**SUNDAY 7/25/21**

**SERMON**

**JOHN 6:1-21**

Her name was Alexandra Scott,

but everyone called her Alex.

Two days before her first birthday,

          Alex was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a pediatric cancer.

When she was four, Alex was so grateful for the care she had received

          she decided to set up a lemonade stand to raise money

          for her local hospital in Connecticut.

Alex's Lemonade Stand soon attracted the attention of her entire community.

The lemonade stand became an annual tradition, and the idea began to spread. Hundreds of young cancer survivors followed Alex's example,

          and set up their own lemonade stands in cities across America.

On August 1, 2004, Alex died.

She was just eight years old.

However, in 2005, the year after Alex died,

          The Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation

          raised over four million dollars for pediatric cancer research

          to find a cure for pediatric cancer.

Even though she is no longer with us,

          the generosity of a thankful little girl is still yielding huge dividends.

With a generous heart and a simple idea,

          Alex was the spark which started a movement

          which has touched lives in all 50 states, and numerous foreign countries.

One little girl gave everything she had,

          and it made a great difference to so many people.

Our Gospel reading this morning

          is one of only two stories which are found in all four Gospels:

          The Resurrection, and The Feeding of the 5,000.

All four Gospel writers believed this miracle story was very important,

          and included it in their Gospel stories,

A large crowd kept following Jesus

          because they heard how he was healing the sick.

Jesus looked up and saw the large crowd,

          and he knew they would soon be very hungry.

Jesus asked his disciples:

“Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?”

In the other 3 Gospel stories He said: "You give them something to eat."

The disciples were as lost and confused as we so often are.

They had little food or money with them.

They did not know how they could feed so many people.

Where are they to buy bread for these people to eat?

They didn't have enough money to buy enough food.

There was no way they could feed that many people.

But there was a young boy in the crowd

          who had 5 small barley loaves and two fish.

He approached Andrew and offered all he had to eat.

 Yet what was this small amount of food among so many people?

Although the disciples were perplexed,

          the boy simply gave everything he had.

He didn't hold any of his food back,

          he gave it all away without any doubt or concern.

Andrew, looked at the gift of bread and fish and asked,

“But how far will this go among so many?”

Andrew was not a pessimist.

Andrew was a realist.

Andrew was practical.

Andrew was logical.

It was simple arithmetic.

They might as well give up.

It couldn't be done.

Then Jesus told them: "You give them something to eat."

The disciples were confused, but they did as Jesus directed:

          they had the people sit down on the ground,

                    and they began to hand out what little food they had.

And there was enough food to feed everyone, with food left over.

We may not have much to give to Jesus,

          according to the world's standards,

          or even according to our own,

          but He can do amazing things with whatever we give.

This miracle story may seem impossible as we read it.

Yet all four Gospel writers believed this event was of great importance.

Many people are admiring fans of Jesus.

There are many who applaud the carpenter from Nazareth.

Many enjoy hearing about the miracles Jesus performed,

          and the inspiring stories in the Bible.

However, nothing changes in their day to day lives.

There is a great difference between an admiring fan, and a devoted follower.

Jesus wants us to be devoted followers, not simply admiring fans.

He wants us to trust Him.

He wants us to give whatever we have to Him

When we do, He does amazing things with our tiny gifts.

Alexandra Scott, and the boy with a little bread and a few fish,

          gave all they had.

And it made all the difference.

[Little things count](https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/little-things-count-scott-white-sermon-on-naaman-203564).

Even small things are important in the kingdom of God.

In March of 1981, President Reagan was shot by John Hinckley, Jr.,

          and was hospitalized for several weeks.

Although Reagan was the nation's chief executive,

          his hospitalization had little impact on our country's activity.

Government continued.

On the other hand, suppose the garbage collectors in this country went on strike,

          as they did in Philadelphia some years ago.

That city was not only in a literal mess,

          but the pile of decaying trash quickly became a health hazard.

A three-week nationwide strike would paralyze the country.

Who is more important –  the President or a garbage collector?

In God's Kingdom,

          even the most insignificant gift can be used

          to create miracles.

And so we try as hard as we can:

          To do all the good we can do,

          any way we can,

          wherever we can,

          whenever we can,

          to all the people we can.

Our smallest gifts may seem to be insignificant.

But God turns those gifts into amazing miracles.

Each of us is only one person,

          I can't do everything,

                    but I can do something.

Then God will do incredible things.

Alex gave everything she could.

A young boy gave away all he had.

Shouldn't we imitate them?

When we give what we have to Jesus,

          regardless of how small it seems to be,

                    Jesus accomplishes amazing things.

God works in us and through us.

God commands us to love one another.

But unless love becomes visible,

                              it is not love at all.

AMEN