

7/31/11

**THE PSALM AND CALL TO WORSHIP** Psalm 145 A psalm of praise. Of David.

Lay Minister: 1 I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.

**People: 2 Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever.**

Lay Minister: 3 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

4 One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts.

**People: 5 They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works. 6 They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. 7 They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.**

Lay Minister: 8 The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

**People: 9 The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.**

Lay Minister: 10 All you have made will praise you, O LORD; your saints will extol you.

**People: 11 They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, 12 so that all men may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**

Lay Minister: 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.

**People: 14 The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.**

Lay Minister: 15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.

**People: 16 You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.**

Lay Minister: 17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.

**People: 18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.**

Lay Minister: 19 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them.

**People: 20 The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.**

Lay Minister: 21 My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD.

**People: Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.**

Lay Minister: Along with all creatures, we praise the Lord! WE PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME FOREVER!

**People: We praise the one who is compassionate and provides for all living creatures. We praise God the Father. We praise God the Son. We praise God the Holy Spirit. AMEN! AMEN!!**

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY** Heavenly Father, though we do not deserve Your goodness, still You provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may know and give thanks for all Your gifts and blessings and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** Isaiah 55:1-7

*(God provides food for body and soul, and is free to pardon.)*

1 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. 2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

3 Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. 4 See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. 5 Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor."

6 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

**THE GOSPEL LESSON** Matthew 14:13-21

*(Jesus provides food for multitudes hungry in body and spirit.)*

13 When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

15 As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." **16 Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."** **17 "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.** 18 "Bring them here to me," he said. 19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. 20 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. 21 The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

**THE SERMON "God: Calling people to Ministry - Providing for His Work"**

**Matth  
ew 14**

13 VAkou,saj de. o` Vlhsou/j avnecw,rhsen evkei/qen evn ploiw| eivj e;rhmon to,pon katV ivdi,an\ kai. avkou,santej oi` o;cloi hvkolou,qhsan auvtw/| pezh/| avpo. tw/n po,lewnA

And having heard, Jesus withdrew from there in a boat to a wilderness place by himself. And having heard the crowd followed him on foot from the cities.

14 Kai. evxelqw.n ei=den polu.n o;clon kai. evsplugcni,sqh evpV auvtou/j kai. evqera,peusen tou.j avrrw,stouj auvtw/n

And having gone out he saw a great multitude and he had compassion on them and healed their ill.

15 VOyi,aj de. genome,nhj prosh/lqon auvtw/| oi` maqhtai. le,gontej\ e;rhmo,j evstin o` to,pou kai. h` w[ra h;dh parh/lqen\ avpo,luson tou.j o;clouj( i[na avpelqo,ntej eivj ta.j kw,maj avgora,swsin e`autoi/j brw,mata

And, as it had become evening the disciples said, “it is a wilderness place and the hour already passes. Release / send away the multitudes that having left from her to the their villages to buy something to eat.

16 o` de. ÎVlhsou/jÐ ei=pen auvtou/j\ ouv crei,an e;cousin avpelqei/n( do,te auvtou/j u`mei/j fagei/n

But Jesus said to them, “They do not need to leave. You yourselves give them to eat.”

17 oi` de. le,gousin auvtw/|\ ouvk e;comen w-de eiv mh. pe,nte a;rtouj kai. du,o ivcqu,aj

But they said to Him, “We have nothing here except five loaves and two fish.”

18 o` de. ei=pen\ fe,rete, moi w-de auvtou,j

And he said to them, “You bring them here to me.”

19 kai. kelev,saj tou.j o;clouj avnakliqh/nai evpi. tou/ co,rtou( labw.n tou.j pe,nte a;rtouj kai. tou.j du,o ivcqu,aj( avnable,yaj eivj to.n ouvrano.n euvlo,ghsen kai. kla,saj e;dwken toi/j maqhtai/j tou.j a;rtouj( oi` de. maqhtai. toi/j o;cloij

And having commanded the crowd to recline on the grass, having taken the five loaves and the two fish, having looked to heaven He gave thanks and broke and gave the bread to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowd.

20 kai. e;fagon pa,ntej kai. evcorta,sqhsan( kai. h=ran to. perisseu/on tw/n klasma,twn dw,deka kofi,nouj plh,reij

And all ate and were satisfied, and there were excess / abundance of fragments / pieces of bread 12 baskets full.

21 oi` de. evsqi,ontej h=san a;ndrej w`sei. pentakisci,loi cwri.j gunaikw/n kai.  
paidi,wn

And those ones having eater were about 5000 men apart from women and children.

INTRO - You may be surprised to know that in the early days of our marriage Kathy and I had discussions over whether or not we were equipped to be good parents. We always leaned in that direction, but we did have conversations about whether we had the resources, the ability, the wisdom to be good parents. As you can see, we now have 4 children, 3 of them fully grown and one mostly grown. But, before we went ahead with a plan to be parents, we needed the assurance we would be able to handle the task.

I. Today in our Gospel lesson Jesus call His disciples to an amazing, almost beyond reason task.

A. The crowds had followed Jesus and his disciples into the wilderness. After healing and teaching the realized it was late so they suggested to Jesus that He send them home to get something to eat.

1. Jesus' response to the disciples suggestion caught them off guard.
2. **"They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."**
3. Jesus was asking the seemingly impossible. **17 "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.**
4. They did not believe THEY had the resources or the ability to do what Jesus was asking. So they did not act.

B. God calls us to do some seemingly impossible acts of faith.

1. Some of the bigger calls of God include what Jesus says in the Sermon on the mount.
  - a. In Matthew 5:44 Jesus calls us to **"love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.** How are you at forgiving those who have harmed you?
  - b. In Matthew 5:48 Jesus calls us to **"Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."** Does that make you afraid, or laugh. There is no one righteous except Jesus. That seems impossible.
  - c. At the end of Matthew Jesus says, **"go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** We have talked about this before. But, if a task seems overwhelming and we don't act out of the doubts of our own inadequacy, how often to we step back and do nothing because of our doubt?
2. There are other jobs that seem smaller, but may be just as big to us.
  - a. Does feeding the hungry seem too big a job?
  - b. How about serving on a board at church? How about praying for our government? Our country? How about being a good parent?

II. Jesus called for the impossible, and then He provided. He took the five loaves and 2 fish, He gave thanks to God for the small amount, then he gave some to the disciples to give to the people. They passed out what they had been given. Everyone ate. Everyone had enough. They picked up what was left of 5 loaves and 2 fish and had 12 baskets full. Jesus provides.

A. He never calls us to an opportunity of faith or love when He doesn't then provide us with what we need to do the job.

1. Look at what 2 Corinthians 9:8 says, **And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.**
2. It may come from a resource we had that we forgot, or God may work in ways beyond our understanding, like the feeding of the 5000.
3. Just don't think that because we don't understand where or how can act, that he

won't. Miracles still do happen. We often miss them.

B. When we don't have the resources, God provides.

1. God may say, "**Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.**" God takes sinners like you and me and **cleanses us from all unrighteousness** through the sacrifice of Jesus, as we believe.

2. God may say, "**Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.**" But Romans 5:10 says we were God's enemies, yet God showed His love when Christ died for us. So, as 1 John 4 says, **Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**

3. Jesus may say, **Go make disciples of all nations.** But, Jesus has all authority and power. He has risen. He has sent the Holy spirit. He gives us the tools of His Word and the sacraments. So, we make disciples as **GOD GIVES HIMSELF, Baptizing and teaching.**

C. God provides!

III. Do you realize, that the stumbling block that gets in our way of serving God is not the lack of resources, but our lack of trust in God to provide? If we don't believe we can do what God has called us to do, we won't try.

A. But, as God provides He gives faith to keep going. In 1998 we finished a long range planning process and we knew we needed some building improvements. We had a problem, to build city code required more parking. To provide more parking we needed more land. But we had tried to acquire land and had been turned back. About this time God sent Bill and Sharon Allen to our congregation. When Bill heard about our problem he said, "No problem, I'll talk to my friend the chancellor of the university." We were able to purchase the land next door. God provided and responding to His goodness we were able to build to serve Him with the building.

1. God provides his Son for our sin.

2. God provides His presence through life's trials.

3. God provides His Spirit, Himself, in the Word and Sacraments.

4. When our eyes are opened because God is good we learn to trust the Lord, and trusting Him we can act in faith.

B. So, I know there are places in each of our lives that God has been calling us to act, but perhaps our doubt has gotten in the way.

1. Is there someone you need to forgive. Go talk to them. God provides.

2. Do you have an opportunity to show unexpected love to someone. Go love them. God provides.

3. Do you have an opportunity or request to serve that goes beyond your comfort zone. Go and serve. God provides.

CONCLUSION - You know that Kathy and I didn't just have one child, or two, but God blessed us with 4. Now first of all, God had his hand in the blessing. But secondly, no, we did not have the resources to be the parents we needed. But, we did have God, and His love, and His forgiveness. We did our best, but we taught our children about the Lord, We read to them, prayed with them, tried to teach them about God. We didn't do it, God did. And, if problems arise in the future, God will be there. You see, Jesus fed 5000 with 5 loaves and 2 fish. God provides.

Prayers

Kristin and Kevin,  
Andrew Elliott and Emily