

11-1-1999

## A Little Boy's Gift

J. Daniel Gibson

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus>

---

### Recommended Citation

Gibson, J. Daniel (1999) "A Little Boy's Gift," *Consensus*: Vol. 25 : Iss. 2 , Article 11.  
Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol25/iss2/11>

This Sermons is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Consensus by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact [scholarscommons@wlu.ca](mailto:scholarscommons@wlu.ca).

# A Little Boy's Gift

**Dan Gibson**

*Pastor, First Baptist Church  
Brantford, Ontario*

**Text: John 6:1-13 (NIV)**

Once upon a time,  
there was a little boy  
who had just had his sixth birthday.  
From his grandmother, he had received  
a crisp new one dollar bill,  
and was on his way, with his mother,  
to the store downtown,  
where he would use the dollar  
to buy a special toy  
that he had always wanted.

As they walked down main street,  
they came upon a man begging in the street  
The little boy had never seen this before  
and asked his mother to explain.  
She said "That man is blind; he can't see;  
and he hasn't been able to work.  
He's hoping that people  
will give him some money,  
so he can buy food for dinner."

When they reached the toy store,  
the boy dawdled outside,  
and his mother finally said  
that they should go in  
and make the purchase  
and go home.

"I can't buy it," said the boy.

"Why not?" asked the mother.

"Because I gave my dollar to the man."

I know that story is true,

because I was the little boy.

And I wish with all my heart,

that my motives and attitudes

were still that pure.

Sometimes children willingly and joyfully share,

and it is delightful to see!

Sometimes children are forced to share,

and they do it grudgingly,

and with bitterness.

Today, through the miracle of the Scriptures,

and our imaginations,

we can peek into the story of another little boy,

who lived 2000 year ago.

Let's call him David.

David was headed out for a day's adventure –

it must have been a 'PD' day at school,

because he had the day free,

and he was off to see the most exciting thing

that had happened in his town all year.

That new prophet, Jesus, was here,

"And he even does miracles and stuff!

And I want to see him."

His mother had made him a lunch:

"Now, I've put all the fixings for  
your sardine sandwiches in here.

Don't lose it,

and don't wait all day before you eat,

because the fish might go bad

in the hot sun.

And be sure you look both ways

before you cross the highway!

And don't go too near the water!"

And little David skipped joyfully

out of the yard,

and down the street,  
clutching his Sesame Street lunch box!

We know the story, don't we?

David arrived at the place where Jesus was teaching,  
and he had never in his life  
seen so many people  
gathered in one place at one time.  
Hundreds! Thousands!!

And as the day wore on,  
it was obvious that Jesus had much more to say and do,  
and David's stomach began to tell him  
in no uncertain terms that it was lunch time.  
It would be impolite to eat in front of all these people,  
so he was just about to slip away behind a tree  
where he could eat his lunch,  
but still hear what was going on.

But then, there was a buzz through the crowd.  
Jesus' disciples were trying  
to arrange a lunch for everyone.  
Sort of a 'pot luck' such as happened  
on special days at the synagogue.

Instantly, David jumped to his feet,  
and got the attention of the closest disciple.

The discipline was a friendly man, named Andrew,  
and David eagerly offered his lunch.

"What have we here?" said Andrew.

"Fish and buns my Mom made," said David.

It turns out that no one else had thought about lunch,  
and David's lunch box was carried back to Jesus.

We can almost hear the ripple of laughter  
when Andrew jokingly said,

"Lord, my little friend David here  
has invited us all to share *his* lunch!"

"And so we shall" said Jesus!

Later that day,

a very excited little boy ran all the way home.

(He was in such a hurry  
he forgot to look both ways

when he crossed the highway,  
     and almost got run over by a speeding camel.)  
 He dashed into the house,  
     and tore into the kitchen,  
     “Mom, *MOM!*  
     You’ll never guess what happened!  
     With *my* lunch!  
     He fed all the people!  
     *All of them!*”

And from this little boy  
     who had a generous heart,  
     and was willing to share;  
         we are allowed to see,  
         and feel,  
         and experience  
             the secrets of God’s heart  
             and love,  
             and economy.  
 The partnership between a child’s willing spirit  
     and our God’s inexhaustible intent to care  
     for His children,  
         creates a miracle every time.  
 And I want to be that child again.  
     And again.  
     And again.

*I want to have renewed within me*  
 the truth which says that no gift is too small  
     for the Saviour to use.  
 Whatever I sincerely dedicate to the Lord  
     is accepted by Him,  
     and treasured by Him.  
 My talents and abilities  
     may not be the best in the world,  
     but He treats them *as if they are*,  
     when I offer them to Him.  
 The story of the widow  
     who gave the two cents at the Temple,  
     because it was all she had,

rings very true right now. [Mark 12:42]  
 Her gift, because it was from the heart,  
 was more precious than an earthly fortune.  
 And went right from her heart to God's.  
 Christina Rossetti, in her beautiful Christmas Carol,  
 'In the Bleak Midwinter',  
 places herself at the manger scene,  
 and says,  
 What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
 If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
 If I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
 Yet, what I can, I give Him – Give my heart.

*I want to have renewed within me*

the truth that God blesses both the gift and the giver.  
 Actually, it goes far beyond that.

We always receive more back from God  
 than we give to Him.

The native Canadians of the West Coast  
 had a fascinating custom called the 'potlatch'.  
 It was an attempt to gain prestige  
 through competitive giving.

I would invite all my neighbours in for a party  
 and give them everything I owned.

Then you would invite us all for a party,  
 and give us everything you had.

And so on.

The winner was the one who gave away the most!  
 God always wins.

Try as we might,  
 we cannot out-give God.

His gifts, and love, are boundless.  
 And by our willingness to give to Him,  
 we also show our joy in receiving from Him.  
 From His heart to ours.

*I want to have renewed within me*

the truth that it's *all His* anyway!

I 'own' a beautiful piece of property  
 on the Bay of Fundy.

Or, at least, I *think* I own it.  
 In actual fact, my claim to ownership  
 is only as strong  
 as the paper the deed is written on!  
 Before I 'owned' it,  
 it was 'owned' by an old farmer,  
 who inherited it from his father and grandfather.  
 Before that it was a part of a vast area  
 'owned' by the French Acadians  
 who were expelled and deported  
 all over the East Coast of North America.  
 Before that, it was inhabited by the Mic Mac Indians,  
 who regarded the mountain  
 beside which our cottage is built  
 to be the sacred home of their god, Glooscap.  
 And they were likely closer to the truth.  
 Because a million years ago,  
 only the birds and porcupines  
 and clams lived there,  
 And a few billion years ago,  
 God, the creator of the universe,  
 looked out over that same shore  
 and said,  
 'It's beautiful!  
 And I made it to share  
 with *many* people over the ages.  
 And one day Dan Gibson  
 will think it's *his!*'

Like the great hymn says,  
 We give Thee but thine own,  
 Whate'er the gift may be;  
 All that we have is Thine alone,  
 A trust, O Lord, from Thee. [William W. How 1823-1897]

*I want to have renewed within me*  
 the truth that the good of a gift  
 continues on, and on, and on....  
 When we present our gifts to God,  
 it starts a whole wonderful chain of events.  
 The little boy gave his lunch,

and 5000 people were fed;  
but it still continued –  
12 baskets of left-overs were collected.  
What happened to them?  
(That will be another sermon on another day.)

The truth is that others, un-named,  
also benefitted from the gift of the boy  
and the subsequent miracle.

In his autobiography,  
Billy Graham speaks warmly  
of his Sunday School teacher  
who first explained the Gospel to him,  
and modelled God's love.  
Because of her, Bill made *his* decision,  
and eventually answered God's call  
to ministry and evangelism.  
Since then, Billy Graham has preached  
to more people than Jesus,  
and all the disciples,  
and apostles combined!

At the risk of sounding very worldly,  
who do you suppose gets the credit  
for every person who is led to the Lord  
during Billy's preaching?  
I would like to believe  
that somewhere in heaven,  
there is a little old Sunday School teacher  
who is given another star in *her* crown  
for every response to Billy's preaching.  
She started the process.  
Or *did* she?  
Who told *her* about Jesus?!!!

A little gift of time or energy,  
of money or food,  
of love or caring,  
can travel from life to life to life.  
What you do today,  
What you offer today,



may travel on to eternity.

*I want to have renewed within me*

what it is to be pure of heart

and open and honest,

and generous and kind-hearted.

And thanks to a little boy and his lunch,

I'm shown the way.

And the Saviour waits expectantly

for my little gift.