

The Gospel of Luke

Many Receive, Few Understand

Luke 9:12-22

1. Jesus Ministers to the People (Luke 9:12-17)

At least four thousand men, and likely more women and children, followed the apostles to Jesus after they had crossed the land preaching repentance and performing miracles (cf. Mark 6:12-13). Jesus received them and taught them about the kingdom of God while healing all in need (cf. Luke 9:11)

A. A Perfect Circumstance (v.12)

Jesus' teaching and healing continued until late in the day (cf. Matt 14:15; Mark 6:35), and while they were near Bethsaida, they were in a desolate area with no food available for them to eat.

B. A Problem for the Apostles (v.13)

Jesus first gives His disciples an opportunity to solve the food problem. They very correctly conclude that feeding this crowd is an impossible task for them to complete on their own (cf. Mark 6:37; John 6:7,9).

C. A Creative Solution (vs.14-17)

After He blessed and broke the available bread, He distributed more than enough food for the thousands to be satisfied with an abundance left over. This is the largest (scale) miracle performed by Jesus, and the only one included in all four gospels (Matt 16:13; Mark 6:33; John 6:1).

2. Jesus Responds to the People

A. The People Want Jesus to be King (John 6:14-15)

They loved free food and perfect healthcare, they believed that Jesus was the expected Prophet (cf. Deut 18:15), and so they wanted Him to be king.

B. Jesus Rebukes the People (John 6:26-41)

Instead of embracing their zeal for their True King, Jesus rebukes them because they were interested only in temporary food, and not in eternal life.

3. Jesus Clarifies His Identity to His Disciples (Luke 9:18-20)

The apostles were beginning to more clearly understand that He was not only the expected Prophet, but that He is also the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and the One who has words of eternal life (Matt 16:15; John 6:68).

4. Jesus Clarifies His Mission to His Disciples (v.22)

At the height of His popularity, Jesus, for the first time, fully and clearly tells the disciples that He would be rejected, suffer and be killed, and then be resurrected three days later (cf. Matt 16:15-21; Mark 8:29-31).