

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

1st Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 11

The Feeding of the 5000

The Feeding of the 5000

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will use the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 to point to the fact that Jesus satisfies their needs both physically and spiritually.

Key Verses

John 6:1-14—Main Teaching Passage

Matt. 14:12-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17(Parallel Passage)

John 6:22-71

Memory Verse - John 6:51a

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever;"

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, Mark 2:17b.

Ask the class how many of them ate something for dinner last night. Then ask how many have eaten something else since then. Act surprised that they would want or need food when they ate something the day before.

When we eat, it doesn't last us forever. We eventually get hungry and need food again. In today's story, Jesus is going to provide for someone's hunger, but then He is going to show the people that they have a greater need than food.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

At the start of today's story, a large crowd of over 5,000 people (5,000 men, plus women and children) had gathered to see Jesus because they had heard of all the miracles He had done. After a while, Jesus turned to His disciple Philip and asked where they planned on getting food for all these people. Philip replied that such a request was ridiculous, and that it would cost 200 days' pay, or about \$35,000 in today's money, to feed this crowd. John tells us that Jesus's question was a test, since Jesus already knew what was going to happen.

Then, another disciple named Andrew (Peter's brother) brought a small child to Jesus. This child had brought five small loaves of bread and two fish and offered them to Jesus. Still, the disciples wondered how such a small amount could make a difference when they had so many mouths to feed. However, Jesus asked the disciples to have the crowd take a seat, and they obeyed. Next, He took the bread, gave thanks, and broke it into pieces to distribute to the crowd. Miraculously, those five loaves became enough bread for the entire multitude. Jesus did the same thing with the fish. The Bible says that He gave out so much food that not only did everyone eat, but they were able to have as much as they wanted. When everyone was done, the disciples collected the leftovers and came up with twelve baskets full of extra food. The people were amazed at the wonderful miracle Jesus had done.

LOOK

John 6:1-14 gives us one of only two miracles that are recorded in all four Gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all tell us what happened, but John goes further in verses 22-71 and explains what this miracle means. Jesus wanted to feed these people to meet their physical needs to be sure, but He had a much greater ultimate purpose than that. Jesus performed this miracle to show the crowd how dependent they needed to be on Him.

When the people asked Jesus for more food, Jesus reminded them of the Israelites in the wilderness. We learned last year that when Israel wandered in the desert for forty years, God provided manna for them to eat every day. This bread-like food reminded the people that God was the one who daily provided them with food as well as all their other needs. When Jesus gave bread to these people, He was demonstrating that it was He who took care of all of their needs. However, this went beyond physical needs. Jesus called Himself the Bread of Life, indicating that He is the answer to every man's spiritual needs as well.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

When the people came to Jesus, they were hoping that He would relieve their physical hunger. However, that would do them no good. After all, they would just get hungry and need food again the next day. When the people came back for more food, He told them that He is the Bread of Life. Notice that He didn't say "I *provide* the bread of life." Jesus *is* that Bread, the thing we need for true, full life. While those who ate His physical bread got hungry again, Jesus said that He is the source of ultimate, everlasting satisfaction.

Just like in the story, today Jesus still provides our physical needs. We may have food in the fridge and parents with jobs who provide it, but God still gives us the job, body, and money we need for those things. However, we should not miss the point that Jesus provides what we really need, what will really satisfy, nourish, and sustain us: Himself. Jesus offers us the only Bread that can give us eternal life. More than we need food to nourish our physical bodies, we need Jesus to save us from our sins and restore us to friendship with God forever as His sons and daughters. Our physical hunger can serve as a great reminder that just like we need food to survive, we need Jesus even more so.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize John 6:51a.

Review the lesson by asking the class how Jesus provided for the people in today's story. What does that tell us about who He is?

Pray: Thank the Lord for providing for our physical and spiritual needs. Ask Him for faith to trust Him to be our Bread of Life.

Parent Question: What did Jesus mean when He called Himself "the Bread of Life"?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on John 6:1-14 by David Guzik

THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN

A. Preparation for the miracle.

1. ([John 6:1-4](#)) A crowd gathers to Jesus near the Sea of Galilee.

After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is *the Sea* of Tiberias. Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased. And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.

a. **After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee:** John now records some of the acts and words of Jesus in the **Galilee** region, north of Judea. John mainly recorded things that Jesus did and said in Judea and Jerusalem, but sometimes included material that the other gospel writers also wrote of, mainly in the Galilee region.

b. **Then a great multitude followed Him:** This miracle is also recorded in the other three Gospel accounts. Luke mentioned that on this occasion Jesus went out to a deserted place to be alone ([Luke 9:10](#)), yet the crowds **followed Him** there. In spite of this imposition, Jesus still served the multitude with great compassion.

c. **They saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased:** [Luke 9:11](#) tells us that Jesus *also* taught this multitude, something that John doesn't specifically mention.

i. Morris gives the sense of the Greek verbs of [John 6:2](#): "The multitude 'kept following' Jesus because they 'continually saw' the signs that He 'habitually did' on the sick." (Morris)

d. **The Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near:** John is the only one of the four Gospel writers who told us this took place near the time of the Passover. Perhaps this **great multitude** was made up of Galilean pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

i. Passover is associated with the Exodus and God's sustenance of Israel in the wilderness. Jesus would soon sustain this multitude in their small "wilderness" with bread from heaven — both literally and spiritually.

ii. **Went up on the mountain:** "The 'high ground' is the sharply rising terrain east of the lake, well known today as the Golan heights. From there one overlooks the level plain east of the river and the lake." (Bruce)

2. ([John 6:5-7](#)) Jesus asks Philip a question.

Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."

a. **Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?** Perhaps Jesus asked **Philip** this question because he was from Bethsaida ([John 1:44](#)) and this was near where this miracle took place ([Luke 9:10](#)).

i. "John does not say, as Mark does ([Mark 6:34](#) f.), that the crowd had been listening to Jesus' teaching all day, but this explains his concern about feeding them." (Bruce)

b. **He said this to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do:** Jesus knew what miracle He was about to perform, but wanted to use the opportunity to teach His disciples. For Jesus this wasn't only about getting a job done (feeding the multitude), but also about teaching His disciples along the way.

i. Philip had already seen Jesus do many miracles; there should have been no question to him about the divine resources Jesus had.

c. **Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient:** Their problem was in at least two parts. First, they didn't have the resources to buy bread and to feed the multitude. Second, even if they had the money it would be impossible to purchase enough bread to feed them all.

i. With greater faith and knowledge, Philip might have said: "Master, I don't know where the food is to feed this crowd but You are greater than Moses whom God used to feed a multitude everyday in the wilderness, and God can certainly do a lesser work through a Greater Servant. You are greater than Elisha, whom God used to feed many sons of the prophets through little food. What is more, the Scriptures say that *man shall not live by bread alone*, and You are great enough to fill this multitude from the words of your mouth."

d. **Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them:** Philip's knowledge of the situation was accurate and impressive (**two hundred denarii** is more than six month's wages), but his knowledge was useless in getting the problem solved.

i. Philip thought in terms of money; and how much money it would take to carry out God's work in a *small* way (**every one of them may have a little**). We often limit God the same way, looking for how God's work can be done in the smallest way. Jesus wanted to use a completely different approach and provide in a big way.

ii. "He was a man of figures; he believed in what could be put into tables and statistics. Yes; and like a great man other people of his sort, he left out one small element in his calculation, and that was Jesus Christ, and so his answer went creeping along the low levels." (Maclaren)

iii. "Philip was apparently a matter-of-fact person ([John 14:8](#)), a quick reckoner and good man of business, and therefore more ready to rely on his own shrewd calculations than on unseen resources." (Dods)

3. ([John 6:8-9](#)) Andrew's help.

One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

a. **Andrew, Simon Peter's brother said to Him, "There is a lad here":** Andrew once again introduced someone to Jesus. First it was his **brother** Peter ([John 1:40-42](#)). Now it was **a lad** with some **barley loaves and two small fish**.

i. "The word for 'lad' is a double diminutive, probably meaning 'little boy.'" (Morris)

b. **Five barley loaves:** Barley was always regarded as simple food, more often fit for animals than for people. This means it is likely that the young boy came from a poor family.

i. In the Talmud, there is a passage where one man said, "There is a fine crop of barley" and another man answered, "Tell it to the horses and donkeys."

ii. "Barley scarcely bore one-third of the value of wheat in the east: see [Revelation 6:6](#). That it was a very *mean* fare appears from [Ezekiel 13:19](#), where the false prophetesses are said *to pollute the name of God for handfuls of barley*, i.e. for the meanest reward." (Clarke)

iii. **Two small fish:** "While the other Evangelists use the ordinary word for fish (*ichthys*), John calls them *osparia*, indicating that they were two small (perhaps salted) fish to be eaten as a relish along with the cakes of barley." (Bruce)

c. **What are they among so many?** There wasn't much to work with, but God doesn't need much. In fact, God doesn't *need* any help — but He often deliberately restrains His work until He has our participation.

i. "Small things are not always contemptible. It all depends on the hands in which they are." (Taylor)

B. The five thousand are fed.

1. ([John 6:10](#)) Jesus commands the group to sit down.

Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

a. **Make the people sit down:** Jesus was in no panic or hurry. He had a huge catering job to fulfill, but went about His work in an orderly way, making them **sit down** upon the **grass**.

i. One might say that Jesus here fulfilled the role of the loving Shepherd in [Psalm 23:1-2](#). *He makes me to lie down in green pastures.* That Psalm also gave the picture of the Lord as a host, serving a meal to His servant as a guest: *you prepare a table for me...you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over...I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever* ([Psalm 23:5-6](#)).

b. **The men sat down, in number about five thousand:** Jesus administered everything in an orderly way. Yet, they had to come under Jesus' order to receive Jesus' miraculous provision. The ones who came under Jesus' order would soon be filled to the full.

i. "Our blessed Master has glorious leisure, because he is always punctual. Late people are in a hurry; but he, being never late, never hurries." (Spurgeon)

2. ([John 6:11](#)) The five thousand are fed.

And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

a. **When He had given thanks:** Jesus only had a few loaves of bread and a few fish, but He was determined to give His Father **thanks** for what He did have.

i. "For five little cakes and two sprats Christ gave thanks to the Father; apparently a meagre cause for praise, but Jesus knew what he could make of them, and therefore gave thanks for what they would presently accomplish. 'God loves us,' says Augustine, 'for what we are becoming.' Christ gave thanks for these trifles because he saw whereunto they would grow." (Spurgeon)

b. **Jesus took the loaves... He distributed them to the disciples:** The miracle resided in the hands of Jesus, not in the distribution. Little is much in His hands.

i. "A moment ago, they belonged to this lad, but now they belong to Christ. 'Jesus took the loaves.' He has taken possession of them; they are his property." (Spurgeon)

ii. "The multiplication of the food was obviously not done with great fanfare." (Tenney) This is so true that we aren't told specifically *where* the multiplication happened. It seems to have happened as Jesus broke the bread and fish and **distributed them to the disciples**. "It was not the integral loaves or integral fishes that were multiplied, but the broken portions of them." (Trench)

- Most everyone ate and was filled, but had no idea that a miracle was happening.

- The disciples did not do the miracle; they simply distributed the miraculous work of Jesus.

iii. Bread comes from grain, which has the power of multiplication and reproduction within itself. But when it is made into bread, the grain is crushed, making it "dead" — no one ever multiplied wheat by planting flour. Yet Jesus can bring life from death; He multiplied loaves of bread made from dead, crushed grain and from dead fish.

iv. "These five loaves (by a strange kind of arithmetic) were multiplied by division, and augmented by subtraction." (Trapp)

c. **He distributed them to the disciples:** Jesus relied on the labor of the disciples in this great miracle. He could have created bread and fish in the pocket or bag of every person, but He didn't. Jesus deliberately chose a method that brought the **disciples** into the work.

i. Jesus refused to miraculously make bread to feed Himself in the wilderness temptations; but He did *for* others and *with* others what He would not do for Himself.

d. **As much as they wanted:** God's supply was extravagant, as much as any of them **wanted**. All ate until they were completely satisfied.

i. "For the significance of this story we must bear in mind that the figure of eating and drinking is widely used in the Old Testament. It is a figure of prosperity... and it is often used of the blessings the people of God would enjoy in the Promised Land." (Morris)

ii. **As much as they wanted** also included the little boy who gave the five loaves and two fish. The boy himself ended up with more than he started with. It certainly was an adequate lunch for himself; but he gave it to Jesus and He it turned into an all-you-can-eat buffet for *the boy* as well.

3. ([John 6:12-13](#)) Gathering up the fragments of the feast.

So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

a. **When they were filled:** Jesus was generous, giving everyone as much as they wanted. This was a remarkable miracle, and some think that the disciples should have (or could have) anticipated that Jesus would do such a thing.

i. Old Testament passages warn against doubting God's provision: *Yes, they spoke against God: They said, "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?"* ([Psalm 78:19](#)) [2 Kings 4:38-44](#) is an example of God multiplying barley loaves, though this miracle of Jesus was on a much greater scale.

ii. Though the disciples did not understand or anticipate the miracle, Jesus invited them to participate in it. They distributed the miraculously multiplied bread and fish. Without their work, no one would have been fed.

iii. Jesus demonstrated to them the giving character of God — the same character God desires to build within us. [Proverbs 11:24](#) says, *There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty.* This bread was multiplied as it was "scattered."

b. **Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost:** Jesus was generous, but never wasteful. Jesus wanted to make good use of everything.

i. "The *fragments* are not the half-eaten morsels and crumbs which might well be left for birds and beasts, but the broken portions which He had handed for distribution." (Trench)

ii. "The term used for 'basket' (*kophinos*) usually denotes a large basket, such as might be used for fish or bulky objects." (Tenney)

C. The reaction to the miracle.

1. ([John 6:14](#)) Jesus as the Prophet predicted by Moses.

Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

a. **When they had seen the sign that Jesus did:** The way Jesus provided bread for a multitude in the open air (something of a wilderness) reminded **those men** of how God worked through Moses to feed Israel with manna in the wilderness.

b. **Truly this is the Prophet:** Moses predicted the coming of the **Prophet** they expected: *The LORD your God*

will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear. ([Deuteronomy 18:15](#)) If the coming **Prophet** was to be like Moses, it made sense that he would also feed the people miraculously as Moses did.

i. This crowd was willing to support Jesus so long as He gave them what they wanted — bread. It's easy to criticize how the crowd loved Jesus for the bread He gave them, but we often only love Jesus for what He give us. We must also love and obey Him simply for *who He is* — Lord and God.

ii. "A rabbi of a later date is credited with the observation that 'as the first redeemer caused manna to descend... so will the last redeemer cause manna to descend', and the general idea seems to have been current in the first century." (Bruce)