

Lesson 6 [Chapter 6] "Feeding the 5000"

Remember:

Last lesson in chapter 5, Jesus healed a paralyzed man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath, triggering conflict with religious leaders. Jesus defended His actions by declaring He is one with God, asserting authority over life, judgment, and the Sabbath.

Lesson Goal:

1. Jesus can give eternal life.
2. Jesus is the bread of life.
3. Everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

Lesson opener:

Give each student a pair of scissors and a piece of paper. Have the children hold up their papers.

Say: How many corners does your piece of paper have? Allow time for the kids to count their corners.

Say: Your paper has four corners. But what if I want to give someone a corner? Cut off a corner of the paper and hand it to a child. Hold up the paper, and say: Okay, now that I've given a corner away, how many corners do I have? Allow kids to answer and then say: Wait a minute. I have five. Count the corners to the kids. Then let each child cut a corner from his or her paper.

Say: You see, the more times Jesus divided the bread and fish, the more He had to give away. Have the children count the corners on the cut-off piece they each have. Not only that, but the people had also more than enough. Encourage the kids to each cut off more corners, each time counting the multiplying corners.

Lesson Body:

The story of the feeding of 5,000 is told in all the four Gospels. Each Gospel writer includes some different details. You can read the others in:

1. Matthew chapter 14
2. Mark chapter 6
3. Luke chapter 9

Feeding the Five Thousand 6:1-15

The twelve disciples had returned from the missionary journey Jesus had sent them on. During the same period, Jesus had received the upsetting news that King Herod had killed His cousin, John the Baptist.

Jesus decides to set sail on the Sea of Galilee to find a remote place to rest and pray with His disciples. Yet, when the people hear that Jesus is in the area, they rush to see Him. They bring sick friends and family to Him to be healed.

When Jesus saw the crowd, He had compassion on them. He didn't sail further away for His needed rest but stopped to teach them about the Kingdom of God and healed the sick.

After a busy day, it was time to eat. The disciples encouraged Jesus to send the crowds away to find food and rest. The disciples were likely fearful of the lack of resources in this remote place and the distance from major towns.

The disciples went to Jesus and said, "It is getting late and everyone is hungry. Send the people away so that they can go and get something to eat."

Jesus answered, "They don't need to go away," Jesus said, "you feed them."

"Feed them? How can we feed them? Even if we were to find enough bread in this remote place, Philip responds that it would cost two hundred denarii (more than an eight-month salary).

Though Philip had been walking with Jesus and witnessing His glorious ministry of wisdom and power, he continued to look at His ministry in relation to his own resources.

We should never limit God by our own abilities and resources when we are faced with trials in life and ministry. Jesus makes possible the impossible.

Andrew said "We have five loaves of bread and two small fish. That is all the food we have."

The "Philip and Andrew" Skit

Pick two children to be Philip and Andrew. Give Andrew two cans of tuna and five crackers. Have the children reenact the scene described in today's lesson. Make sure that Philip expresses the impossibility of the situation, and have Andrew offer the meager supply with doubt.

Explain to the class that Philip could see no way to feed so many, and that Andrew offered what was available but doubted that Jesus could accomplish such a miracle.

When Andrew spoke out, it must have seemed really silly for him to even suggest that five barley loaves and two fish could ever meet the needs of this crowd. Yet Andrew's

perception was much broader than Phillip's. He looked at the resources he had but failed to rely on Jesus to meet the needs of this impossible situation.

Now that Jesus had forced them to realize their inadequacy, He told the disciples to bring their resources to Him [the bread and fish].

Jesus told the disciples to tell everyone to sit down on the grass. He took the loaves and fish and looked up to heaven and gave thanks. Then He gave the food to the disciples to give to the people.

Once they had given Jesus what they had, He multiplied it and gave it back. Jesus would supply, but the feeding would be done through the disciples. He is the source of the bread, but it is distributed to the people through His servants, the Clergy. [Priests give us communion]

Feeding as many as 15,000 people was no big deal for Jesus, but it was a big deal for His disciples to learn that they could always place their shortcomings and impossibilities into His hands. Jesus makes possible the impossible.

After all the crowd ate, the disciples collected twelve baskets of leftovers.



Takeaway:

So often we go to the Lord as a last resort, only after we have exhausted our own resources. Jesus wanted His disciples to turn to Him for help, just like you and me. We must turn to Jesus first and trust in Him to care for us and our needs. It is so important for us to bring what we do have to Jesus. He does not ask us to provide the impossible, only to bring what we do have to HIM so that He can meet the need.

Many times, we look at how little we have and how impossible the situation is. **But in Jesus we can “do all things.”** If He asks us to do something, we need to realize that He will give us the ability and resources that we need to carry out what He has asked of us. **Jesus makes possible the impossible.**

Jesus Walks on the Sea 6:16-21

The people Jesus fed sensed that He was the anticipated Prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15) and tried to make Him king. They thought, surely if He could do such miracles, He must be the king that will free them from the Romans. Knowing the desire of the people, Jesus made His way up to the mountain by Himself.

It may be through the direction of the Lord Christ that the disciples took a boat to go toward Capernaum so that they may not be preoccupied with the useless dialogue about making Jesus king. He wanted to withdraw them from this test, but they face another test, which is the raging sea because of a great wind.

A storm had begun to come up and when they were halfway across the sea they saw a figure walking across the top of the water. They were scared to death as most of us would be. When Jesus saw them, He calmed them down and told them it was Him. Once again Jesus showed His power over this world by defying gravity. Also, when He got in the boat it immediately arrived at their destination.

He allows that His children have tribulations, but He does not leave them in the middle of their trial. He rather announces His presence to grant them rest and peace.

The Bread from Heaven 6:22:40

The Jews demanded of the Lord a sign so that they may believe in Him. Did they consider feeding the multitude among whom were about 5000 men, with five barely loaves and two fish, a trivial sign?

Bread from Heaven – Gathering Manna

Supplies – cotton balls

God fed the Israelites Manna for many years in the wilderness; people should gather only what they need for the day.

Say: Please, pick up 3 [cottons balls] pieces of manna for each person living at your house. One for breakfast, one for lunch, and one for dinner. If you picked up too much Manna, it would go bad the next day.

Manna was bread sent from heaven to keep the Israelites alive, but manna didn't last. Even if they ate all they could they would still be hungry the following day. And if they tried to store some up for later it went bad.

But manna isn't the only bread God sent from heaven. Anyone know what the other bread was?

This might sound a little strange, but Jesus is the bread. Just like the manna was sent to keep the Israelites alive, Jesus was sent to keep us alive. And unlike the manna, Jesus doesn't run out or go bad. Jesus was sent from heaven to save us and keep us alive for all time.

In the Bible Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

Once we have Jesus, we are full. We have all we need. We don't need to keep searching for something else to save us. Jesus is it. He is all we need, and with Jesus we will live forever. However, the people still didn't quite understand...

They were not interested in hearing about the bread of life. They wanted their tummies to be filled, but Jesus wanted to fill their hearts.

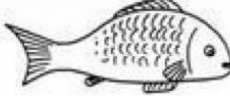
Unfortunately, the crowds still failed to fully comprehend who Jesus was and what He came to do. Christ made things pretty clear, but a lot of people at His time missed it. They missed the main point! But we don't have to do the same. We recognize that Jesus is the foundation of our lives. He wants to give us what we need to be healthy and "fed" spiritually. He has given His very life for us, and we know we can trust in His words.

The crowd asked what work God wanted them to do, and Jesus says, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one He has sent."

Who is the one God has sent? Jesus, of course! When we believe that Jesus is God, who come to earth to die in our place for our sins, He fills us up with the bread of life [Communion]. He gives meaning to everything we do and lets us live forever in heaven with Him!

Verse 35: What does Christ promise? He does not promise a perishable thing but rather promises that mystery—The Eulogia—in partaking of His Body and Blood.

Memory Verse: 6:47 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. 48 I am the bread of life.



Jesus multiplied loaves and fish

(Matthew 14:13-21)



We have here
only five loaves of
bread and two
fish.





Jesus

Boat

Crowds

Sick

Disciples

Villages

Food

Loaves

Fish

Grass

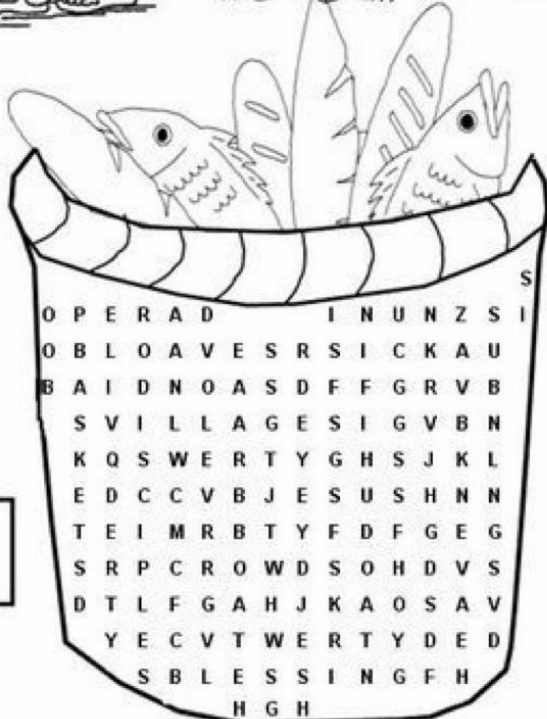
Heaven

Blessing

Baskets



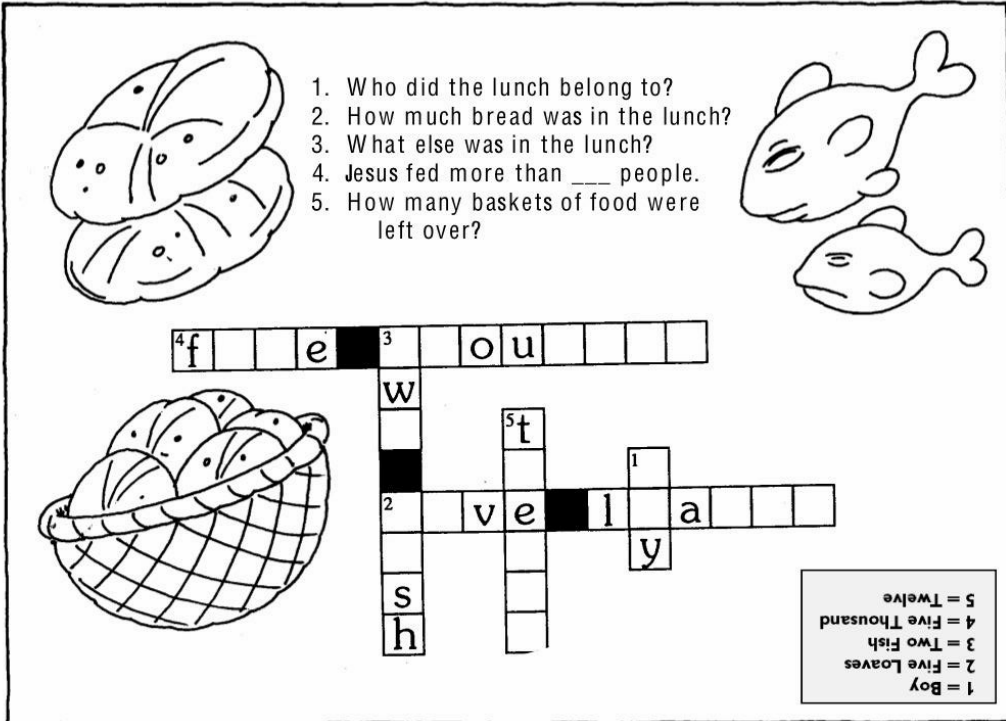
Find the
hidden
words



O	P	E	R	A	D		I	N	U	N	Z	S	I	
O	B	L	O	A	V	E	S	R	S	I	C	K	A	U
B	A	I	D	N	O	A	S	D	F	F	G	R	V	B
S	V	I	L	L	A	G	E	S	I	G	V	B	N	
K	Q	S	W	E	R	T	Y	G	H	S	J	K	L	
E	D	C	C	V	B	J	E	S	U	S	H	N	N	
T	E	I	M	R	B	T	Y	F	D	F	G	E	G	
S	R	P	C	R	O	W	D	S	O	H	D	V	S	
D	T	L	F	G	A	H	J	K	A	O	S	A	V	
Y	E	C	V	T	W	E	R	T	Y	D	E	D		
S	B	L	E	S	S	I	N	G	F	H				

A Miracle Meal

Use the clues to finish the crossword.



More than 5,000 people were listening to Jesus teach. When dinnertime came a little boy gave Jesus his lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus blessed the food and broke it into pieces. Everyone there had all the food they wanted to eat—and there were twelve baskets of leftovers!

Discussion questions:

1. What did the boy in the story have to share, and how did Jesus use it?
2. Why do you think Jesus had the disciples collect the leftovers? What does this tell us about God's provision?
3. Why did the people want to make Jesus king, and was it for the right reason?
4. What do you think Jesus meant by saying "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry"?
5. If physical bread fills your stomach, what does Jesus fill in your life?