**Small Is Big, Less Is More**

***Pr. Tan Moy How***

Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, “It would take more than half a year’s wages[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6%3A1-14#fen-NIV-26265a)] to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!”

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” (John 6:1-14)

# Introduction

There was once a small boy who was very quiet. He was also very shy. He was particularly shy about wearing glasses. There was once, due to his poor sight, he pushed someone down. He could not explained what had happened to his teacher or his parents once they got to know. This made him more shy and reserved. He felt that he wanted to dig a deep hole and stay there.

# Small is Big

Christ sees that small is big.

This was probably God’s greatest miracle. This miracle is listed in all the four Gospels of the New Testament. There must be something important in this miracle that it was written in all the four Gospels. There were five thousand men. If we add one wife and a child to each of the men, there should have easily been fifteen thousand people in this crowd. They were listening to Jesus all day and there was no restaurant nearby for them to buy food.

By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”

They said to him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mk+6%3A35-37&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24445a)]! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” (Mark 6:35-37)

## Philip Looked at the Cost.

Philip answered him, “It would take more than half a year’s wages[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6%3A1-14#fen-NIV-26265a)] to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!” Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there. (John 6: 7, 10)

The disciples did the most logical thing in their mind as there were too many people and they had no money. They had to ask the crowd to leave and eat somewhere. Jesus wants us to know that without Him, we cannot do anything. Jesus asked the disciples to feed the crowd instead.

## Philip counted the cost and told Jesus that it will cost them more than two hundred denarii to feed 15 000 people. One denarii is equivalent to one day’s wages. In verse 9, the word small is repeated twice in the verse.

“Without God we cannot; without us, He will not." ~Augustine of Hippo.

## Philip Looked at the Crowd

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, **9**“Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” (John 6: 8-9)

Andrew looked at the crowd and almost sent them away and brought a little boy with five small loaves of barley and two small fish.

## The Boy Looked to Jesus

## Do not look down at the small things. Just because something is small or insignificant, it does not mean God cannot use it.

“Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” (John 6:9)

## Jesus wanted to show everyone that small is big and small is enough. God often uses the small things to achieve big goals. We see this in other parts of the bible too:

1. God asked Moses to use a simple wooden staff to perform miracles. Moses had a speech impediment. Yet, God used him to bring more than three million slaves out of Egypt.
2. God asked Samuel to anoint the future king. He anointed David who was smaller compared to his other brothers. God made a shepherd boy one of the greatest kings of Israel.
3. Jeremiah told God that he is too small but God used him anyway to be one of God’s greatest prophets.
4. In DUMC, God used Pastor Sarah to lead six thousand Myanmar people to Christ in a crowd of seventeen thousand. The Myanmar ministry started with thirty people and now has an average attendance of nine hundred and sixty-one people weekly. Growing a church is a herculean task. The lead pastor needs to be a good public relations person, a preacher, a teacher, a manager, a banker, and a good leader.

In a paradoxical way, this passage exposes the lack of faith and yet encourages us to put our faith in God.

# Less is More

In God’s economy, less is more.

## Jesus’ Big Lunch,

Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.  (John 6:11)

When Jesus took the loaves, he gave thanks, and distributed to those seated as much as they wanted. The word took means lambano which means to actively take. Jesus accepted what was received. He never forced the boy to give anything. The boy gave willingly.

The boy could have done three things

1. He could have kept it to himself. The small loaves were not as big as the gardenia loaves we know. It was bigger than the wafer or as big as a square biscuit. The fish was as big as a small sardine you see in cans.
2. He could have shared with those around him.
3. He chose to give all he had to Jesus. What he had was only enough to feed himself yet he gave his meal to Jesus.

The stage was set for the greatest miracle. Jesus generously gave to everyone as much as they wanted. People were completely full. No one left the place hungry. It was more than enough. No one was excluded. Jesus used the boy’s hands to move His. They had a good meal.

## Jesus’ Bountiful Leftovers

When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” (John 6: 12-14)

Jesus gathered the leftovers once everyone was full. There were twelve baskets leftover. This was infinitely more than the five loaves and two fishes. Looking at this miracle, their faith was stretched. What happened to the twelve baskets? There are three possibilities

1. He would have taken them home for a few month’s supply of food.
2. Jesus would have given a basket to each of the disciples since there was 12
3. He would have given all the baskets to the boy the same way the boy gave freely to the kingdom of God.

Philip counted the cost and Andrew counted the crowd. Both of them found it impossible. The boy gave what he had to Jesus and He made it abundant. Jesus is asking us to give our lives to God. God will make the small and insignificant things of our lives bigger. There is no one small enough for the kingdom of God.

“**If you feel** weak, **limited**, ordinary, you are the best material through which God can work.” Henry Blackaby

Hebrews 11 is the roll call of God’s heroes. These are people whose weaknesses were turned into strengths. Hudson Taylor felt so small that God used him mightily in China to bring millions to Christ.

Pastor Bill Wilson was abandoned by his mother in a street for 3 days. It took a father of a dying child to see whether he was okay. The man then fed him and arranged him to be sent to a church Sunday School Camp where Pastor Bill will give his life to Christ and then use him to start the biggest Sunday School with over a hundred and eighty thousand children attending every week. Metro World Child will cross two hundred thousand very soon.

Big doors open up in small hinges – Pastor Bill Wilson

# Conclusion

This small boy went overseas to study. He came back, met the love of his life and continued working in the IT industry. Following a lunch with Senior Pastor Daniel Ho who challenged him “When is your time?” He accepted his call into full time ministry. He eventually became a pastor. One day when Senior Pastor was overseas, he was called to dedicate the opening of an embassy. Dressed in his best in the presence of ministers, ambassadors and other VIP’s, people were surprised when he was announced to walk up and give a prayer representing a religion in Malaysia. This person is no other than Pastor Moy How.

Pastor Moy How’s mother could not believe the day he gave his testimony many years ago when his was commissioned to be a fulltime pastor. His mother could not believe how God raised this small, quiet and shy person to the person he is today.

God will indeed make the small big and the less more.

Sermon summary contributed by Abbey Thangiah.