

Life of Christ

Jesus Feeds A Big Crowd

John 6:1-15

Younger Verse

God wants you to . . . believe in the one he has sent." John 6:29 (NLT)

Older Verse

Jesus told them, "This is what God wants you to do: Believe in the one he has sent." John 6:29 (NLT)

Bible Story

The following is a summary of the Bible story to help supplement your preparation. In your personal study time, use this summary as a guide, and make notes to help you remember your plans for the lesson. Please do NOT read to the children.

When you have something, let's say chips or gum, but you only have a little bit, what do you do? Do you keep it for yourself because there is only a little, or do you share it with others until it is gone? We will see in our Bible story today what one young boy did with his small lunch.

After Jesus returned to Jerusalem and healed the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years, He went back to Galilee. In Galilee, Jesus and His disciples went to the Sea of Galilee and they went all the way over to the far side of the sea. Sometimes, when we think about the sea, we think of flat land and beaches. The Sea of Galilee was surrounded by mountains and valleys and Jesus and His disciples climbed up one of the mountains and sat down. As they were sitting and resting or talking, and looking out from the mountain, they saw a crowd coming toward them. The crowd had seen Jesus' miracles. They knew that He had made sick people well and they had been following Jesus. This was a very big crowd, a crowd of 5,000 or more! It may have been more because it talks about 5,000 men and we know that there was at least one young boy. There may have been other boys and girls and even women. Jesus looked at them and knew that they were hungry. Jesus had a plan, but he wanted to see what His disciples had learned about faith. Remember, faith is believing, even when you can't see how it will work out.

Jesus asked one of His disciples, Philip, "Where will we buy bread so that all of these people can eat?" All Philip could think of was that not even "200 denarii" would buy enough bread to give each of them a piece, much less satisfy their hunger. In Jesus' time, a denarius was a silver, Roman coin. It was what people would make for working a whole

Lesson Goals

Build on last week's foundational discussion of faith.
Realize the importance of sharing, no matter how much we have.

day. And Philip had figured out that 200 day's wages would not even buy a piece of bread for each one! They needed a lot of food. What would they do? Andrew, one of Jesus' other disciples, had an idea but he was not sure how it would work. He had met a young boy who brought his lunch with him. The boy's lunch was just enough for him, but he was willing to share. But how would five loaves of bread and two small fish help feed 5,000 or more people?

Five loaves of bread and two small fish *could* be enough . . . with faith! What is faith? It is believing that God can do something even if we don't understand how He will do it.

Jesus took over and asked His disciples to have the people sit down. At the bottom of the hill where Jesus and His disciples had been, in the valley, was a very nice grassy area. So, the people sat down in the nice, soft grass. Jesus told God "thank you" for the food and then He began to pass out the food, bread first, to all the people. And they all ate. Then the fish was given to everyone and they each ate as much as they wanted, until they were filled! How did that happen? Only five people should have been able to eat from five small loaves of bread! But as Jesus distributed the bread it multiplied until everyone had eaten! The same thing happened with the fish. And not just that, but there were even leftovers!

What a miracle! How amazing! What a sign from God! And because of this sign, the people knew that Jesus was from God. Do you remember from last week's story, when Jesus was upset because the people needed to see a miracle to believe? How about you? Do you need to see a special miracle or will you believe what God says in the Bible? He can take care of you just like He took care of the big crowd!

**Memory Verse
Activities**

Play Hopscotch with the memory verse. Chalk or tape off a hopscotch playing area. Help children learn a phrase (or word) of the verse with each square they jump over. For example: Throw a bean bag on the first square. Jump over that square, jump on the rest of the squares and on the way back, before picking up the bean bag, the first word or phrase of the memory verse must be said. All students do the same. On the next round, before retrieving the bean bag, the first two words or phrases must be said before a turn is completed.

Prayer Time

Take time to pray, in thanksgiving, for all the things God gives us that we sometimes take for granted. Thank God for the food we have eaten (and will eat) today, for snack, for a bed to sleep in, etc., . . .

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 15
Jesus Walks on Water
John 6:16-21

Preschool Lesson

Jesus Used a Little Food to Feed a lot of People!

From our Bible stories about Jesus, we have learned some amazing things! Jesus changed plain, simple water into really good wine. He healed a very sick little boy. He even caused a man to walk who had been sick for thirty-eight years!

We open our Bible today and read that a really big crowd followed Jesus and His friends to the sea. The crowd was hungry! But what would they eat? Andrew, one of Jesus' friends, had met a young boy in the crowd. This young boy was very prepared; he had brought his lunch with him. The young boy was very nice; he wanted to share his lunch with others, but there were 5,000 people in the crowd, and the little boy only had two fishes and fives small loaves of bread. Have you ever tried to share something and were told that you were too small or that what you had was not enough? Well, not this young boy. He had already met one of Jesus' friends, Andrew. He and Jesus liked the idea of this young boy sharing what little he had. They did not make fun of him because he was little and they did not make fun of the small gift of his lunch. They accepted it.

And then, another amazing thing happened. Jesus and His friends began to share his two fishes and the five loaves and they gave and they gave and they gave . . . until everyone had eaten. That's 5,000 people who ate fish and bread, and they ate until they were full! That's a lot of fish and bread! Jesus made a lot of food out of a little. He used that little bit of food to feed a lot of people! What an amazing thing! What an amazing God!

Pray: "Thank you, God, for sending Jesus. Thank you for doing amazing things! Thank you for feeding a lot of people with a little food. And thank you for feeding me each day!

Bring a lunch box with snack. Share snack with your students from your lunch box. Snack Ideas: Goldfish crackers, crackers and fish-shaped cheese, small tuna sandwiches, gummi fish . . .

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Bring a basket with bread and fish to help tell the story.
- Bring a picture, or make a coloring sheet, of a denarius. Discuss that money was not what was lacking to feed the big crowd. The disciples lacked faith. Use this opportunity to build on last week's discussion of faith.
- Talk about sharing. Take the introductory question from this story and build on it to teach your students about sharing and being willing to offer what we have to God. It may not seem like much to us, but God can do amazing things!
- Bring a picnic. Offer small loaves of bread and sardines. Substitutions for sardines might include gummi fish or gold fish crackers.
- Make picnic baskets out of paper bags or small boxes. Fill the basket with five loaves of bread and two fishes either found in magazines or cut from construction paper. Print the memory verse on each picnic basket.
- Make paper plate fish. Using any sized paper plate, color in scales and eyes and decorate with construction paper fins and tail.