brethren, our little... It's necessary in the equation. He wants us to bring our little to Him. But His power is the reality in this whole thing.

Three just seemingly unnecessary aspects, but they were so necessary. He involved us. And His power came... See, this is the thing.

This is the thing that you really want to get. His power flowed through their little. That's key because that's how He operates through us.

He doesn't tell us all just to go to bed because after all this is His work and He's going to do it all and we don't participate. You see, this account is there four times. And He's showing us.

We bring our little to Him. Massive power. And you know the thing is, they got done with that day and they probably could have all said, well, we failed the test today.

But we now know the right answer. Right? We got this. You like to pass the test the first time.

But if you take a test and you fail it and you know you're going to get exactly the same test later, you're probably pretty confident that you're not going to fail it the second time. It's not too many days later. And here they are again.

And here's a crowd again. And you know what? There's no account in Matthew or Mark where He asks them this time, they burst out. How would we feed a crowd like this? This is when there's 4,000.

Brethren, that is an inexcusable question. But think about, we can read this. We read in both Matthew and Mark.

We come across the five and then you know it's in Matthew, it's one chapter later. In Mark, it's two. This did not happen that long after.

Here are the men. That observed this happen. That would be one thing, you know we might excuse them if they've been kind of, you know when the 5,000 got fed, if they were kind of off over there, not really paying attention to what Jesus was doing in the background.

You know what Jesus did? He put a basket in each one of their hands. They had the facts. This is inexcusable.

But brethren again, this day we're the ones taking the test. And you know we can see God work one day and then we get full of anxieties and doubts the next day. God just wiped out our enemies with 10 plagues and now we stand before the Red Sea and we're in a panic.

And it parts, hallelujah, and we run out of water. Oh no, what are we gonna do now? And the rock, it flows and then we have no food. And here comes the manna and the quail fly in.

And then we go up to these cities and there's giants in there. We're grasshoppers. We can't go in there.

And brethren, when you look at these things, this is a test for all of us. And brethren, those folks out there in the wilderness, they perished in their unbelief. Jesus is working with his disciples, but he's working that unbelief out of them.

So the day would come when that would not be there, when these would be the men that turn the world upside down. Brethren, you know what happens? 5,000, they fail the test. Let's just take Matthew's account.

Matthew 14, 5,000, they fail the test. Same guys, Matthew 15, they fail the test. Matthew 16, okay, what happens here? Oh, Jesus climbs in a boat.

They climb in with him. They're out there sailing across and he says, boys, you guys really need to watch out for the leaven of these Pharisees, these Sadducees, Herod. You need to watch out for that.

Immediately, Thomas, you were supposed to bring the bread! And you know what? A lot of times, Jesus, you notice this. He was the kind, give me that water of life that if I drink it, go call your husband. You ever notice how Jesus, sometimes people would talk to him about certain things.

It was like he didn't even hear them, just he'd switch it to the heart matter. Not here. Oh no, he heard them.

He heard them and you get, I know the different translations have different number of question marks here. You get a string of questions that come from Jesus unlike anywhere else. There's 10 questions he fires at them in rapid succession.

Listen to this. Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive? Do you not understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes, do you not see? Having ears, do you not hear? Do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the 5,000, how many baskets full of the broken pieces did you take up? The seven for the 4,000, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up? Do you not yet understand? You see what happened? The disciples heard the word leaven and their minds immediately went to bread. Why? Because the provisions of this world are just so automatically on our minds and that's where they went.

They didn't even hear the Pharisee, Sadducee, Herod part of this. All they could think about is bread. We brought no bread.

Brethren, he says, why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? How can you possibly be worrying about bread when I am with you? How can you trust me so little? That's where these questions are coming from. How can you trust me so little that you guys would even be sitting there talking about bread? He said, have you not used the eyes that are in your head? Have you not? I mean, but this is aimed at us because brethren, we're just like them. Our resources are meager.

But what he's wanting to convince us four times over, this account comes at us. Why? Because there's something necessary to our faith here. Brethren, what he's saying is, if you are my people and I am with you, you can go do what I call you to do and you can feed the world and you don't need to turn the crowds away.

And you know what he does? He begins to review their math lessons. He wants them to consider what they'd already been taught, what they'd already seen, what the numbers really were. He wants them to review in their minds and go through all the math.

How did it work? Don't you remember? We started with five loads there. Don't you remember the number? Don't you remember what was left over? He goes back through it. I mean, here's the schoolmaster.

He's schooling them again. And listen, he could have just let this go. I don't know, they just misunderstood me and so I'm going to really hit them with the errors of Herod that I'm trying to get through.

No, no, no. He stops in his tracks because this is like math 101. You don't get this right.

This is bad. This is bad math. Oh, brethren.

Four times. And here we are. Brethren, we live in a world that is desperately hungry.

And the reality is, they don't even know what they're hungry for. You know what they're doing out there. They're devouring sensuality, devouring pornography, devouring pleasure, devouring entertainment and possessions and sex.

And you know what it just does to the world? Because a lot of us, we're like that prodigal. We walk that path. We know what it is.

You get out there and you come to your right mind. Well, it isn't until you just felt hollow and empty and dirty. Brethren, this is the world around us.

They don't know where the true bread is. We know where the true bread is. Brethren, do you read your Bibles in such a way that you actually are convinced that if the world's going to get bread, we have to be the people to take it to them? Are you convinced of that? Are you convinced? Brethren, it's not the media.

It's not the schools. This is us. Jesus says, you give them something to eat.

You do that. Brethren, they're out there. They're perishing for a lack of knowledge by the thousands and the millions and the billions.

And we're the ones He said go. You've got the bread. We've got the bread, the living bread, the bread of life.

We know what it is. We know the way. And it's like, I don't know if you can hear these words like I hear them.

Go and make disciples of all the nations. Preach the gospel to every creature. I mean, it can almost make you want to just fold up and go over and hide somewhere.

The more we come face to face with what our responsibility is, I know how it is for me. The more my poverty stares me straight in the face. The poverty of our churches.

Lord, feed this. Look at our loaves and our fish. How do you think we're going to do this? Lord, don't mock us with this.

Don't call us to this impossibility. You bid us to go to the nations. You bid us to make disciples.

Lord, this work is too big. This is too much. Lord, look at our money.

Look at our loaves. Look at us. Lord, we're few in number.

I was talking to some brothers right before I came up here. And I was just saying, you know, in the U.S. if we heard that a church had 40 people in it, like you'd feel really bad for them. Like, you know, they're not going to last much longer.

Over here, that's kind of a common 40 people. Lord, Lord, I think if we're all honest, the momentum of the church in this country is in the wrong direction. Lord, look at the momentum in this country.

Look at the numbers of your people. Look at our resources. Look at the funds we have.

Look at the gifts we... Lord, we might be able to pull this off. If we were someone else, if we were Charles Spurgeon or if we were Hudson Taylor, maybe we could pull this off. We're just us.

Lord, just us. You bid us to do this, but Lord, we're few in number. The number of Christians in this country.

I mean, what are we in a world that's so big, in a world that's so hungry? Lord, we lack, we lack, we lack. We lack the supplies. We lack the labors.

We lack the preachers. We lack the elders. We lack the missionaries.

We lack the church planters. We're small. We're struggling.

We're just trying to survive. We're coming out of this old COVID thing. Lord, just getting all the people in the seats.

Lord, the offering boxes are empty. The pastors are discouraged. They're hardly able to support their pastors.

Lord, look what we have. We have problems. There's been splits.

There's been divisions. Please, Lord, don't rebuke us. You tell us to feed the crowds, but look what we have.

Don't mock us, please, Lord. See what we say is true. Lord, we're too inexperienced.

We're too backwards. We're too feeble. We're too weak.

We're too old. Some of us, the shadows are lengthening, ready to leave the stage. Lord, what can I do? Lord, I'm just a mother.

I've got children. I'm trying to homeschool them. Look at me.

I've got a job. I can barely support the family. Look what we're all about, Lord.

Lord, this is reality. Oh, but he gives us these four accounts. Because if you simply do the math based on our resources and plus unbelief, yep, you just go home and forget the crowd.

That's bad math. That's where that will lead you. You only have five loaves and two fish.

What are they among this world? This world? It's a big place. Please, Lord, help us. You got, again, I don't know if you can hear this like I hear.

Paul heard, come over and help us. There were people at Philippi. Can you hear the voice of people in the Middle East? Do you even think? You know, I don't know how Philippi was with the crowd right at that moment, but I can imagine, you know, he kind of had his back to the crowd.

He's looking at Jesus and all the disciples. Lord, send him away. Send him to the villages.

Probably back to him. Just you don't want to look at them because you don't want to look in their faces and really think, well, they may not have any money in their pocket. Actually, go to the village.

Don't let your emotions get too wrapped up in this crowd. Do you hear their voices like Middle East? Come over and help us. Come over.

Did the people at Philippi really, there was a vision there, but were they really the ones calling? Was that God seeing the need? But can you hear their voices? Are you going to let us stay under Allah? Are you going to let us starve? They cry out in this darkness, lost, lost. Can you hear them in Asia and Africa? Just crying out. We're lost.

We're lost. Can you even hear the voices of the fathers and the grandfathers that have already perished, worshiping this false God? And now they're in the flames? Do you know what they said? To John G. Peyton, how long have you known that truth? He probably hung his head when he said it. They had this truth for 1,800 years.

And you're just coming now? You let us perish for 1,800 years? Brethren, we're the people with the truth. What do we say? Glory days are gone. Cary's gone.

Fuller's gone. Taylor's gone. Peyton's gone.

What can we do? The church here is shrinking. Mosques pop up where there used to be churches. So what do we do? Brethren, are we going to let them starve? You end up doing your math equations without the Christ factor.

We don't want to do this. Brethren, I can hear you say what I say. We only have five loaves.

Lord, the bread's hardly sufficient for us. And you know what we can do? We can take our five loaves and we can selfishly go over there under the tree and eat it all by ourselves. And you know what I'm afraid? Is you get Calvinistic churches, Reformed churches, and a lot of times that's it.

We'll eat our bread within these walls and then we go out. And the people right over here don't even know we're in the neighborhood. They don't know.

We just disappear to our homes. We take our few little fish with us. Brethren, that is not what this account is all about.

This account is for us to look at it and say, you know what? We can do what the Lord calls us to do. And we can take our little meager resources and we can bring them to Him. Now go selfishly eat them over there under the tree.

We're going to bring them to Him. And if He puts His blessing, we can, Lord, we bring them to you. I'll tell you, a place to bring these meager resources is in our prayer meetings.

It's a perfect place. Church gather together and fall on our faces and say, Lord, look what we are. Lord, you know what we are.

Look at our number. Look at our resources. Lord, we got two small fish over here.

They're more bone than meat. You tell us to go do this. We're facing COVID travel restrictions.

How are we going to do this? Brethren, what we want to do is we want to take what we have to Him. That the more we feel our responsibility, yes, I realize the more our infirmity can just oppress us. I feel that.

Can't we break out of that? There is one that stands in our midst. He's in here, brethren. Our God is with us.

Christ is with us. He said He would not... Brethren, right there at the end of that, going to the nations, He says, Lo, I am with you always, even till the end of the age. The one who created this enough to feed the multitudes, He's with us.

Last thing He wants us to do is be these nice, proper, correct Christians who just eat their own bread and don't take it to the Lord to multiply for the multitudes. Oh, brethren, I hope you feel the desperation in this. We can say, oh, if I was somebody else, I could do something.

Brethren, souls are dying. Hell is filling. I know we can't do it in our own strength.

Master, command us not to impossibilities. You've bidden us to do this, but they're out there. If you strain your ears, they cry out, we are perishing.

Will you let us perish? Brethren, I didn't come from a Christian family. My grandfather perished. My great-grandfather perished.

My great-great-grandfather perished. Nominal, Irish Catholics, drunks, liars, foul mouth. I can't trace a single Christian anywhere in my family.

Can you hear the generations that perish out there? Brethren, we're told, you feed them. You feed them. Brethren, they're starving.

They need the true bread. Come and help. And even if you can't, we must.

I mean, that's what we're faced with. Don't, listen, look at the little you have, bring it to the Lord. And then we need to strategize based on the fact that this Christ is with us.

How are we going to get that bread out there? How are we going to feed them? Lord, our resources aren't great, but we're going to just trust you that somehow we're going to go out there. We've got them all sat down. You see, you've got to prepare the thing.

You have them all sit down. Sit by 50, sit by 100s. They're out there.

They're sitting down. You've got to plan together. We don't just shut down in the mind.

We've got to plan. How do we do this? Brethren, we don't want to shift the responsibility. Don't get to thinking that somebody else is going to do it.

Don't think, well, they can go off to the village and somebody there is going to feed them. Somebody in another place. Spurgeon groaned, how terrible is the combined whale of the world? Have you ever done math like this? I do this math all the time.

I brought this up with the FBC guys and with our church there in San Antonio, with the church at home. Probably a fellowship conference in the past. Have you ever done greater than, less than types of problems? This is basic math.

Here's one for you. Jesus says, everybody that believes in me, the works I do, they will do, and greater works. Jesus says this, if we bring our little five loaves and two fish, that what we'll be able to do is turn around and do greater than what he did.

And you got to know, you got to believe because he's going to the Father. This has everything to do with evangelizing the world. Brethren, our hands are not tied.

Christ has untied them. We're a free people to run and do this. They said send them away.

Brethren, I fear we can get very, very comfortable about the state of the perishing world around us. Because we simply avoid them. We just, we can avoid them.

We don't want to know what's going on in Africa. We really don't want to know what's going on in Afghanistan right now. But to tell, we don't really want to know what's going on in Myanmar right now.

It can be easy to shut that out. We've got our own little life over here. We live our little life over here.

And it can be easy. Just send the crowd away. You know what Jesus said? Those accounts said he had compassion upon the multitudes.

He said, I'm not willing to send them away. You give them something to eat. And you know what happened there? When Andrew says, you know, there's this lad over here and he's got this, he's got a few little resources over here.

Jesus said, bring them to me. Bring them to me. Brethren, let's just, we want to bring it to him.

I know we're not Charles Spurgeons, but we can bring what we have. Lord, here I am. Here I am and what I have.

And Lord, show me the way to go. Open the doors for us. Lord, show us the way.

Open the door. Open the door into the prisons here. Open the door in the nursing home.

Open the doors into the hospitals. Open the door. We got the streets.

You can, you can open your own door and walk right out on the streets. Lord, I don't speak too well. I stammer.

I don't have the greatest gifts. Lord, I don't have a whole lot of resources. But you know, isn't it amazing? You can take your little two fish and send it over to help a missionary somewhere working in a hard place.

Somebody that you know has the truth. You can send your little 10 pounds over there. You don't know what Christ might do with that.

He takes that. He may feed a multitude with that. Just bring it here to me.

Brethren, this is the church's first duty. Look at your resources. You feel them utterly insufficient.

I mean, you still bring them to Christ. You still, it's all for Him. Bring it to Him.

We're not great. We're not the PhDs. We're not the doctors.

We're not the rich. We're not the famous. Brethren, those people were few that went up into that upper room.

What were they? Fishermen? Converted tax collector? Not that you're an impressive crowd. They turned the world upside down. Bring them to me.

Bring a fisherman to them and look, you can make them into a fisher of men. Bring them to me. You say, Lord, it's just, it's so feeble.

So were those Moravians. Whatever you say about where their theology went, fact is they had a prayer meeting for 100 years nonstop. They touched the four corners of the earth.

Not very impressive crowd. Oh, Zinzendorf was, but the rest of them were nobodies. Nobody knows hardly any of them.

You don't know their names. They're just a bunch of people, the pilgrims in this world. Brethren, this is where we're at.

The point of all of this, what good is it to have this Christ if you're not going to trust him? That's what he's saying to his people. This was like a slap in the face to him. These guys that he walked with and he loved, for them to get to the place where they're arguing about bread, but we can get to the same place.

And it's just as much as an insult to his power, his ability, his promise, his person. Let's be the men and women who hear the question, how can we feed such a multitude? And we're quick to say, ah, heavenly math. We know how we're going to, I mean, we may not have the answer, but we know who does.

And we're going to go forth as, we recognize he does have the answer. Whatever our resources, brethren, whatever our resources, you've got to feel this. You are this world's only hope.

And if you don't like the way that sounds, Jesus said, you are my witnesses. Who? Those guys that lived back then? Yeah, but they're not alive anymore. Brethren, you know his full well.

The Jehovah's witnesses aren't the ones. The Mormons aren't the ones. You know, the politicians are not the ones.

The medical community is not the ones, not unless they're Christians. And brethren, you know, a lot of people claiming to be Christian. They don't have that message.

They don't have that message that we heard this morning. They don't know about such a father. Brethren, you've got people preaching garbage.

This building probably hasn't heard truth preached in it for how long? Oh, brethren, we are the people that, this is our time. This is our generation. And you fourfold, Jesus says, look who I am.

Look who I am. Don't get in the boat and start arguing about bread. Don't go home to your churches and start arguing about the slimness of resources.

That's not where we want to be. Brethren, just attempt to be a Christian and just close your eyes to the fact that your fellow men are going to be in flames forever in a very short time. What is that? Brethren, that's hypocrisy.

We don't want to be in that place. We just bring our little, we bring our little to Him. And when it gets multiplied and when we turn the world upside down and when things happen that we could hardly imagine could have happened through such a rabble as us, then who gets all the glory? We say, Lord, we don't know how that happened.

We stepped out there and you did it. You did it. You were with us.

This little boy, I mean, he is five cakes and two little fish. That's not much. But I'll tell you this.

When I take this book and I look at Matthew, five barley loaves. Mark, five barley loaves. Luke, John.

There they are. No other miracle has such an abundant record in the Scriptures. I titled my message, Do You Not Yet Understand? Father, I pray, instill, instill within us the heavenly math, the faith.

Lord, I pray, help our faith, increase our faith to trust this Christ, to know Him more fully. Lord, I pray. I pray that you do such things in this land with our little resources, with our meager amounts, with our loaves and our fish.

Lord, we bring them to you. We want to consecrate to you. But then, Lord, in prayer, we want it.

We ask you, Lord, bless, bless. We may not have many years left. We may not have much health left.

We may not have much money. Lord, here it is. Show us, Lord, how to most live.

Lord, we want to have the right math answer. We want to be able to pass the test. When the things in life come at us and we're put to the test, Lord, we want to pass.

Lord, be gracious to us. Please, Lord, you know the smallness of what we have in this country right now. I ask you for help in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/tim-conway/kingdom-math/>

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