

VBS

2026

GOD CARES FOR ME

THURSDAY
1ST-5TH GRADE

***God Cares About
Our Service***

CC PHILLY CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

God Cares About Our Service

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks 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 verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study.

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 To teach that God is able to make much of even a small act of service, and no one is too young to be used by God.

Key Verses

John 6:1-13—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17—Parallel Passages)

Mark 10:43-45

Ephesians 2:10

Joshua 24:15

Memory Verse - Colossians 3:23

"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."

Hook

Ask the students to make a list of the most important jobs that people do. They might come up with ideas like doctors, police officers, presidents, etc. Write those things down on the board. Then tell the students what you do as an occupation. Write that down on the board and ask them if that job is important. Explain how your job is important (Example: I am a stay-at-home mom. I care for my children etc.)

Now write, "being kind," "being generous," and "loving your neighbor" on the board and tell the students that these are things that God asked us to do. God doesn't just care about big important jobs that adults can do. He cares about every act of service done for Him, even the little things!

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

While Jesus was near the Sea of Galilee (also called the Sea of Tiberias), He went up on a mountain and sat there with His disciples. The Passover was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward them, He asked Philip where they should buy bread for the crowd to eat. Jesus said this to test Philip, as Jesus already knew what He was about to do. Philip replied that even eight months' worth of wages would only buy enough food for everyone just to get one bite!

Andrew, another one of Jesus' disciples, brought a young boy to Jesus who had five small loaves of bread and two small fish, but questioned, "What are they among so many?" Jesus told His disciples to have everyone sit down on the grass. Then He took the bread, gave thanks, and gave it to His disciples who distributed to everyone else. He did the same thing with the fish. Miraculously, the food kept multiplying until everyone had eaten so much they were full!

After everyone had eaten, Jesus had the disciples gather the leftover food into baskets so nothing would be wasted. They filled 12 baskets with the leftovers. When the people saw this miracle, they declared that Jesus must be the Prophet who has come into the world. They came to Jesus and tried to force Him to be their king, but He separated Himself from them, and went by Himself on a mountain to pray.

LOOK

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

This week we've been learning that God cares for us. We saw His care for Hagar when she was alone in the wilderness. We saw His care for the widow when she was in desperate need. We saw that God cared about Israel's obedience when Achan sinned. And today we see that God cares about the things we do for Him. God cares about our service.

When Jesus saw the crowd of hungry people, He already knew what He was going to do. Jesus chose to use a young boy and the small lunch he offered. By giving his lunch to Jesus, the boy was serving the Lord. He only had five loaves and two fish, which did not seem like much. To the disciples, it certainly wasn't enough. How could such a small gift feed so many people? But Jesus took the lunch, gave thanks, and multiplied it until thousands of people were fed.

Sometimes we may think we are "too little" or "too young" to serve God. Maybe we think we are too weak, unimportant, or not talented enough to make a difference. But God does not ask us to be great in our own strength. He asks us to trust Him and willingly offer what little we have to Him. God can take what seems small and use it in a big way. Just like He knew what He would do in our passage today, He knows what He

LOOK (Continued)

will do through you! The Bible says that God has prepared good works for His people to walk in (Ephesians 2:10). Even simple acts of service matter to God. Jesus said that even giving a cup of cold water in His name would not go unnoticed by God. God can use anyone with a heart to serve Him.

But the miracle was not ultimately about how great the boy and his offering were, but how great Jesus is, and what He can do with what little we give Him! Jesus is the greatest example of serving others. He didn't come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Jesus cared for people, helped people, taught people, and ultimately gave His own life on the cross to save sinners. Jesus told His disciples to follow His example and serve others like He had served them (John 13:15). When we serve others, we are serving the Lord Himself (Colossians 3:23).

So what can you give to Jesus? How can you serve the Lord? Maybe through your kindness, your encouragement, your time, your willingness to help, or your desire to tell others about Him. You do not need to wait until you are older to serve God. Like Joshua, we can say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." God cares about our service, and He can use even small acts of faithfulness to accomplish great things for His glory.

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 Colossians 3:23

Review the lesson by asking the class what kinds of things they can do to serve God today.

Pray: Father, thank You that You can use even small acts of service for Your glory. Thank You for sending Jesus, who came to serve and give His life for us. Help us to trust You, serve others with love, and use what You have given us to honor You.

Family Question: How can I use my time, words, or things that belong to me to serve God?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on John 6:1-13 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)