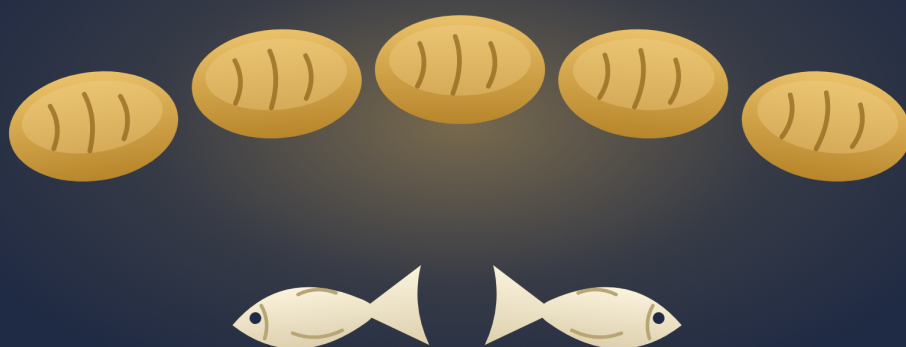


A CHILDREN'S MUSICAL PLAY

Is It Enough?

Inspired by John 6:1–14



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

JOHN 6:9 · KJV

WRITTEN BY

Helena Yingge Li

Presented by Shakespeare Cultural & Education Trust

The Play Script · A Director's & Pastoral Guide

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Cast of Characters

THE BOY	A thoughtful child: curious, observant, sometimes funny without trying to be. He holds his world tightly until he learns to let go.
MOTHER	Warm, practical, loving. Anchored in reality, with a quiet and profound wisdom. Her love shows up as lunches and rules.
ANDREW	Kind and patient; willing to notice what others overlook. A seeker of small possibilities.
PHILIP	Practical and precise, always calculating what is possible and what the math forbids.
PETER	Direct, energetic, easily frustrated, but warm-hearted. Acts first and worries out loud.
LITTLE GIRL	Small, and completely honest about being hungry.
GIRL'S MOTHER	Patient, tired, gently humorous.
OLD MAN	Dry-witted and weathered; he has seen many crowds.
CHILD ONE & TWO	Friends of the Boy. Energetic, inquisitive, quick with news and quicker with teasing.
NARRATOR ONE & TWO	The poetic voice of the landscape and the unfolding moment. They speak like breath: one in, one out.
WOMAN	A weary traveler in the crowd. A very small role (may be doubled).
CROWD / ENSEMBLE	Children, families, villagers. Flexible in size.
VOICE OF JESUS	Optional. Offstage, warm and calm, used very sparingly.

NOTE ON PRODUCTION

Jesus does not appear on stage. His presence is registered entirely through the attention of the crowd, the narration, the disciples' responses, moments of deep silence, and, if desired, a very gentle offstage voice used sparingly.

THE SHAPE OF THE PLAY

Running Order

ORDER	TITLE	WHAT HAPPENS
Scene 1	Morning	A home at dawn. A mother packs a lunch; news arrives that Jesus is near.
Song 1	♪ <i>Come and See</i>	The village sets out for the hillside.
Scene 2	The Hillside	A crowd gathers and the day slips by.
Scene 3	A Very Large Problem	Evening comes. The disciples count the cost.
Scene 4	What Is in Your Hand?	The Boy wrestles with his basket.
Song 2	♪ <i>Is It Enough?</i>	The emotional center: a small gift, a large question.
Scene 5	Five and Two	The gift is carried to Jesus.
Scene 6	Before There Was Enough	Jesus gives thanks. The bread is passed hand to hand.
Scene 7	Everyone Ate	Laughter, fullness, and twelve baskets.
Scene 8	The Walk Home	Dusk. Three friends and a difficult explanation.
Scene 9	Home Again	Mother and Boy, by lamplight.
Song 3	♪ <i>Enough and More</i>	The answer to Song 2, sung by the whole company.
Finale	Open Hands	A question reframed; a silence; a blackout.

AT A GLANCE

9 + 1 scenes & a finale	3 original songs	13 speaking roles, plus ensemble	0 appearances by Jesus on stage
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PART I

The Musical Play Script

Is It Enough? · inspired by John 6:1–14

SCENE ONE

Morning

Early morning. A simple, modest home.

MOTHER sits at a wooden table beside a small woven basket. THE BOY shuffles in, still half-asleep, rubbing his eyes.

MOTHER	You're awake.
BOY	Almost.
MOTHER	Almost awake is not awake.
BOY	It is in the morning. <i>(He sits.)</i>
MOTHER	Come here. Count these for me.
	<i>She sets a small loaf in the basket.</i>
BOY	One.
MOTHER	<i>(adding another)</i> Two.
BOY	Three.
MOTHER	Four.
BOY	Five. Five little loaves.
MOTHER	Barley loaves. Honest bread.
BOY	Very small honest bread.
MOTHER	<i>(adding two small dried fish)</i> Bread does not lose its dignity because it is small.
BOY	Five loaves and two fish.
MOTHER	Enough for your lunch.
BOY	<i>(peering into the basket, doubtful)</i> Are you sure?
MOTHER	Yesterday you told me you were nearly grown.
BOY	Yesterday was a long time ago.
MOTHER	It was one day ago.
BOY	A lot can happen in a day, Mama.
MOTHER	Apparently.
	<i>She wraps the food carefully, looking him straight in the eye.</i>
MOTHER	Don't lose it.

BOY I won't.

MOTHER Don't leave it behind somewhere.

BOY I won't.

MOTHER And don't give it all away to strangers.
The Boy looks up sharply.

BOY Why that one? Why did you say that one?

MOTHER Because I know you.

BOY I don't *always* give my food away.

MOTHER No. *(A knowing beat.)* Only when somebody looks hungrier than you.
Lively voices break the quiet outside.

CHILD ONE *(offstage)* Come on! Hurry up!

CHILD TWO *(offstage)* He's already heading for the ridge!
The Boy springs to the doorway. CHILD ONE and CHILD TWO burst in, out of breath.

CHILD ONE Jesus is here!

BOY *Here?* In our lane?

CHILD TWO Not *here* here. Down on the lower road.

BOY That is wonderfully precise.

CHILD TWO He's walking toward the hillside. Everyone is following him.

BOY Why? What does he do?

CHILD ONE Some say he heals people who can't walk.

CHILD TWO My sister says he tells stories.

BOY What kind of stories?

CHILD TWO She says you think you understand them at first—

CHILD ONE —and then you realize you didn't understand anything at all.

BOY That sounds deeply inconvenient.

MOTHER The best stories usually are.
She hands him the covered basket.

MOTHER Go on. Stay with the others. Be home before dark. And—eat your lunch.

BOY I will. Five loaves. Two fish.

MOTHER Enough for one hungry boy.
The Boy looks into the basket one last time, then holds it close to his chest.

BOY Enough.

Music begins to swell.

♪ SONG ONE

Come and See

A lilting walking song in 6/8. Light, curious, gathering pace.

The children set off. Villagers drift in from every side of the stage until the whole company forms a moving procession.

CHILDREN

*Come and see, come and see,
Something's happening today!
Down the road and up the hillside,
Crowds are hurrying on their way.*

WOMEN

*Some have heard that he can heal us,
Some have heard the stories told.*

MEN

*Some are hopeful, some are frightened,
Some are tired, some are old.*

ALL

*Come and see, come and see,
Bring your questions as you go.
Maybe what we think we're seeking
Isn't all there is to know.*

BOY

*I don't know what I am looking for,
I don't know what I will find.
There's bread inside my basket
And a hundred things on my mind.*

CHILDREN

*Come and see, come and see,
Walk together, don't be late!*

BOY

Maybe nothing much will happen...

CHILD ONE

Maybe something great!

ALL

*Come and see, come and see,
Something calls us on today.
Over roads and over hillsides—
Come and see. Come this way!*

The music fades as everyone gathers on the hillside.

SCENE TWO**The Hillside**

A grassy slope in the middle of the day.

People settle across the slope in scattered groups. The mood is quiet anticipation mixed with restless fatigue. The BOY has found a spot at the edge of the crowd, his basket on his knees. LITTLE GIRL stands on tiptoe, trying to see over the adults.

LITTLE GIRL Mama, I can't see.

GIRL'S MOTHER Stand right here beside me.

LITTLE GIRL I *am* standing right here. I still can't see.

OLD MAN (*nearby*) Neither can I, little one.

LITTLE GIRL But you're so tall.

OLD MAN Not tall enough to be useful.

The Boy smiles at them. The Little Girl notices the basket.

LITTLE GIRL Is that a lunch?

BOY (*holding it a little closer*) It's a basket.

LITTLE GIRL Baskets are for lunches.

BOY ...Sometimes.

Her stomach growls, loudly. She looks down at it, offended.

OLD MAN Was that thunder?

LITTLE GIRL That was me.

The Boy looks away and pretends not to have heard. He is not fooling himself.

NARRATOR ONE They came from every village.

NARRATOR TWO From the olive groves and the stone-paved yards.

NARRATOR ONE From fishing boats left rocking empty on the shore.

NARRATOR TWO Down roads that felt much shorter in the cool of the morning.

NARRATOR ONE Some came because their bodies were broken.

NARRATOR TWO Some because someone they loved could no longer rise from a mat.

NARRATOR ONE Some came because they needed an answer.

NARRATOR TWO And some came simply because everyone else was going.

The murmur of the crowd sinks into a deep, shared stillness. Every face turns toward an unseen point offstage. A long, resonant silence.

BOY *(quietly, almost to himself)* Is that him?

CHILD ONE *(whispering)* Yes.

BOY He's... not what I expected.

CHILD ONE What *did* you expect?

BOY I don't know. Someone taller. Someone who looked less like the rest of us.

Child One bites their lip to keep from laughing.

NARRATOR ONE Jesus began to speak.

NARRATOR TWO And the people forgot the miles behind them.

NARRATOR ONE The morning slipped away.

NARRATOR TWO Midday burned hot overhead.

NARRATOR ONE Then the long shadows of afternoon stretched across the grass.

NARRATOR TWO And still, nobody moved.

The lighting shifts slowly to the amber warmth of late afternoon.

SCENE THREE

A Very Large Problem

The same hillside, late in the day.

LITTLE GIRL Mama?

GIRL'S MOTHER Yes, sweetheart?

LITTLE GIRL I'm hungry.

GIRL'S MOTHER I know.

LITTLE GIRL How do you know?

GIRL'S MOTHER Because you've told me six times already.

LITTLE GIRL This is the seventh.

GIRL'S MOTHER Then I have been informed seven times.

Nearby, PHILIP, PETER, and ANDREW stand together, looking out over the vast sea of seated people.

PETER This is no longer a gathering. This is an administrative crisis.

PHILIP Which crisis, specifically?

PETER The hungry one. Look at them. They've been here all day.

PHILIP There are several thousand hungry ones, Peter.

PETER Exactly my point. It's getting late. They should go home.

PHILIP Some of them walked three or four hours to reach this slope. If they start back now, in the dark—

PETER Then they should have packed a lunch. Like sensible people.

ANDREW Peter.

PETER What? Somebody has to be sensible.

ANDREW They're exhausted. And so are we.
They glance toward the unseen presence of Jesus.

NARRATOR ONE Then Jesus turned to Philip.

VOICE OF JESUS *(optional, warm and calm)* Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?

NARRATOR TWO He asked it to test him. He already knew what he would do.
Philip stares, blinking in disbelief.

PHILIP Bread? For *this* many?
He gestures wildly at the crowd.

PHILIP Do you have any idea what that would cost? Two hundred days' wages would not buy enough for everyone to have even a bite!

PETER Then let's not buy it. Problem solved. Let them walk.

PHILIP That is not the point, Peter!

PETER It feels very much like the point when my feet hurt.

ANDREW Maybe... just maybe... someone here brought something.
Peter turns and stares at Andrew as if he has lost his mind.

PETER Enough food for *this* crowd? Hidden in a pocket?

ANDREW No. Probably not.

PETER Good. For one terrifying second I thought the heat had finally got to you.

ANDREW Even so, it costs nothing to look.

PHILIP What difference could a stray crust possibly make in an ocean of empty stomachs?

ANDREW I don't know.

PHILIP That is not a very reassuring answer, Andrew.

ANDREW No. But it is an honest one.

SCENE FOUR

What Is in Your Hand?*The edge of the crowd.**The disciples move quietly through the seated people.*

PETER *(to a woman nearby)* Pardon me. Any bread left in your pack? Even a stale corner?

WOMAN Gone hours ago, I'm afraid.

PHILIP *(to Child Two)* You there. Did you bring provisions?

CHILD TWO I had fish earlier.

PHILIP Where is it now?

CHILD TWO Inside me.

PHILIP Of course. Naturally.

OLD MAN *(chuckling weakly)* I have a single crumb left from breakfast. It had a very promising future this morning, but alas...

Peter shakes his head and moves on. Downstage, the Boy looks at his basket. Without meaning to, he tightens both hands around it and pulls it close.

NARRATOR ONE The boy had heard every word they said.

NARRATOR TWO And he knew, down to the last crumb, what he carried.

NARRATOR ONE Five small loaves.

NARRATOR TWO Two small fish.

NARRATOR ONE Packed with care by a mother who knew how quickly a growing boy gets empty.

The Boy lifts the lid a fraction. A quiet peek. Five. Two. He snaps it shut. ANDREW approaches, noticing the guarded posture.

ANDREW What have you got in that basket, young man?

BOY Nothing.

ANDREW That is a remarkably well-guarded nothing. It has weight to it.

BOY It's my lunch.

ANDREW Ah. Then by all means, you should eat it.

BOY Aren't you out here looking for food for the crowd?

ANDREW I am.

BOY Then why are you telling *me* to eat mine?

ANDREW Because you're a child, and children need their strength.

BOY And everyone out there needs food. That's what you just said.

ANDREW *(softening, kneeling to his eye level)* That is a very sharp observation.

BOY *(lifting the lid again, hesitant)* Five loaves. Small ones.

ANDREW And?

BOY Two fish. Also small. You can nearly see through them when the sun hits them right.

ANDREW You seem very concerned about their dimensions.

BOY Look around, Andrew. Look at the crowd. Do these look big enough to fix *this*?
Andrew looks out across the hillside. The scale of it lands. He gives a quiet, weary smile.

ANDREW No. They don't.

BOY I didn't think so either.

ANDREW Keep your lunch. You've earned it. Your mother packed it for you.

BOY She told me not to come home starving.

ANDREW Your mother sounds like a wise woman.

BOY Usually.
Across the slope, the Little Girl's voice rings out, thin and tearful.

LITTLE GIRL Mama, my tummy hurts. I'm really, really hungry now.
The Boy looks at her. Then at the Old Man, slumped against a stone. Then back at the basket. A long, heavy struggle.

BOY Andrew?

ANDREW Yes?

BOY If I gave this to you...
He stops. His hands tremble slightly on the handle.

ANDREW You don't have to. Nobody is asking a child to feed a crowd.

BOY I know that.

ANDREW Five loaves won't even feed the people on this one patch of grass.

BOY I know.

ANDREW Not even close.

BOY I *know*, Andrew!
A pause. His voice drops to a raw whisper.

BOY But keeping them in my lap won't feed them either. Will it?
Andrew looks into the boy's eyes and understands what is happening in this small heart.

ANDREW No. It won't.

The Boy draws a deep breath and holds the basket out. Andrew does not take it at once. He waits, honoring the weight of the gesture.

ANDREW

Are you sure?

BOY

No. Not at all.

ANDREW

No?

BOY

I'm still hungry! I like my lunch!

ANDREW

Then maybe you should—

BOY

Do I have to be certain, and brave, and fearless *before* I'm allowed to do something good?

Andrew is quiet, touched by the question.

ANDREW

...No. I don't think you do.

Music begins to weave softly into the air.

♪ SONG TWO

Is It Enough?

A gentle, questioning ballad. Sparse at first (piano or guitar), opening out as the children join in.

BOY

*I have only what I carry,
Only what is in my hand—
Five small loaves and two small fishes,
Nothing anyone had planned.
There are faces all around me,
Hungry, tired, and far from home.
What can something small accomplish?
What can I do all alone?*

BOY AND CHILDREN

*Is it enough? Is it enough?
When all I have seems far too small.
Is it enough? Is it enough?
Can little answer such a call?*

BOY

*I do not know what comes tomorrow,
I cannot see what lies before.
I only know that when I open,
What I hold may become more.*

A short, reflective instrumental break.

BOY

*I could close my hands and keep it,
I could say, "It isn't much."
I could wait until I'm stronger,
Wait until I have enough.
But if everyone kept waiting
Till they had no need or fear,
Would the hungry still be hungry?
Would we ever start from here?*

CHILDREN

*Is it enough? Is it enough?
When all we have seems far too small.*

BOY

*I cannot feed a thousand,
I cannot answer every call.
But I can open what I'm holding.
I can give what I have. That's all.*

ALL (softly, in harmony)

*Is it enough? Is it enough?
We cannot know what lies before.
But one small hand can still be opened,
And maybe little can be more.*

The song ends on an unresolved, hanging chord. The Boy slowly lets go of the basket and places it in Andrew's hands.

SCENE FIVE**Five and Two**

The gift is carried across the grass.

Andrew takes the basket and leads the Boy toward Peter and Philip.

ANDREW	Look. I found something.
PETER	What is that? Bread?
ANDREW	Yes.
PHILIP	How much? Let me guess—a crumb for the collection?
ANDREW	Five loaves.
PHILIP	Five? Out of thousands?
ANDREW	And two fish.

Peter looks from the basket to the endless sea of people.

PETER

Andrew, be serious—

ANDREW

I am entirely serious.

PHILIP

What are five loaves among so many? It's mathematically absurd.

The Boy steps forward and looks straight at Philip.

BOY

That's what I said.

Philip blinks, taken aback.

PHILIP

Well... you're not wrong, young man.

Everyone turns toward the unseen presence.

NARRATOR ONE

The boy had not brought enough to feed a village, let alone a crowd.

NARRATOR TWO

Andrew knew it. Philip knew it. Peter knew it in his bones.

NARRATOR ONE

The boy knew it better than anyone alive.

NARRATOR TWO

Yet Jesus did not look into the basket and say, "Is this all?"

NARRATOR ONE

He received what was offered. Gladly.

VOICE OF JESUS

(optional, clear and gentle) Have the people sit down.

NARRATOR TWO

There was much grass in that place.

PETER

Sit down? Right here in the dirt?

PHILIP

That is precisely what he said.

PETER

What for? Why are we seating them?

ANDREW

(lifting the basket, with a quiet smile) Because, Peter, I suspect they are about to eat.

PETER

Eat *what*, Andrew? Air? Pebbles?

ANDREW

Five loaves. Two fish.

PETER

(groaning) You said the numbers out loud again. You made it worse.

ANDREW

Help me get everyone seated. We have a very large lunch party to host.

SCENE SIX

Before There Was Enough

The hillside, hushed.

The crowd settles into orderly rows across the slope. A reverent silence falls.

NARRATOR ONE

Jesus took the small loaves into his hands.

NARRATOR TWO

Five very ordinary loaves of bread.

NARRATOR ONE

He took the two fish.

NARRATOR TWO

Two ordinary, dried fish from a child's basket.

NARRATOR ONE And looking up to heaven, he gave thanks.
The Boy looks up suddenly, eyes wide.

BOY *(whispering)* Andrew.

ANDREW Yes?

BOY Did you hear that?

ANDREW Hear what?

BOY He gave thanks.

ANDREW Yes.

BOY *For that?* For this tiny basket of scraps?
Andrew looks toward the unseen figure. Something is dawning on his face.

ANDREW Yes. For that.

BOY But there still isn't enough! Nothing has changed yet! The basket is just as small as it was a minute ago!

ANDREW *(gently)* Maybe gratitude doesn't have to wait for abundance to arrive.

BOY What is that even supposed to mean?

ANDREW It means—
He smiles.

ANDREW —I am beginning to think I don't entirely know either.

BOY Good.

ANDREW Good?

BOY I was terribly worried I was the only clueless one here.
They share a warm, conspiratorial smile.

NARRATOR TWO The bread was broken.

NARRATOR ONE And handed over.
Andrew receives bread from an unseen source. His hands are suddenly full.

NARRATOR TWO Then given again.
Peter receives more, staring at his own hands in shock.

NARRATOR ONE And again. Passed from hand to hand. Person to person.
Andrew crosses to the Little Girl.

ANDREW Here. Open your hands.

LITTLE GIRL For me? Real bread?

ANDREW For you.

LITTLE GIRL Can Mama have some too?

ANDREW There is plenty. Give her half.
Peter rushes across the grass and nearly collides with Philip.

PETER Philip! Something extraordinary is happening!

PHILIP You only just noticed? I count numbers for a living, Peter, and I cannot account for *this*. The bread keeps multiplying the moment it touches my fingers!

ANDREW *(laughing, passing more along)* Then stop balancing the ledger and keep passing it on!

SCENE SEVEN

Everyone Ate

The hillside, glowing with evening light.

A light, joyful underscore. People eat. Children laugh. The heavy cloud of worry lifts into shared peace.

LITTLE GIRL Mama?

GIRL'S MOTHER What is it now, my darling?

LITTLE GIRL I'm full. I can't eat another bite.
Her mother stares at her in stunned amusement.

GIRL'S MOTHER Say those exact words again.

LITTLE GIRL I'm full!

GIRL'S MOTHER I honestly did not think I would hear a child say that on this hillside today.

OLD MAN I have eaten my fill as well.

PETER *(wiping his hands, grinning)* I noticed.

OLD MAN Twice, in fact.

PETER I noticed that part too.

PHILIP *(shaking his head in quiet awe)* Everyone ate. Every single person on this hill.

ANDREW Everyone?

PHILIP Down to the last toddler. Not one empty stomach.

BOY Nobody is hungry anymore?

CHILD ONE Not a chance! I couldn't eat another crumb.

CHILD TWO Though, if someone offered me a very small fish—

CHILD ONE Don't you dare!
Laughter ripples through the crowd.

NARRATOR ONE When everyone had eaten all they could hold, Jesus spoke once more.

VOICE OF JESUS *(optional)* Gather up the leftover pieces, so that nothing is lost.

PETER Leftovers? From *this*?

PHILIP There shouldn't be anything left but crumbs!

ANDREW Let's look. Bring the baskets.
The disciples and children begin to collect. One basket is carried forward.

CHILDREN One!
Another is lifted high.

CHILDREN Two! Three! Four! Five!
The Boy joins the count, more astonished with every basket.

ALL CHILDREN Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten! Eleven!
The last, heaviest basket is carried forward. A breathless pause.

ALL Twelve!
Silence. The Boy walks slowly down the line, staring into twelve overflowing baskets.

BOY Twelve baskets.

ANDREW Yes.

BOY Left over.

ANDREW Entirely left over.

BOY From *five* small loaves?

ANDREW And two little fish.

BOY My five loaves? The ones from my mother's kitchen table?

ANDREW They stopped being only yours a long time ago, my boy.
The Boy looks up at Andrew, trying to reassemble the laws of the universe.

BOY When I handed them over... I honestly thought I was losing everything. I thought I was starving myself for nothing.

ANDREW You *were* letting go. That was real.

BOY That isn't very comforting, Andrew.

ANDREW Truth often isn't, at the moment you have to live through it.

BOY I thought I had a choice to make.

ANDREW Between what?

BOY Between keeping enough to get by on my own...
He looks down at the twelve baskets.

BOY ...or giving away something that felt too small to matter to anyone.

ANDREW And now? What do you think?
The Boy looks at his open palms.

BOY Now I think I don't understand the word "enough" the way I used to.

SCENE EIGHT

The Walk Home

Dusk. The first stars appear.

The Boy walks slowly beside CHILD ONE and CHILD TWO, carrying an empty basket, or simply walking light-handed.

CHILD ONE Your mother is going to have questions about where your lunch went, you know.

BOY I am painfully aware.

CHILD TWO What are you going to tell her?

BOY The truth.

CHILD ONE Which part? There are several layers.

BOY That is precisely my dilemma.

CHILD TWO Just tell her you gave it away.

BOY Then she will ask why I gave away a perfectly good meal before noon.

CHILD ONE Tell her five thousand people ate it.

BOY Then she will gently feel my forehead for a fever.

CHILD TWO Tell her there were twelve baskets left over.

BOY That will not help my case in the slightest.

They burst into quiet laughter and head for home.

SCENE NINE

Home Again

The same simple home, now lit by a single oil lamp.

MOTHER sits at the table, mending a cloth. The door opens. The Boy steps inside.

MOTHER You are late.

BOY A little, Mama.

MOTHER The sun went down an hour ago.

BOY I know. Time behaves strangely on hillsides.

MOTHER Were you with the others?

BOY Yes.

MOTHER Did you hear the teacher?

BOY Yes. Every word.

MOTHER Was it worth walking all that way on an empty stomach?
The Boy hesitates, then smiles.

BOY Yes. It was.

MOTHER Good.
She pauses, looking at him closely.

MOTHER Did you eat your lunch?
A long, telling pause.

BOY That, Mama, is a remarkably complicated question.

MOTHER It was a very simple question when I asked it this morning.
She looks around for his basket.

MOTHER Where is your basket?

BOY I gave the food away.

MOTHER All of it?

BOY Yes.

MOTHER All five loaves?

BOY Yes.

MOTHER And the two fish?

BOY Yes.
Mother folds her hands and leans back in her chair. She does not raise her voice. She simply waits.

BOY Ah. You're doing the quiet thing.

MOTHER I am listening.

BOY The quiet thing *is* listening. But it's a very loud kind of listening.

MOTHER Continue.

BOY There were thousands of people, Mama. Thousands.

MOTHER Thousands?

BOY At least. My arms aren't long enough to point at that many people.

MOTHER And you decided to give your one lunch to thousands of people?

BOY Not directly! Not all at once!

MOTHER Then how, exactly?
The Boy pulls up a stool and sits beside her, eyes shining.

BOY They were hungry. Really, truly hungry.

MOTHER And you were hungry too.

BOY Famished. My stomach was making noises that frightened small children.

MOTHER Then why, in the name of common sense, did you give it away?

A long pause. The Boy looks down at his hands.

BOY At first... I wasn't going to.

MOTHER *(a soft, understanding smile)* That sounds much more like my son.

BOY I held on to the basket. Really tightly. Like this.

He clenches his fists to show her.

MOTHER Because it belonged to you.

BOY Yes. Because I needed it. And because it felt so small.

MOTHER Too small?

BOY When you look at a crowd that stretches as far as the olive trees, and then you look down at five little loaves, you think, "What difference could this possibly make? If my little bit can't fix the whole problem, why bother letting go at all?"

Mother is silent, letting the words hang in the air.

BOY Five little loaves. Two fish. Against an ocean of hunger.

MOTHER And yet... what *did* they do?

The Boy looks up. Quiet wonder fills his voice.

BOY That's the part nobody will believe unless they were there. Andrew took them to Jesus.

MOTHER And?

BOY And Jesus took them and gave thanks.

MOTHER Yes.

BOY *Before* there was enough. That's the part I keep turning over.

MOTHER Why does that part trouble you?

BOY Because I always thought you gave thanks *after* you had enough in your hands. After you were safe. After the problem was solved.

MOTHER Ah.

BOY But he gave thanks while it was still five little loaves and two dry fish. Before anyone had eaten a bite. Before there was any proof. Why would he do that?

Mother looks at him with deep, tender affection.

MOTHER Because gratitude is not a receipt for what you've already been given, my son. It is how you open your hands to what has not come yet.

BOY Andrew said something very like that.

MOTHER Then Andrew is a wise man.

BOY He also admitted he didn't entirely know what it meant, which made me feel a lot better.

MOTHER Then he is *definitely* wise.
She reaches out and touches his small hands.

MOTHER Tell me what else you learned on that hillside.

BOY I think... I spend most of my life looking at what isn't in my hands.

MOTHER Most of us do.

BOY Wishing for more bread. More money. More safety. More courage. More of everything.

MOTHER And today?
The Boy opens his hands and studies his empty palms in the lamplight.

BOY Today there was only what was in front of me. Five loaves. Two fish. And one very small boy.

MOTHER You weren't small when you walked out that door this morning.

BOY I felt small by lunchtime!
He looks up. His voice grows clear and steady.

BOY Mama, I used to think I had to wait until I had a lot before what I gave could matter. Now I think you don't wait for plenty. You begin with whatever is already in your hands. Even if it's small. Even if it's all you've got.
He opens his hands wide. Music rises, warm and golden.

♪ SONG THREE

Enough and More

A warm, building anthem. Begins as a lullaby between Mother and Boy, then swells with the full company.

BOY

*This morning I counted
Five little loaves,
Two little fish in my hand.
I knew every number,
I knew what I owned,
I thought I could understand.
I knew what was little,
I knew what was mine,
I knew what I couldn't afford.
But something I carried
And thought was too small
Became enough... and more.*

MOTHER

*We count what is missing,
We count what we fear,
We count every unopened door.
We wait to be stronger,
We wait to have plenty,
We wait until we have more.
But sometimes the beginning
Is not what we gain.
Sometimes it is only this:
An ordinary hand
With an ordinary gift,
Opening instead of a fist.*

The children and villagers enter gradually, forming a warm circle around them.

CHILDREN AND ENSEMBLE

*A loaf that is broken,
A kindness that's shared,
A place for somebody outside,
A word for the lonely,
A hand for the weary,
A little put down beside.*

BOY

*I had only what I carried,
Only what was in my hand.
Five small loaves and two small fishes,
More than I could understand.
I had asked, "Can this be useful?"
I had asked, "What is it for?"
Now I know a gift surrendered
May become enough and more.*

ALL

*It was enough. It was enough.
Not because the gift was great.
It was enough. It was enough.
Love was larger than we could calculate.
We could not see what came tomorrow,
We could not know what lay before.
Someone opened what they carried,
And little became more.*

BOY

*I cannot feed the whole world,
I cannot answer every call.
But I can give what is in my hands.
I can begin with something small.*

ALL

*Enough and more, enough and more,
Not because we had plenty before.
Enough and more, enough and more,
When one closed hand opened the door.
Enough for the hungry,
Enough for the tired,
Enough for the ones at the door.
Enough for today,
And somehow beyond it—
Enough...*

The music fades to a whisper.

BOY *(sung, almost a whisper) And more.*

FINALE

Open Hands

The cast remains on stage in the warm amber glow.

The Boy and his Mother stand side by side.

MOTHER This morning I told you your lunch was enough for one hungry boy.

BOY I remember every word.

MOTHER Was I wrong?

The Boy thinks. A quiet smile touches his lips.

BOY Not exactly, Mama. It was enough for one boy. It just turned out to be so much more than that.

MOTHER Tell me.

BOY The five loaves weren't enough. The two fish weren't enough. I certainly wasn't enough to feed a crowd.

MOTHER No. And no one ever asked you to be.

The Boy looks up at her.

BOY But in his hands, it was.

MOTHER Yes.

BOY Maybe that's what I didn't understand for such a long time. I always thought the question was, "Do I have enough?"

He looks down at his open hands.

BOY Maybe the real question is, "Will I open my hands?"

Complete silence on stage.

NARRATOR ONE Five loaves.

NARRATOR TWO Two fish.

NARRATOR ONE A child who could not feed a crowd.

NARRATOR TWO And was never asked to.

NARRATOR ONE Only to offer whatever he held.

The ensemble begins the final refrain almost as a breath, a collective whisper.

ALL

Is it enough?

Pause.

BOY

I don't always know.

ALL

Is it enough?

BOY

Maybe I don't have to know.

Pause.

ALL

Open your hands.

The Boy slowly opens his hands wide toward the audience, palms upward.

ALL

Enough...

A long, breathless pause.

ALL

And more.

BLACKOUT. Warm golden light lingers on the Boy's open hands for three seconds before fading completely.



T H E E N D

PART II

Director's & Pastoral Guide

For directors, ministry leaders, and Christian cast members

This guide is for the people who will carry the play: directors, ministry leaders, cast, and crew. Read it before the first rehearsal, and return to it along the way. Its aim is simple: to help everyone involved treat this small story with the honesty, humor, and reverence it deserves.

I. The Heart of the Play

This play is far more than a moral story about sharing, kindness, or community cooperation. It points to foundational truths of the Christian faith.

- 1 Human limitation, divine abundance.** The Boy's five loaves and two fish are wholly inadequate to the need, and that is the point. They mirror how we feel before the world's hunger, suffering, and scarcity: *What can I possibly do?* Andrew's honest question in John 6:9, "What are they among so many?", is left standing. The play answers gently: **God never asks you to supply the whole solution. He asks you to place in His hands what you hold.**
- 2 Gratitude before abundance.** Jesus gives thanks over five loaves and two fish *before* anything has multiplied, before anyone has eaten, before there is any proof (John 6:11). This is faith that walks "by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). Thanksgiving here is not a reaction to plenty; it is trust in the Giver.
- 3 From a closed fist to open hands.** The whole arc follows a familiar instinct: to guard our security, comfort, and resources out of fear. The play's central image, a clenched hand slowly opening, is where the story turns. Abundance (*enough and more*) begins not when we finally have plenty, but when we stop gripping and open our hands to God and to others.
- 4 A caution against a common misreading.** This is not a formula: *give something small and God will make it big*. John 6:6 tells us that Jesus already knew what He would do. The Boy's offering was not the price of the miracle; it was his invitation into it. Keep the emphasis on Jesus' generosity and the Boy's trust, never on the Boy's achievement.

II. Characters & Spiritual Arcs

When coaching actors, encourage them to look at their roles through a spiritual lens, without ever preaching from the stage.

THE BOY*The Open Hand*

SPIRITUAL PARALLEL Every believer who feels small and inadequate, yet is willing to answer a quiet call. He is no plaster saint: he gets hungry, hesitates, and guards his lunch fiercely. Because his humanity is so real, his surrender is deeply moving.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE Let the actor play the genuine tug-of-war. Do not rush him into nobility. His struggle makes the moment he lets go of the basket an act of real, raw faith.

ANDREW*The Gentle Bridge-Builder*

SPIRITUAL PARALLEL Throughout the Gospels, Andrew keeps bringing people to Jesus: his brother Peter (John 1:40–42), this boy with the loaves (John 6:8–9), and, with Philip, some Greeks who wished to see Jesus (John 12:20–22). He is not the flashiest disciple, but he notices value where others see nothing.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE Warm, patient, unpretentious. Andrew does not force answers; he invites participation. His “I don’t know, but it’s honest” is a gift to the Boy and should never be played as weakness.

PETER & PHILIP*The Honest Calculators*

SPIRITUAL PARALLEL Our natural, rational minds: the part of us that measures what is “possible” by math, logistics, and financial security. Their objections are reasonable, which is exactly why grace looks so astonishing when it breaks into human systems.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE Play their tiredness and frustration truthfully. Peter’s sarcasm comes from care, not cruelty; Philip’s math is genuinely correct. Let them be *moved* by the miracle, not merely corrected by it.

MOTHER*The Anchor of Everyday Faith*

SPIRITUAL PARALLEL Generational faith handed down in quiet, ordinary places. What looks like packing a simple lunch turns out to be the first classroom of surrender.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE Her warning, “don’t give it all away”, is love and realism, not selfishness. In Scene Nine, when she waits in silence, the audience should feel that she already suspects the answer.

LITTLE GIRL & THE CROWD*The Ones Who Are Fed*

SPIRITUAL PARALLEL The Little Girl is the play’s conscience: honest about hunger, unashamed to say so. Her need is what turns the Boy’s decision from an idea into an act.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE Plant her early (Scene Two) so the audience already cares by the time the Boy looks at her. Give the crowd real weariness and, later, real joy.

**THE
NARRATORS***The Breath of the Story***SPIRITUAL PARALLEL** The voice of the landscape and the unfolding moment: they see what the characters cannot yet see.**DIRECTOR'S NOTE** Speak as if breathing in and out together. Leave room after each line. Their stillness carries as much meaning as their words.

III. Staging the Unseen

- **Jesus is never seen.** The staging is the attention of the cast. Choose one fixed focal point offstage (slightly above eye level works well) and have every actor look at exactly that spot, every time. Consistency builds presence.
- **The Voice of Jesus is optional.** If used, keep it natural, warm, and unhurried, never amplified or dramatic. Many productions will prefer silence, letting the narrators carry his words.
- **The miracle needs no special effects.** In Scene Six, never show the multiplication itself. Pass bread from hand to hand into the crowd; let Andrew's hands be full again the moment they are emptied. The wonder lives in the disciples' faces.
- **Light tells the story.** Cool dawn light in Scene One, bright midday on the hillside, amber from Scene Three onward, deepening to gold for the finale. Hold the last three seconds on the Boy's open hands.
- **Props.** A wooden table, a woven basket with a lid, five small loaves, two dried fish, a cloth and an oil lamp, twelve baskets (they need not match), and enough bread to pass through the crowd.

IV. Music Notes

- **Song One, "Come and See."** A walking song of invitation. Keep the pulse steady and the mood curious: everyone is heading somewhere, and no one is quite sure why.
- **Song Two, "Is It Enough?"** The emotional center. Begin intimately; the Boy should sound small. The unresolved final chord is deliberate, because the question is meant to hang in the air.
- **Song Three, "Enough and More."** The answer to Song Two. It begins as a private lullaby between Mother and Boy, then grows into communal thanksgiving. In the finale, the whispered "Is it enough?" quietly closes the circle.

V. Rehearsal & Devotional Guide

Before staging begins, lead the cast and crew in a short time of Scripture reading (John 6:1–14) and prayer, then weave these elements into the rehearsal process.

- 1 **Icebreaker and sharing question.** Ask: *"When in your own life have you felt that what you held was 'just five loaves and two fish,' leaving you hesitant to give or serve?"* Honest sharing helps actors drop their performance armor and bring real vulnerability to their roles.

- 2 The power of an unseen Jesus.** Remind the cast that Jesus does not physically appear. **The whole focus of the play (the crowd's attention, the long silences, the disciples' reactions) points toward an invisible yet sovereign presence.** It makes a quiet theological statement: He does not need to force His way onto a stage to transform everything.
- 3 The power of silent surrender.** In the last moments, especially after the Boy's line, "*Will I open my hands?*", guide the ensemble into **reverent, worship-like stillness.** This is not a curtain call; it is an invitation for every heart in the room to open its hands before God.
- 4 A closing practice.** At the final rehearsal, or before opening night, invite each cast member to hold something small in open hands, and pray together: "*Lord, we bring what we have: our voices, our nerves, our small offering. Take it, give thanks over it, and use it as You will. Amen.*"

VI. Conversation Starters for After the Show

Useful for families, Sunday school groups, and youth gatherings.

- What did the Boy keep in his basket, and why was it so hard to give away?
- Why do you think Jesus gave thanks *before* anyone had eaten?
- Andrew said, "I don't know, but it's honest." When is it brave to say you don't know?
- What is your "five loaves and two fish" right now? What would it look like to open your hands this week?