

**God Provides**

**Matthew 14:13-21**

**EXPLORING THE SERMON**

- \* What did you hear?
- \* What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- \* What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

**KEY VERSES**

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

**REFLECTION**

**Read the passage out loud, imagining yourself in the story. With whom do you identify the most: Jesus, the disciples, or the crowd? Why?**

**As we examine each character, consider what speaks to you about God's provision:**

- 1) Jesus:** Jesus did not need the disciples to pull off this miracle, but yet he sends them out to meet the needs of the crowd. This example reminds us how vital community is for the Christian life. **How is community currently helping you meet your needs, and what part do you play in community for others?**
- 2) Disciples:** The disciples do not see a way to feed the crowds, but God provides. We see examples of God's provision throughout scripture when outcomes look bleak. The Israelites made it across the Red Sea, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead - when all hope seemed lost. **What scenario do you currently find yourself in for which you don't see a way out? Pray for God to show you the way.**
- 3) Crowd:** The crowd, fed by the bounty of God's provision, reminds us that we each have needs and our God of compassion will meet them. As people living materially well-off, we tend not to depend on God for much. **Instead, where do you feel spiritually poor right now? How can you allow God to see that need and meet it?**