

ONLY A LAD.

“There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes : but what are they among so many ?”

JOHN vi. 9.

ONLY five barley loaves and two small fishes ! Well might Andrew say, “What are they among so many ?” Man could do nothing with such a supply in view of so great a need, but the Lord could. But it is especially about the young lad who brought the scanty but sufficient provisions that we would say a word. What a privilege to be the bearer of food for five thousand, and he only a lad ! It is a day of small things, and God often uses the weak things and the despised things to effect His purposes. Matthew, Mark, and Luke speak of the loaves and fishes, but it is only John who mentions the lad who brought them. This, one of the last-written books of the Bible, rescues from oblivion the interesting fact that it was a lad who had brought this little store ready for the Master’s use.

“There is a lad *here*.” He was just where the Lord could use him. Had he had several cart-loads of fish elsewhere they would have been of less use than the two where the Lord was, and where the need was. Many of us have loaves and fishes somewhere. Let us get them out, and

take them where the need is, and we shall find Jesus there before us. We can always find some one in need, and if it be only an encouraging word, it is a privilege to supply it.

The lad had very little with him, it seems, but it was enough for God. Has not this a voice for one who seeks to minister to souls? Quite likely you have had to speak to many about the things of God, and have felt your weakness and your ignorance. With all your honest use of spare time you seem to have dug but little into the mine of spiritual wealth. And now you have to stand for the Master, and minister to the need of souls. Courage! Take what you have. God will not give you a miraculous insight into truths all at once, but He can make what you have sufficient for the occasion.

The supply was not multiplied in the lad's basket. It would have been too much for him. May we remember, if the Word is used to the pulling down of strongholds, that it is in the Lord's hands it does such wonders.

We are not told what the young lad received for the fishes, but we may be quite sure he was not without his reward. The Master would never have taken from him five loaves and two fishes and given him nothing in exchange. It may have been but a look—a look never to be forgotten, or a glad "well done," that thrilled his soul with joy. Of all the happy faces on the mountain side it is

easy to believe that the young lad's was one of the happiest. And when we see the Lord in glory, when we too hear that voice, what joy it will be to hear His "well done" for even *one* talent wisely and faithfully used.

To sum up. Let us be near to the people who need our ministry. Let us be near the Lord, that it may be used by Him to meet the want of each. Let us be sufficiently insignificant in our own eyes not to be elated if used by Him, and then surely we shall find His hearty approbation a rich reward for our service.

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THE OVERCOMER.

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God."—REV. iii. 12.

IN this day of sad declension,
'Midst the wreck of all around,
Some there are, a feeble remnant,
Pleasing to the Lord are found.
These are they who 'midst the ruin
Seek to give His heart delight,
Walking here amid the darkness
As the children of the light.

Poor in spirit, weak and feeble ;
By the world despised, unknown ;
Boasting in the name of Jesus,
Holding fast His word alone.
These are they who in their weakness
Gathered to His name we view ;
Owning Him alone their Centre,
Who is *Holy*, who is *True*.