# Luke 9: 10 – 17 More or less

The feeding of the multitude is sandwiched in between questions about the identity of Jesus. What Jesus is able to do cannot be separated from who he is, and the authority that is given to him.

Jesus wants to be really clear with his followers that his identity (v20) cannot be separated from his coming to die (v22). Why is it important that we remember this?

Is it easier to talk about Jesus as someone who came to give us good things or as someone who came to die for us? Why might that be?

## *Refection: Living in Western Europe, we are not going to be asked to die for our faith. Does this lead us to not take seriously the cost of following Jesus? How then do we lose our lives (v24)?*

The contrast in Luke 9 is between the cost of discipleship and the abundance of God’s provision. Yet the two are also interwoven. What is the link between Jesus’ death and God’s abundant provision?

Jesus sees and understands the needs of the people in front of him. Unlike when healing people, where Jesus often comments on the faith of the person healed, there is no comment on the faith of those Jesus feeds. How does this shape our understanding of abundant grace?

Why does Jesus feed the people if it will not lead to faith and trust in him?

If we are to echo Jesus’ concern for human need do we always need to do it within the framework of the question “who do you say Jesus is?”

*Reflection: It is good to think back to Luke 7 and the lessons learned about how we view others. What do we think about those who are in need? How do we view them?*

The apostles wanted to send the crowd away. They see need as an obstacle. Jesus however sees the need of the crowd as an opportunity. How can we learn to see things as Jesus would see them?

Yet we live in a world that is at times overwhelmed by need. Jesus never lost sight of his primary calling and purpose (something he reminded them of after the miracle). What is the church’s primary call and purpose? What is its relationship to compassion?

*Reflection: Some of us are more moved by compassion. Others of us are moved by purpose. How can we get the right balance in our own lives? How do we get the balance right in our church life.*

Jesus asks the apostles to feed the crowd. Why did he do this? What did the disciples need to learn?

If Jesus were talking to us today, what do you think he would be saying to us? What do we need to learn?

Jesus’ presence enables the disciples to feed the crowd abundantly. Later in the gospel, when Jesus talks about the gift of God the Holy Spirit to every believer he says that believers will be able to do even greater things. What kinds of miracles should we be looking for?

Despite the demonstration of abundant grace, the Gospel doesn’t record lives changed at this moment. The crowd will not follow Jesus to Jerusalem (although perhaps some did). How does that help us understand what we should be looking and praying for?

How best can the church model the idea of abundant grace today?

How do we invite others to experience the God of Abundance?

*Reflection: There is a clear connection in the story telling of the Gospel between abundant grace and costly discipleship. How can we ensure that link is true in our own lives? How can we live it out clearly in our church life?*