

His Power Perfected in Weakness

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 June 2024

Preacher: Bill Story

- [0 : 0 0] How we doing? Hey, good to see Faith here. Brought a friend. Welcome. Glad you're here. Faith and friend. Faith and friend. That's right. Cool.
- Great to see the Reimer clan out here camping. Oh, there she is. Most of the Reimer clan. I'm missing a couple, but yeah.
- Good to see you guys. Good to see Sheila back from wandering around the world. Well, part of the world. Good to see you back. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Luke.
- The Gospel of Luke, chapter 9. We are walking through this Gospel. We're trying to walk a little faster than I normally walk as we go through text, so we're taking larger portions.
- That's why I'm hitting the pews. Okay. So Luke, chapter 9. We come to a text that has actually two stories in it, which don't look like they go together, but I hope to show you that they actually do.
- [1 : 1 5] Once again, Luke is framing things so that we can discover what he's trying to show. Remember, Luke has written this Gospel that we might be certain about our faith.
- So he's showing us things that make us, give us assurance about the Gospel. Okay. So we're going to read chapter 9, verses 1 through 17. If you're able, please stand as I read.
- Verse 1, Luke 9, verse 1. Verse 1. And he called the twelve together, and he gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases.
- And he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. And he said to them, take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money, and do not have two tunics.
- And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town, shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.
- [2 : 3 5] And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere. Now, Herod the Tetrarch heard about all that was happening.
- And he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen.
- Herod said, John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things? And he sought to see it.
- On their return, the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida.
- 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.
- [3 : 4 2] Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, Send the crowd away to go to the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions.

For we are here in a desolate place. 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 buy food for all these people, for there were about 5,000 men.

And he said to his disciples, Have them sit down in groups of about 50 each. And they did so, and had them all sit down.

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

And they all ate and were satisfied, filled. And what was left over was picked up. Twelve baskets of broken pieces.

[5 : 04] So it reads. Let us pray. Father, direct us today to see what you want us to see, what Mark has put down on the page for us.

Help us to see you, and help us to see how you use your followers. Open our hearts to understand how the power that you bring to us, you display through us.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Okay, so, I remember this event, this story that happened in our family many years ago.

Delinda was preparing pancakes for the kids, for Zach, who was about five at the time, and Abby was about three. And they began to argue about who got the first pancake.

And Delinda, being the wise mom that she was, thought about, this could be a good moral lesson. Let's teach them to think like Jesus. So she said, if Jesus were sitting here, he would say, let the other have the first pancake, I'll wait.

[6 : 25] To which Zach replied, Abby, you be Jesus. Remember that? Remember? No? No? It was wild.

You be Jesus. Can you be Jesus? We're called to be like Jesus. We're being conformed to be like Jesus.

Can we be Jesus? Do you feel able and adequate to follow in Jesus' steps?

Do you feel capable to do what He's called you to do? Do you? He calls us to do impossible things. He calls us to love our enemies, to suffer loss, to trust Him to provide all our needs.

He calls us to save the lost, to resist the devil, to overcome temptation, to raise the dead and cleanse lepers. Can we do that?

[7 : 36] That's what He calls us to do. Who can do this? In the text before us, we have these two stories. He tells His disciples to preach and to heal.

He tells them, you have power over all the demons. Well, Jesus had that. And then He tells them to feed 5,000 hungry people.

Well, 5,000 hungry men. Matthew tells us the 5,000 number isn't counting the women and the children. So we're not talking 5,000.

We're talking minimum 20,000 to 30,000 people. Okay. Okay. Could you imagine being that, you know?

You feed them. 5,000, 5,000, 5,000, 5,000, 5,000, 5,000, 5,000, 5,000, So here we see Jesus' power perfected in weakness.

[8 : 41] He gives His power to 12 men. Are they ready to do these things? And then He tells them to feed a multitude, an impossible thing with the resources that they have.

power perfected in weakness. It's the same today. So I want you first of all to see how Luke frames the story.

There's connecting links. Notice that verse 1 he starts talking about the 12. Okay. The 12. The 12. The 12 apostles.

Now look down at the end of verse 17. He talks about 12 baskets. 12 and 12. Is there any similarity here? And then he talks about in verse 1 He gave them power and authority.

And then in the other story, verse 16, He gives them the bread to give to the crowd. We've got the 12.

[9 : 50] We've got giving. In the middle of the story we have the disciples healing and we have Jesus healing. we also have bread mentioned in both. Don't take bread. And then later he's breaking the bread.

But in the middle, in the middle, so we have story 1 verses 1 through 6, story 2 verses 10 through 17, in the middle you have this interruption.

They go on their journey and then in the middle before they come back, Luke tells us about Herod. How did Herod get into this story? Herod, who's heard about Jesus, he's perplexed, he's wandering, he's heard the rumors, oh no, it's John the Baptist, he's back.

Maybe he's haunted because he had John beheaded. He hears, maybe it's Elijah, he hears, maybe it's one of the prophets. Maybe it's Moses coming back. Maybe it's Elijah. Maybe it's Isaiah.

No, not Isaiah. Yeah. And so he asks the question, verse 9, who is this?

[11 : 03] Who is this? So we have two stories around the question, who is this? And I want you to remember in this gospel of Luke, remember he's persuading us, he's assuring us to have certainty about the gospel.

So as he tells the story, he lets other people ask the questions as they're learning about Jesus. So remember back in chapter 4, he began his ministry, he started casting out demons.

The question came up, who is this who has authority over demons? We've never seen this. Who is this? Same question, Herod asked.

Who is this? When he healed the paralytic, remember? The paralyzed man let down through the roof and he first, before he healed him, remember he said, your sins are forgiven?

And then he said, to prove that I have the authority to forgive his sins, he raised them up. And they asked, who is this who forgives sins?

[12 : 09] They asked again, remember when the sinful woman came and washed his feet? Remember that? And they asked the same thing. Who is this? Who forgives sins?

And then even John the Baptist, remember John the Baptist sent people to him saying, are you the one? I'm not sure. I don't, you're not going according to my plan. Who are you?

Even John asked the question. And then at the end of chapter 8, remember Jesus stills the storm? Remember the disciples are terrified?

These are professional fishermen. They're terrified. They're taking on water. They're going down. Jesus is sleeping. They wake him up and he stills the storm with the word and they said what?

Who is this? Who commands the wind and the wave? And they obey him. Who controls creation?

[13 : 09] Who is this? This is no normal prophet. This is no mere Moses. Who is this?

And so once again, Luke has raised the question by telling us that Herod's raising that question. And it's in the middle of these two stories.

I believe these two stories are linked. In verses 1 to 6, we see the mission of the 12. He gives them power to do the mission.

He gives them power and authority. In the second story, verses 10 to 17, we have the miracle of the 5,000. Feeding the 5,000. To do that miracle, He does His power through them.

Because notice, in this miracle, in just this miracle, I can't think of another miracle that Jesus did that He used His disciples to accomplish it. Right?

[14 : 09] Usually He's just raising somebody, He's healing somebody, He's stealing a storm, whatever. Here, He gives them, He's giving the bread to the disciples to give to the people.

And somewhere in that process, five loaves and two fish become 12 basketfuls left over. I believe they're connected because there's a giving of power to or through His followers.

Now, this is the first time we know that Jesus has sent the 12 out. Back in chapter 5, they're just following Him. They're just following, learning.

Chapter 6, Luke tells us that He chose from all His disciples, He chose 12 and called them apostles. Okay? Which means sent ones.

They hadn't been sent yet until now, we come to chapter 9. Now He takes those 12 who have been following Him for two years at least.

[15 : 13] now He sends them out. And He sends them to do exactly what He has already been doing. Preaching the gospel and healing people.

Power over demons and over diseases. He's duplicating who He is in His disciples. And do you know He calls us to do the same thing?

He calls us to do the impossible. So, let's look at this story of equipping the 12 both by mission and by miracle.

And I want to ask the question, so how does this relate to me? Right? This is not just a story about what the 12 did. And only the 12 could do that. Because we're going to come to the next chapter and find out it's not just 12 but 72 people who can do the same thing.

Okay? So, it's not just the 12. So, this is something that expands. How does it expand to us? That's what I want to ask. And I'm borrowing the phrase that Paul used.

[16 : 21] Power, perfected, and weakness. That's what he's doing. So, I think he does it in two ways. First of all, in verses 1 to 6, he gives his power to his followers for the purpose of mission.

Gives them power for mission. And then secondly, in the miracle, verses 10 to 17, he gives his power through his followers for the impossible.

For things that they can't do by themselves. They can never do that. He gives power to us for mission and he gives power through us to do things we could not do by ourselves.

Okay? That's what these stories are about. Okay, so let's look at it. First one, Jesus gives his power to his followers for his mission. Notice verse 1, he calls them to a task, right?

But first it says, he calls the 12, and he gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases. So first, he gives them power.

[17 : 31] power. He's going to call them to a mission that's impossible, but first he's going to give them power and authority. He's going to give them the ability, and he's going to give them the right.

Authority means they have the right. They have the right to call out demons. They have the right to cure things. They have the right to do it like Jesus did. Okay?

To duplicate, to do exactly what he did. And then verse 2, then the mission. So he sends them out. That's what apostle means, to be sent out. Now he sends them out to do two things, to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom and to heal.

That's what Jesus has been doing, what Luke has described, everywhere Jesus goes. He's preaching the kingdom and he's healing people, everywhere. And now, his followers are doing the same thing.

Reproduce. Now, curious, verse 3, his instructions, he said to them, take nothing for your journey, no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, do not even have two tunics.

[18 : 40] So what's this about? Take nothing. Why take nothing? That's not how people did it back then. Back then, you went, you took out your tunic, you take a bag, you know, you got a carry bag, you got a go bag, you got something, you got to go.

He said, take nothing. Don't take an extra cup, don't take anything extra. Just go. What's that mean? Trust the Lord to provide, right?

Rely on Him to provide all your needs. And then, he says, verse 4, stay in one home. When you come to a city, whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.

So just stay in one house. Don't go house to house. Which was what people did back then, particularly philosophers would go and stay from house to house and they'd beg in every house.

So in other words, I think Jesus is simply saying, keep it simple guys. Don't take anything. Trust me to provide. Seek first the kingdom of heaven and all these things will be added. I'll take care of you. Go. Just go and do it.

[19 : 42] Stay in one house. Then, he says, interesting, verse 5, wherever they do not receive you, what is that?

Does that mean they don't let you in the house? No. He's talking about their mission. Wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town. So it's not about a house, it's about the whole town.

When you go to a town and the town does not receive you, in other words, they don't listen to you, they reject you, or they're neutral. Maybe they just don't care. Maybe they dismiss you.

Any way that they don't receive it. Even if they're neutral. Even if they're just, I don't care about this. Shake off the dust of your feet as a witness against them.

What is that? What? By the way, I did that once. When I left my church in Illinois, I did it to the elders, not to the church.

[20 : 48] I told the elders, you know, I have been telling you for three years what you need to do. They wouldn't do it. I said, so guys, I remember, I was sitting at a meal with them, and I said, I took my shoes off, and I said, I'm shaking off the dust.

I have told you, you know it's right, and you won't do it. I have no more responsibility. That's a warning. That's what it means.

To shake off the dust is a symbolic warning. It's something that the Jews did when they left a Gentile territory. Because, you know, they'd take their sandals off, and they didn't want the dust of those pagans, you know, on their feet.

Unclean ground, right? That's kind of a symbol. It's unclean ground. So here, they're going to Jewish towns. So to do it to a Jewish group. Now why would that be so important?

If you preach the gospel to somebody, what if they just don't understand? What if they're waiting? What if they're, you know, they don't receive it because they don't get it? Is that what he means? Remember, when they went to this town, they did two things.

[21 : 57] They preached the kingdom, and they what? They healed. Healing is the proof of the power. Healing is the attesting sign that these guys have real power.

Okay? And so they heard, and they saw, and he's saying, if they reject it. Remember, Jesus said that his hometown rejected him.

Remember? He went to, he did a bunch of miracles in a couple of towns, and he said, woe to you. I can't remember the names of those towns. Woe to you. You know, all these miracles were done, and you still rejected.

Woe to you. Woe to you. If you have heard the gospel, woe to you, and you have seen that it has power, and you still reject it, woe to you.

So, here's the practical question. Does Jesus reproduce his power in us today? He gave power and authority to the apostles. Now, some say, well, that's just the 12.

[23 : 15] They could do that, right? He hasn't given that to me. I can't go out calling out demons, and, you know, touching people, and healing them. I wish I could. That'd be great, but I don't have that kind of a power and authority.

So, does he give us power and authority today? Yes. Yes. So, how is it given? Well, let me give you a few examples. Romans 1, 16. Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel.

Why? For it is the power. I'm not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God for salvation. For everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.

For in it, in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. We are saved by faith alone.

It's grace alone. I'm saved by grace alone. Through faith alone. In Christ alone. That is the gospel. He gives us power.

[24 : 23] The gospel has power. Secondly, he gives us power in our weakness. Remember what he said to Paul. He said, Paul says, God said to me, my grace is sufficient for you.

Remember, Paul had that thorn in the flesh, whatever that was. Remember, the messenger from Satan. Remember, remember, and he's praying three times that it'll go out. Right. God will relieve him.

And God said, what? Nope. Nope. That's my special gift for you. Paul. He said, my grace is sufficient. No healing for you.

My grace is sufficient for you. Why? For my power is made perfect. Perfect in your weakness. That's where, that's where people see me in you.

When you're weak. And yet power comes through you. That's where I get the credit. My power is perfected in weakness. Therefore, Paul says, I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses.

[25 : 24] So that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For when I am weak, then I am strong. How does that make sense? Well, that makes sense only if you walk with God.

That makes sense only if you have faith in God. That makes sense only if you are willing to say, not my will, but his will be done. That's when that makes sense. That's impossible.

Isn't it? On my own? Because I don't want to give up. I don't want to say, right? But faith says, okay, Lord, I surrender. Ephesians 3.20.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to what? God can do all this stuff through us, even more than we ask for.

According to the power at work out there. No, that's not what he said. According to the power at work in us.

[26 : 38] Do you know that power? He can do all kinds of things according to the power at work in us. Again, one more second, Timothy 1.8. Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me, his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel.

How? By the power of God. You know, that's how you share in suffering. By the power of God. I don't share in suffering by going, okay, here we go again.

That's how I normally do it. That's my, you know, go to, that's my, what do you call it? Default. My default. Yeah, thank you, Dan. It's my default. It's gone, or that gone over there.

Not this one. That's my normal default. When stuff happens, when bad stuff happens, I get grumpy. I get, you know. And so, what do I need to do?

I need to call my faith into action. I need to remind myself, no, God is at work within me. I trust that. I don't know how it's going to happen, but I trust that.

[27 : 53] I renew my mind. So, a question for you, do you believe his power is at work in you? Do you believe that? You see that. Do you experience it?

Do you, do you experience his power in your weaknesses? When you're weak, is there strength that comes? Somehow, because you've, you're relying on him.

Do you believe the gospel has power? Do you believe when you share the gospel, the simple gospel, that it has power to change people?

Do you believe that? Do you believe that it can raise them from the dead? I'm talking spiritually. They're dead in sin. Do you believe when you tell them the gospel, that can awaken them, and that can change them, and that can transform them?

Do you believe that? Do you believe when you share the gospel, it overcomes the devil's roar? Do you believe that? Do you believe that? It has that kind of power?

[28 : 57] Because when Jesus preached, demons objected, and he shut them up. Didn't he? And when the gospel is preached, that's the thing.

We need to expect that the devil's going to resist that. So preach the gospel's power to shut them up. So Jesus works his power in his followers for his mission, first of all.

Now, let's look at the other story, verses 10 to 17. We see a second way he gives power. Not only does he give power directly to those 12, power and authority to do these things, but now in this story of feeding the 5,000, he grants his power through his followers for the impossible.

You've got to feed 5,000 people, not people, excuse me, 5,000 men, right? Let's say conservative. 20,000 people with the women and children. Now Luke doesn't tell us there were women and children also, but Matthew does.

This story of the feeding the 5,000 is the only miracle besides Christ's resurrection that is in all four Gospels. This story is so important.

[30 : 17] Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell the story of the feeding of the 5,000. They all have different details, right? You read all four and you get, oh, oh. And so Matthew's the one that tells us there were 5,000 men besides women and children.

Okay? So we know, okay, there's got to be at least 20,000 people there. How's he going to feed 20,000? Let's just keep it at five. Let's forget that it was a lot more.

Just five. 5,000. How are you going to feed 5,000? Five loaves of bread and two fish. I mean, it's ridiculous. It's really ridiculous. Right?

So Jesus grants his power through them. He's going to involve them. He's going to use them to do this powerful miracle. So first of all, notice verse 10, they return.

They return. So after this little interruption about Herod, right, and his question, now he picks up the story again. Right? So back at the farm. Verse 10. On their return, the apostles told them all he had done.

[31 : 24] So they give him a report. We preached and we healed. And Luke doesn't fill us in on how long that took. It doesn't tell us how many towns they went to. We don't get any of that detail. It just says they went and they returned.

They told them. So what does Jesus do? Verse 10. He took them and withdrew apart. Literally withdrew by themselves. He wanted time alone with these men who had just gone on a preaching and healing mission.

He's taken them on retreat. Let's get away, guys. They're going to Bethsaida, which is kind of a nowhere place. It's up in the Sea of Galilee.

You got Capernaum. Okay. Sea of Galilee. You got most of the ministry Jesus does is over here on the northwest side. So they get in a boat and they go over here to the top of the Sea of Galilee where the Jordan comes in to the sea.

And it's on the other side. It's out of Herod's territory, which is interesting. Just on the other side of the border where Herod can't do anything. But it's this little desolate place, as one of the disciples says.

[32 : 32] We're in a desolate place. You need to send them away. So they're there to retreat and reflect. And what happens? What happens sometimes when we do a bunch of, we do some ministry, we're going and we're serving people and then we just, we need a little break.

Wouldn't it be nice to take a retreat? Wouldn't it be nice to take some time off? So you've got to take some time off. You've got to take a break. What happens? God sends a bunch of people.

God happens. Interrupted plan. The crowds, and essentially the way he put it, verse 11, the crowds learned it.

They discovered where they were. They were away and they found out where they are and then they followed. John, in John 6, records this where they're over on this side of the lake and they go running all the way around to get to where Jesus is.

So much for a retreat. You need rest, you desire a retreat, but God, God sends people sometimes. So we see Jesus' reaction in verse 12.

[33 : 44] No, excuse me, verse 11. He welcomed them. He spoke to them and the King of God and cured those who had need of healing. So that took all day.

Verse 12, Now the day began to wear away and the twelve came and said to him, Send the crowd away to go to the surrounding villages and country sites to find lodging, get provisions, for we're out here in a desolate place.

We're out here in a solitary place. But apparently nearby are villages and places they can go. Where are 20,000 people going to go to get provisions of food when you're in a desolate?

I don't know. But the disciples are thinking about we've got a problem coming up. We've got a dilemma coming up. We've got all these people. It's getting late and they haven't eaten.

And all we got... So they see that the problem, they have a solution. And then Jesus says, verse 13, You feed them.

[34 : 47] Can you imagine that? You've got all these people around. They're all tired. They've been ministering all day. Jesus has been preaching and healing. Now the day's wearing down. The sun's starting to set.

and they say, You know, we've got a problem. We need to let them go. Jesus says, You feed them. You feed them. You feed them. I think that's impossible.

Okay, if I give them a speck of each, you know, is that going to go to 20,000 people? They say, verse 13, right?

He says, You give them something to eat. They said, We have no more than five loaves and two fish. Our resources do not meet the demand.

Too little. Too little. And he says, Unless we supplement that, unless we go and buy food for all these people, one of the other gospels telling this story says, I think it's Philip who says, Hey, 200 denarii wouldn't be enough to cover the food for this group of people.

[36 : 00] 200 denarii. How much is that? Denarii is one day's wage? 200 days wage. That's about, I don't know what that is. That's like two-thirds of a year, isn't it?

I don't know. 200 out of three. Yeah, about two-thirds. That's a lot of money for fishermen. So, and then he mentions how many are there.

Verse 14, for there were about 5,000 men. And the word for men is not anthropos, which could mean just people. It's the word andros, which means male people.

The men. That's just how they counted. They're not being, you know, chauvinistic. That's just how they counted. And Matthew being the one, you know, he's the one that adds the women and the children were there.

So we kind of know, oh, okay. Too many. Our resources too little. The need is too much. So Jesus says, get them to sit in groups of 50.

[37 : 07] And then they did that. Verse 15. By the way, there's a lot of numbers in this story, isn't there? You got 12 disciples, you got 5 loaves, 2 fish, you got 5,000 men, and you got groups of 50.

Then we're going to see 5 and 2 again, then we're going to see 12 again. Lots of numbers. So we come to the miracle, verse 16. Notice what he does.

Taking the 5 loaves and 2 fish, he looked up to heaven, he blessed them, that he broke the loaves, that could mean literally broke into pieces, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

Now notice there's, he's acting through the 12. That's the big point to get. He does it through the 12. He doesn't just make a whole bunch of bread and the people come and get the bread.

He's giving it as a process to the disciples to give to the people. The other thing I want you to notice is in verse 16, there are six actions.

[38 : 16] Six verbs that Mark uses to describe, okay, go back to English class, verb. Verb, what's a verb? Verb is an action, right? Jimmy ran after the ball, right?

Okay, so ran would be the verb, okay? So, so he does, so look at verse 16. He took the five loaves, okay, takes the five loaves and two fish. Secondly, he looks up to heaven.

Third, he blessed them, the loaves and fish. Fourth, he broke the loaves. Fifth, he gives them to the disciples.

Sixth, they set it before the crowd. Okay? Six verbs. Five of those verbs, five of those actions are in what's called the aorist tense, which just means it's just a simple statement of what happened.

He took, he looked, he blessed, he broke, and he set it before the crowd. One action in there is not. One action stands out.

[39 : 19] And we can't tell by our translation, unfortunately. It's the word giving. He gave them to the disciples.

That word is in the imperfect, which means he kept on giving. He kept on giving. I don't know how it happened. Right? So you've got 5,000 people, 50 people each, right?

How many groups would that be? Groups of 50. Out of 5,000, how many would that be? 100, right? 100 groups. Okay? 12 guys going to 100 groups. How's the math working?

How's your math working? Okay? So he brought, so he gives, I don't know how they did it. Did they have baskets that they took it to? Did they just do it in their hand? It doesn't tell us how they did it. But however, so here comes Peter.

Okay, Peter, here, take this, and you go to that group. Okay, go to that group. Okay, John, you've got the next group. Okay, James, you've got the next group. You know, on and on. Go through 12. How many groups you've got left? You've still got 88 groups left.

[40 : 24] So, Peter comes back. Okay. Oh, there's more. He's still giving. He's still giving. He goes, gives it. John, oh, there's more. Here's a book. Somehow in there, there's a miracle.

The giving. He broke. There's just five loads of two fish. He broke it all up. Then he's giving. He's giving. And he's giving. And he's giving. And he's giving.

They come back. He's giving. They come back. He's giving. He's giving. You've got all the groups yet? No, there's five more. Okay. I don't know how it happened. But Luke seems to be telling us something mysterious happened when he's giving it to them.

It's in his hands. It's multiplying. But he's not giving it to the people. He's having the 12 give it to the people. Who do you think the miracle's for?

They picked up how many baskets afterwards? 12. Yeah, I wonder if that's significant. One prize for you. You're all going home with a basket. One for you.

[41 : 33] One for you. No. Jesus didn't act like that. And then we see the sign. We see the miracle. Verse 17. They all ate and were satisfied.

They were filled. They were stuffed. You imagine they're reclining around going, No, no more. I can't eat another piece. 20,000 people. No. No more.

Take it away. That's my imagination. Well, Mark helped me with that imagination. That's what Mark got me thinking. So here's the question.

How did they end up with more than they started? How does 5 plus 2 equal 12? When it's been divided among 5,000 plus people.

It's impossible. It doesn't add up. It does not make sense. So most people who don't believe the Bible say, Ah, it's just a myth. It's just a myth.

[42 : 32] Obviously, the church made that up. It can't happen. No, it can't happen anymore than Jesus stealing the storm. It can't happen anymore than raising the dead. It can't happen anymore than the leper being cleansed or the lameNING walking or the blindNING seeing. It can't happen any more than the sea being divided. It can't happen any more than day one, let there be light and there was light. It can't happen any more than that.

The very one who spoke the words on day one of creation is the one speaking the words here. Same person. Same person. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And now He's with His people and He's given them His power, and He's doing His power through them.

Doing what they could never imagine doing. Power perfected in weakness.

He gives us power or displays His power through His disciples. So what does this teach us? How does this apply to us?

[43 : 56] Does He give us power through us? We just said, yeah, He gives us power that's working in us. Does He give us power that works through us? Does He give us power so that we can raise the dead?

By which I mean, say the gospel, and the gospel wakes them up. Does He give us power that we can cleanse lepers? Because we speak words of healing? Does He give us power to do those kind of things?

That's impossible. What about the rebel? Do I have any chance of bringing the rebel back? The prodigal. So, Paul says this, let me quote Paul again, 2 Corinthians 9.

He says, God is able to make all grace abound to you. Why? so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times you may abound in every good work.

Oh my gosh. Does He mean that? Is He being superfluous? Is that the right word? I don't even know if that just popped into my head. I mean, is He overstating it? I mean, all, all, right?

[45 : 15] All sufficiency. I have all the ability I need in all things at all times that I may abound in every good work. Really? As it is written.

So, Paul's going to prove it from Scripture. As it is written, He has distributed freely. He has given to the poor, to the weak, to the one that can't. His righteousness endures forever.

Paul says, He who supplies the seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

You will bear fruit. You will bear fruit. He goes on, you will be enriched in every way.

For what? Oh, so I can get rich? So I can get, oh, that's a health and wealth prosperity verse, right? Yeah, they do try to use these verses, by the way. You will be enriched in every way.

[46 : 21] Why? To be generous in every way. It's not about you, it's about serving others, which through us who produce thanksgiving to God for the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but it's also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God because it's about God.

Right? because we come to His house on His day with His people because it's not about us, it's about Him. It's about His Word to encourage us and remind us that though we're weak and though in ourselves we're insufficient, though we want to give up and have little strength, it reminds us, no, my power is in you.

In fact, my power is really power when you're the weakest. Ouch. Bless Paul.

Paul can say, oh great, yay! I get to keep the thorn because it keeps me weak. Yay! How do you get there?

That wasn't false. Paul, understand, he had to go through a journey to get to that point and go, okay, I get it. I'm on board.

[47 : 44] I'm happy to suffer if that means God gets praise. And He uses me. Woo! If I gotta look bad for Him to look good, okay, that's what it means.

Jesus calls us to do the impossible. Save the lost.

Where do you even start with that? Save the lost. Well, go get lost people and build a relationship with them. Earn the right to be heard by them.

Don't just preach at them. Go learn who they are. Show them that you care and you love them so that you earn the right to at some point share with them who Jesus is.

And they've probably got all kinds of barriers, right? They've probably been hurt. They've probably been whatever and they got this view of God and God's people. Prove them wrong.

[48 : 49] Show them that you love and love your enemy so that you earn the right to tell them how much Jesus has done for you. and how he can do the same for them.

Raise the dead. Suffer loss. How? Do you like suffering loss? Do you like it when God takes things away? I've had something taken away lately.

It's tough. But his promise is he will provide the power and the enablement to do what he calls us to do.

Even if we suffer, we suffer by the power of God at work within us. when we go, we go with a gospel that has so much power.

How is that? Just words on a page. Just words out of my mouth. How is that power? It's power because God infuses it with power when we speak. How you got saved, right?

[50 : 08] Somehow got through your hard noggin. And especially through your hard heart. How to do that. He will provide the power and enablement to do what he calls us to do.

Let's pray. Our Father, we thank you for this picture of Jesus. It's amazing that he has all this power and authority and he gives it to these 12 men.

and they're certainly not ready yet. And yet you use them, you give them the power and authority and they do something.

They actually come back and they've got a report. They've preached and they've healed. You use weak, inadequate, incapable people.

And thank you, Lord, that you give us power that's at work in us. Help us to believe that. Thank you that you give us power through, you work your power through us to do the impossible with others that serve others.

[51 : 25] Father, we pray that you would renew a right spirit within us, that you would sustain a willing spirit in us, that you would do the working and the willing within us for your good pleasure.

Help us open our lives and surrender our lives to see you work. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.