

## Blessed, Broken, Given: Your Life As Bread

Is there anything more ordinary than bread?

Bread is the building block of a meal, a staple in every diet. Bread is a common, ordinary meal. The commonness of bread makes it the perfect metaphor for our lives. Most of what we do is ordinary, like bread.

Maybe that's how you see yourself. Perhaps you have settled for a life that is less than it could be. I have good news for you. There is more to this life than what you see.

Throughout Scripture, we discover that nothing is as common as it seems, not even bread. Luke records three stories in his gospel about Jesus taking bread in His hands, blessing it, breaking it, and giving it. I want us to look at the first of those stories today.

Luke 10-12

We observe several things here.

First of all, the needs of the people are overwhelming.

Secondly, resources are in short supply.

The impulse to send the people away is not entirely uncompassionate; it is also practical.

If we're honest, this is how we feel when we see the needs of our friends, family, and neighbors. It can all feel overwhelming. "*Send them away, Jesus,*" we want to say. But Jesus won't let the disciples—or us—off the hook.

Luke 9:13-17

***Jesus blessed the bread. Jesus broke the bread. Jesus gave the bread.***

Those three actions changed the whole story.

-A "desolate place" became a place of abundance.

-A desert became a banquet.

-A story that began with "not enough" ended with there being more than enough.

This is what happens when Jesus takes something that we think is just ordinary bread! —and blesses it, breaks it, and gives it.

Jesus took bread, blessed it by giving thanks to the Father, broke it, and gave it. Bread in the hands of Jesus is *blessed, broken, and given*. And so it is for you. Your life, as common and ordinary as bread, in Jesus's hands, becomes something more.

**In the hands of Jesus, your life becomes *blessed*.**

This blessedness is not about accumulating or achieving more. Blessedness is about having your true identity recovered and your true calling revealed. To be blessed is to be given a new name. Once you were a sinner; now you are a saint. Once you were far off; now you are a cherished family member.

**In the hands of Jesus, your life becomes *broken*.**

Broken, yes, but in a new way. There are several different kinds of brokenness.

-There is a brokenness that comes from our frailty—our finiteness, our limitations.

-There is a brokenness that comes from our own failure—our sin, our participation in the spread of wickedness.

-And, there is a brokenness that is the pain of living in a fallen world—our suffering and pain. But all these kinds of brokenness can be placed in Jesus's hands.

When you surrender the brokenness of your failure, frailty, and suffering in Jesus's hands, you become open to the grace of God. This brokenness is not about wallowing in your sin or fixating on how miserable you are. To be broken is to allow the grace of God to humble you, to lead you into vulnerability with God and others, and to transform your heart. ***Brokenness becomes openness in the hands of Jesus.***

After all, ***bread that is not broken cannot be shared.***

**In the hands of Jesus, your life becomes given.**

You realize you are not here for yourself. Life with Jesus is deeply personal but never private. The openness that comes from being broken is meant to lead you outward. There is a hunger in the world around us, a deep groan for something more. When your life becomes blessed and broken in Jesus's hands, He gives *you* out for the life of the world. You become the way others find the Bread of Life. But to be that way, you must first experience the blessing and embrace the brokenness—only then will you be consecrated to bring change in powerful ways.

Luke 9:16

One of the remarkable things about this story is that Jesus gives the bread back to the disciples. If He did the miracle of *multiplication*, surely He could have done the miracle of *distribution*? Why involve the disciples at all?

Because that's what God does. God made human beings in His image to reflect His rule into the world. From the beginning, God chose to involve humans as His collaborators.

In v. 13, Jesus had told the disciples to give the people something to eat. They wanted to send the people away. The disciples saw the crowd as the problem; Jesus saw the crowd as the disciples' responsibility.

And now, because of Jesus's miraculous blessing, what was not enough has become more than enough. And weary disciples who were willing to be the bearers of bad news to hungry people now become the carriers of good news to those same people.

That's what Jesus does: He blesses us and takes our brokenness and turns it into something that can be for the good of someone else. Purpose is restored! The calling is back on track.

***Blessedness and brokenness are for the sake of givenness.***

The thing that we must not miss is that Jesus is the hero of this story.

Luke 9:10-11

**Jesus is the Host.**

Jesus *welcomed* the people; Jesus *taught* the people; Jesus *healed* the people; Jesus *fed* the people. With Jesus, there is always an abundance; there is always a feast. Grace is always more.

Luke 9:17

***Jesus turned a desolate place into a place of abundance.***

*Do we see it?* Do we see the world as Jesus sees it? You have to wonder if Jesus really saw their location as a remote and deserted place. Or, did He really know that wherever He went, there was the blessing and fullness and glory of God?

**This is all Jesus's work!**

You don't have to be epic. You don't have to be spectacular. You can be bread. Just as bread seems common and ordinary, but is actually crammed full of glory, so your life is actually miraculous and holy. That's what happens when Jesus takes us into His hands.

**We need our eyes opened to see God at work.**

-Psalm 24:1-2, Psalm 57:5, Isaiah 6:3

The *whole earth is full of God's glory*. God, the holy God, the God who is above and beyond everything and everyone else—*His* glory is filling not only the *heavens* but also *the earth!*

God is holy *and* His glory fills the earth. God is not only above and beyond His creation; He is also somehow within it. God is holy, and He is filling the common with glory. The heavens are open above the earth.

In Genesis 28, Moses tells the story of Jacob when he was running away from his brother, Esau, after he stole the birthright from him. One night he had a dream where he saw the heavens opened up and angels ascending and descending. And he heard the voice of the Lord say to him, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac" (verse 13). Immediately, God identified Himself as the God who had called Jacob's grandfather and father. Jacob woke up and said what may be the truest words he had ever spoken: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it" (v 16).

This is the description of a world beginning to awaken to the nearness of God. We are all Jacob. We scheme to enhance our futures and fortunes because we think no one out there is watching over us. We stretch the truth and manipulate the outcomes because who knows if there's a God or not? Even if there is one, He's too far away or too preoccupied to notice. If there is a heaven, it's way out there somewhere.

But then we glimpse something. It may not be a dream or a heavenly vision. It may simply be a spark, a surge of joy, or a flash of awe. We bump against the mystery and wonder of it all. Our imaginations are awakened. And we see it: *God* is here. God has been here the whole time. The heavens are open. The whole earth is *full* of His glory.

All gifts from God are ordinary yet extraordinary, earthy and yet filled with glory.

Surely the Lord is in this place—the place where we are right now—and we do not know it. It's true: The whole earth is full of His glory.