



THE ENORMOUS PICNIC

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U3#3 1st-3rd Grade • Sept.3, 2023

Concept

Jesus fed the 5,000 to prove he is God.

Goal

Students will learn that Jesus fed the multitude with 5 loaves and 2 small fish to authenticate His claims of deity. They will be encouraged to believe that Jesus provides in ways far greater than they can imagine.

Passage

John 6:1-14

Key Verse: "I assure you, anyone who believes in me already has eternal life. Yes, I am the bread of life!" John 6:47, 48 (NLT)

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Search and find – "Jesus Feeds A Hungry Crowd," Sammy's Incredible Travels with Jesus & His Friends or "Feeding 5000," The Great Bible Adventure• Dime/nickel, 1 each• Copy paper, 1 piece/CT class• Paper clips, 2/child• Strips of paper, 1/child• Magic Tricks Instructions, 1/class• Paper printed with RIGHT/WRONG, 1/CT class <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Picture of a crowd <p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• King-size sheet map of Israel• 5 small cups to use as markers	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mini die-cut Fish, 2/child• Mini die-cut Bread, 5/child• Napkins, 1/child• Markers

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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The feeding of the 5,000 was another miracle that authenticated Jesus' claims of deity. It is one of two miracles included in all four gospels. In their gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke emphasize Jesus' compassion and His desire to provide for the multitudes through the disciples. The John account "...shows Jesus as the supplier of human need, and sets the stage for his testimony that He is the bread of life (v.35)."[1] Jesus and His disciples had gone up on a mountain and 5,000 people went to find Him. (It should be noted that women and children were not counted, so there were likely 10,000 to 15,000 people in all.) John's narrative emphasizes that the great multitude was following Jesus because they saw the healings that He had performed. In John 6:26 and 27 Jesus addressed those who later approached Him, "you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal." He continued in verse 29, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." And then verses 47, 48, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life." The people were interested in another "magic show." Jesus clearly pointed them to their true need, i.e., their need for eternal life.

John tells us that this was also intended to test the faith of the disciples. Jesus knew what He was about to do, but tested Philip when He asked, "Where will we buy bread for all these folks?" John also draws attention to the pessimism of the twelve due to the limitations of their faith, partly by recording Philip's words... and partly by inserting the remark of the more resourceful Andrew"[2] After the bread and fish were distributed all ate and were satisfied. The disciples gathered the leftovers and filled twelve baskets. Thus this sign directed the crowds and the disciples to Jesus. But it was clear that the spiritual implications of this miracle were lost to all.

Jesus is the bread of life, our only provision for eternal life. He wants you to be the instrument through whom He provides. Like the disciples, you have a choice. Will you choose to believe that He will provide through you in ways that you could never imagine?

[1] John 6:1-15 note from NIV Study Bible, p. 1605.

[2] R.V.G. Tasker, John Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, © The Tyndale Press, p. 96.

Set Up

Incorporation Lg. Group

Introduction Lg. Group

The week before class:

- Assign each teacher a part to learn for LEARNING ACTIVITY #1.
- Learn and practice magic tricks to use in the Activity Stations and INTRODUCTION. (Attached in a separate page)

The day of class:

- Collect costumes from the storage room for LEARNING ACTIVITY #1.

Activity Stations:

• Craft – Lunch Bags

- **Instructions:** Give each child 1 napkin, 5 bread and 2 fish die-cuts. Write name on napkin and decorate as desired. Color the bread and fish and place them in the center of the napkin.

• Search and Find – "Jesus Feeds a Hungry Crowd" in Sammy's Incredible Travels with Jesus & Friends or "Feeding 5000" in The Great Bible Adventure

- **Instructions:** Place the pictures on the table and have the children try to find the characters pictured in the story.

• Magic Tricks

- **Instructions:** Show children the trick, then show them how to do it so they can show others. Tell them you know the secret to make the trick work. Talk about the difference between magic tricks and God's miracles.

(Do one of the tricks from the Activity Station or save one to do the first time in the introduction.) Magic tricks are fun, some of us like to do tricks. Some people might believe that we can truly do something that we really can't, such as pull my thumb apart. (See illustration. Or do any other trick you may be able to do better.)

Did I pull my thumb apart? No. It looked like it, but I tricked you! Magic tricks are just that – TRICKS. They fool us to make us think that the person can do something impossible. But there is always some secret to a trick. Anyone can do the trick when they learn the secret. Today we're going to talk about miracles. Miracles aren't tricks.

Discuss the difference between miracles and magic tricks: Only God can do miracles. In the last 2 weeks we learned that Jesus calmed a horrible storm by just saying, "Shh... Be still." Only God can tell the wind and the rain what to do. He made a paralyzed man walk. Why could Jesus do miracles? (He is God.) Jesus performed miracles to teach people about God's power and to show that He is God's Son. And He did these amazing things not to trick us into believing in Him, but to demonstrate that He is the one true God. Jesus is real and everything He does is real.

Transition

Lesson Lg. Group

Today we are going to learn about another miracle Jesus did. It's written right here in the book of John in the Bible. (Open to John 6.)

During the second part of His ministry, Jesus was traveling to a place by the Sea of Galilee. Who can show me the Sea of Galilee on the map? (Have a child point it out.) At this place there were no stores, no restaurants, no Dairy Queen, no Burger King, no Kroger or Giant Eagle—NOTHING. As the news about Jesus' miracles spread, many people came just to see His miracles. They thought it was like a magic show. One day while Jesus and His disciples were sitting up on a hill, more than 5,000 people went to see Him!

Have you ever been to a place with 5,000 people? Where were you? (Show the picture of the crowd.) Look at this picture of a large crowd of people. This is probably what it was like that day in Galilee with Jesus.

Transition

Let's pretend we are in Galilee back in the days of Jesus. You pretend to be the crowd of people. You've looked for Jesus all day and finally found Him. It is almost dinnertime, there is no food and no restaurants, but there are thousands of people.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Drama – "The Enormous Picnic" skit performed by teachers and a student **See attached script. Instructions:** Give one of the students in the class the cloth sack lunch. Philip, Andrew and Jesus should be dressed in their Bible costumes. Have lots of fun with this; especially Philip and Andrew should exaggerate and ham it up. A teacher who plays the part of Philip or Andrew should change his/her voice to be the narrator or you can combine with another class to do the skit.

Transition

Let's get into small groups to talk about this.

Lesson Continued

That day everyone had so much to eat that they were all completely full! Are you full from your meal? When Jesus did this miracle He fed over 5,000 people with only 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. No one understood what happened. When the disciples gathered up the leftovers they had filled 12 baskets—more than enough for all of the disciples to eat! That is amazing!

Was this a trick or was it a miracle?

People were amazed so they came back later to see more. Jesus knew came because they wanted to see another miracle, not because they believed Him. He told them that they should work for the food that lasts forever. He said, "I assure you, anyone who believes in me already has eternal life. Yes, I am the bread of life!" John 6:47, 48 (NLT). That is our key verse.

Lesson Continued

What do you think it means that Jesus is the bread of life?

Jesus had fed the people real bread. But He wanted to give them much more than food for their bodies. He wanted to give them spiritual food, food for their souls that lasts forever. That food was forgiveness so that they could be friends with God and live with Him forever. Our hungry tummies are a picture of our hungry souls. Our souls are hungry with the need to be loved and accepted just as we are. But we have a problem. We are sinful and our sin separates us from God. We can't be accepted by our perfect God. God doesn't want to be separated from us so He sent Jesus to tell people that God loves them and to die on the cross to pay for all our sins. Jesus came to earth to give us the forgiveness we all need. That's why Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." Just as the bread you eat will give you physical life, Jesus will give you spiritual life forever with Him. When you ask Him to forgive you He will live in your heart forever.

If you have already asked Jesus into your heart, how can Jesus use you to give spiritual life to others? He wants you to show His love and to tell others about His love and believe that He will do more work through you than you can ever imagine.

Let's pray and thank Jesus that he is the bread of life!

Transition

Let's play "Where in Israel" to see if you can remember the names of the places Jesus went during His ministry.

Learning Activity# 2 Lg. Group

Game – "Where in Israel"

Instructions: Divide the class into 3 groups. Spread out the sheet map and place the flags next to it. Play "Where in Israel" using the following questions.

1. What region was Jesus in when He fed the 5,000?
(a) Judea **(b) Galilee** (c) Perea
2. What sea was Jesus traveling near?
(a) Mediterranean (b) Dead Sea **(c) Sea of Galilee**
3. Where was Jesus born?
(a) Bethlehem (b) Columbus (c) Dallas
4. Name another region in Israel.
(a) Texas (b) Ohio **(c) Judea**
5. In what city did Jesus spend His last week before He was crucified?
(a) Jerusalem (b) Capernaum (c) Bethany

DRAMA SKIT

Characters: Philip, Jesus, Andrew, boy with lunch (a child), Narrator

Narrator: It is getting late and time for supper . . . The disciples are tired and hungry and probably wondering if they are going to get anything to eat. Surely they can send someone into the closest town to get them some food??!!

[Enter Philip, Jesus and Andrew.]

Philip: Great teaching, Jesus. I don't know where you come up with all that good stuff! I'm starving to death!! How about you, Andrew?

Andrew: Yeah, I could sure use a McGalilee quarter pounder.

[Jesus looks out over the crowd.]

Jesus: Where can we buy bread for all these people to eat?

[Andrew and Philip look at each other as if they can't believe Jesus is worried about the people and not them.]

Philip: All 12 of us would have to work a whole month to have money to buy enough bread for each person to have only a little piece!

Andrew: [Walks around between the children in the classroom. Talks to himself.] We need food to feed all of these people.

[Approach the child with the lunch.] There's a boy over here who has a lunch. Say, what's in your sack, young man? Wow, 5 barley loaves and 2 fish!

[Take the food out of the bag to show Jesus. Wave it around. Look at the class, then down at the ground.]

It's a good start, but it is not enough for SO many people! Anyone else have a lunch they'd like to share?! [To the child with the lunch] You did want to share this didn't you?

Jesus: [To Andrew and Philip] Have the people sit down.

Narrator: Jesus took the bread and thanked God for it. Then He had Philip, Andrew and the other 10 disciples pass it out to everyone there.

[Jesus breaks the bread apart and gives to the disciples to pass out to the children.]

Narrator: Then He did the same thing with the fish.

[Jesus breaks the fish apart and gives to the disciples to pass out to the children.]

Narrator: Let's hold on a minute. There seems to be a problem besides the fact that you guys don't want the sardines. On that day there was enough bread and fish for more than 5,000 people to eat until they were full. We have as much food as those people had that day—5 small loaves of bread and 2 very small fish. But there is no way that this is enough to feed all of us.