

"A JOY TO THE HEART AND
STRENGTH FOR THE SOUL."

Max Lucado



FISH SANDWICHES

The Delight of Receiving God's Promises



TROY SCHMIDT



Our good friend Troy Schmidt has served up a delicious main course of God's promises—his miracles and power all in one. The Feeding of the Five Thousand is one of those miracles discussed but rarely dissected with the kind of humor and insight Troy brings to everything he does. Dine on this book—then bring your friends back for seconds!

DAVID AND JASON BENHAM, authors, entrepreneurs, speakers

The miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand is one of my favorite stories. How fun it would have been to be there—I love to imagine the people's astonished joy and laughter as Jesus provided more and more and *more*. Troy Schmidt unpacks the miracle that offers far more than a feast of food. In Jesus' economy, there is always more and more and more.

TRICIA LOTT WILLIFORD, author of *You Can Do This*

If you are hungry for a book that will feed your soul . . . here you go! Eat up! *Fish Sandwiches* is chock-full of soul-satisfying truth! In this book, Troy Schmidt serves a well-written, practical, and humorous feast of God's promises that is sure to leave you spiritually full and even more confident that we serve a God who loves when we are well fed.

ARRON CHAMBERS, author of *Eats with Sinners*

Troy Schmidt has written an engaging and inspiring work that expounds on Jesus' miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. You'll find your attention grabbed and your spirit raised as you follow his explanation and practical application of the various parts of this story. This two-thousand-year-old miracle met the people's needs then and can also meet our needs today.

TOM YEAKLEY, author of *Praying over God's Promises*



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*My soul is starved and hungry, ravenous!—
insatiable for your nourishing commands.*

PSALM 119:20, THE MESSAGE

#1

HUNGRY?

What to Eat When Your Cupboard Is Bare

REMEMBER this nursery rhyme from childhood?

*Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard
To get her poor dog a bone;
But when she came there
The cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none.¹*

Some old lady goes to get her poor dog something to eat. She opens the drawers and finds nada, nothing, zilch—not even a piece of discarded marrow, the part people usually throw out. The dog, sadly, must go hungry.

And the poor lady, too—unless, out of desperation, she must eat the . . .

No, let's not think such things.

How did she get into such a predicament? Did her social security run out? Did she make bad or overly enthusiastic investments in the stock market? Maybe Old Man Hubbard, who once provided a generous income, is now shacking up with one of the eight Maids a-Milking, leaving her with a stack of bills?

What does it matter? She's hungry. She needs to eat. Now.

Like Old Mother Hubbard, many of us find our cupboards empty these days, as a result of . . .

- recession
- unemployment
- job cutbacks
- bank collapses
- church collapses
- relationship collapses
- terrorism
- drought
- floods
- political upheaval
- stock market instability
- greed
- apathy
- war

Once, your cupboards stored delectable treats and important staples to your diet. Now, even the cockroaches have given up hope.

HUNGRY?

You may be hungry, but is food all you need? Moses reminded the Israelites of an important lesson about food that God taught them in the desert:

He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

DEUTERONOMY 8:3

These words are so powerful that Jesus quoted them to Satan. Remember when Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness and Satan came and tried to make him turn rocks into bread? Cool trick, right? But Jesus wouldn't fall for Satan's veiled attempt to control him.

Won't work. Ever. Satan doesn't call the shots or make the promises. Jesus does.

But let's face it: Jesus *was* hungry, and some nice Rocky Mountain bread sounded delicious. Yet Jesus fired back with the idea that while physical bodies need food, people need more than food.

Jesus said to Satan, "Bread isn't the most important thing these physical bodies need. What they really need is God's Word."²

Food isn't always the solution to our needs. As Jesus and Deuteronomy 8:3 both state, *we need every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*

What good do words do when you're hungry? You've heard the expression "You're going to eat those words," which makes

**SATAN
DOESN'T CALL
THE SHOTS
OR MAKE THE
PROMISES.
JESUS DOES.**

a seven-syllable snack sound good when you're starving. You'll eat anything, right? But words have no nutritional value to your body, so Jesus' direction must mean something else.

**THE PROMISES
OF GOD CAN'T BE
SEEN, BUT YOU
CAN SEE THEM
WORKING.**

According to the verse in Deuteronomy, God sometimes causes physical hunger to teach us to desire spiritual truths. He leads us out into the desert to show us what's really important. He allows us to experience hard times so we ask ourselves deeper questions about God.

Maybe that's what is happening to you right now.

So, what words from the mouth of the Lord sustain us when we are starving? Which words fill our souls with the most nutritional value? Which words are tastiest when life turns bitter?

The promises of God found in the Word of God.

The Israelites lived off a steady diet of promises that kept them alive during their desert days. Frankly, they had nothing else out there in the wilderness. God's promises provided protection and purification from the harsh, naked, unfertile elements. Everything they received came about as a direct promise from God.

Food . . .

Water . . .

Clothes . . .

Protection . . .

It works the same way today.

Many of those promises cannot be stacked in cupboards, but they are stored in our hearts. They can't be seen, but you can see them working. They can't be eaten, but they can be consumed into your life.

God's promises fill those empty spots in our hearts that food

HUNGRY?

cannot touch. They make us feel blessed, full—even rich with a prosperity beyond money that goes deep into the very recesses of our souls.

And we see God feeding us those promises in a buffet Jesus served to a group of hungry people.

What was on the menu? Fish sandwiches.

