

The boy with bread and fish John 6:1-13

Today we're carrying on looking at children in the Bible and the amazing part that they play.

Our character today seems like only a bit part, a minor footnote, but really, he is the key to an amazing miracle.

Picture the scene: Jesus is there at Lake Galilee and there's a massive crowd around him. People have travelled from miles around to hear what he has to say. But these are poor people, if they had jobs, they'd be working. That they are there means most of them don't have steady work. As the day goes by, people start to notice how hungry they are. There's on shops nearby and even if there were, how many of them could afford to go and buy something.

Jesus notices what's going on and he has compassion on this hungry crowd, so he turns to his friends, the disciples and he says, 'can we do something for them, can we get them lunch?'

Well, Philip, one of them, just laughs! 'You are joking, Jesus, do you know how much it would cost? That's going to set us back, what, six months wages? We can't do it!'

But there's someone earwiggling in, having a listen to the exchange and he goes up to Andrew:

"Excuse me, Mister"

"Disappear, kid, we haven't got time"

"But, I've got something Jesus might want"

"I doubt it, go away."

"You need some food, I've got some food"

"Oh yeah, you got a kebab van hidden in our back pocket have you? Scram!"

"No, I've got five loaves and two fish. My mum packed them for me..."

"Go away"

"please..."

with a great sigh "Fine, come on then... Jesus, this little boy has five loaves and two fish. I'm sure we can each have a crumb!"

But Jesus, with a twinkle in his eye, thanks the boy. He tells everyone to sit down. He prays and then breaks the bread and fish and starts to give it out...

Jesus took the little that the boy offered and he did something miraculous and amazing with it. You wonder how many people noticed what was going on?

Jesus takes the little and he does a lot. The boy knew he didn't have enough but he had faith that Jesus could make it enough.

I wonder, do we have that kind of faith in Jesus? Sometimes it's easy to look at the needs in front of us and feel helpless, they just seem overwhelming and what we have seems so small. Jesus never asks us to solve problems on our own though, he wants us to work with him and to offer in faith what we can.

So, when you look at the world, the church, your family, what is it you can offer to God in response to the situations you see?

We might think that what we can offer is little and insignificant – almost not worth bothering about – but actually, the little we can offer, put through the lens of God's kingdom, might just be huge. Your little just might make the difference.

In a moment, we're going to pass some baskets round. Inside you'll find some loaves and fish. I want you to take one. If you haven't got a pen, take one as well.

On the paper, I want you to write something. It might be something you can offer to God, just like the little boy did. A talent, a skill, time, money. Or it might be someone you'd like to offer to God in prayer – someone in need, someone you love. It could be a situation in the world that seems overwhelming. What you offer might seem small, your prayer might seem small. But we believe in a God who takes the small and does mighty things.

We'll then collect up the loaves and fish, so pass them down to one end or the other of your row. We'll bring them to the front, ask God to bless them and trust in him.

What's little for us might be big for someone else. God is the God of the miracle. He asks us to be like the little boy and to offer what we can and await the miracles of God.