



Feeding the Five Thousand

Lesson Aim: To see how God includes and expects us to participate in His miracles.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The God of Wonders

THE WORD

What He Has Done: Jesus fed five thousand people with five small loaves and two small fish.

Scripture Focus: John 6:1-15 **Key Verse:** John 6:6

Christ Connection: Isaiah 6:8

THE WAY

The Big Question: What is God calling you to do?

UNIT 1 FOCUS VERSE

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21

Unit 1: Jesus as the God of Wonders			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
1	Jesus' First Miracle, John 2:3-11	Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana.	To recognize miracles of transformation and understand God's purpose for them.
2	Filling the Nets, Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 28:16-20	Jesus filled the nets to call His followers.	To understand that witnessing a miracle can inspire others to follow Jesus.
3	Calming the Storm, Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 28:18	Jesus calmed the wind and waves.	To trust in God's power and authority during the storms of our lives.
4	Healing Jairus' Daughter, Luke 8:40-42, 49-56; Hebrews 4:16	Jesus healed a 12-year old girl.	To trust God's ability and desire to heal us physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
5	Feeding the Five Thousand, John 6:1-15	Jesus fed 5,000 people with 5 small loaves of bread and 2 fish.	To see how God includes and expects us to participate in His miracles.

LEADER'S ENCOURAGEMENT This week, read Psalm 111:1-5. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for including us in Your miracles. Inspire the students to be open to Your calling in their lives. Amen."

Lesson Aims are based on reflecting God's character as we participate in His actions to, for, and in the world.

Take Home Elements: The Journal Entry, Action Card, and Family Discussion Card may be sent home to encourage students to reflect on the lesson. The Journal Entry is an in-depth personal study. The Action Card is a visual reminder of the Bible story, God's action, and how we can join into that action. The Family Discussion Card gives parents and guardians a way to engage their students in what they are learning.

Leader's Tip: For larger gatherings, teach THE WELCOME, THE WORSHIP, and THE WORD in a large group setting and divide into small groups for discussion with THE WAY.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

Suggestion: Choose a game that focuses on ideas such as fish, bread, baskets, or multiplication.

ACTIVITY OPTION 1: BASKET CATCH

Purpose: To introduce the story of feeding the 5,000.

Supplies: 2 matching baskets, pairs of small objects (e.g. marbles, tennis balls, bean bags, small stones, pine cones, stuffed animals, plastic cups, spoons)

Optional: Make this game messy by choosing objects such as water balloons, eggs, or wet towels.

Directions:

1. Choose four students to play as two teams of two.
2. Have one member of each team (Student A) stand at one end of the play area. Give him or her one set of the small objects. Have the other member of each team (Student B) stand about 10 feet away from their partner with a basket.
3. On your signal, Student A tosses the small objects for Student B to catch. When both teams have tossed all their items, each team gets 1 point for the items they caught.
4. Play again with Students A and B trading places.
5. The team with the most points wins.
6. Option 1: Have the teams play again but give them baskets that are much smaller.
7. Option 2: Choose new students to play the game. The teams that win in each round play each other in a final round.

ACTIVITY OPTION 2: A BOY'S LUNCH TEAR OFF

Purpose: Teams compete to see which team can tear one large paper into the most pieces as they prepare to learn about Jesus' miraculous division of the boy's meal of bread and fish.

Supplies: Paper (or paper plates), timer

Prepare: On the paper, draw a simple outline of 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread. Be sure the drawing fills the entire sheet of paper. Make a copy for each team (2 or more people).

Directions:

1. Form teams of 2 or more students.
2. Give a copy of the paper with 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread to each team.
3. On your signal, set the timer for 1 minute. Teams are to tear their paper into as many pieces as they can.
4. At the end of 1 minute, tell the teams to stop.
5. Each team counts the number of pieces of paper they created.
6. The team with the most pieces wins.



Jesus as the God of Wonders

THE WORSHIP

Note to Leader: The instructions below are suggestions only. Adapt this time of worship to suit your environment, resources, and cultural expression. Encourage students to broaden their view of corporate worship by including a variety of expressions such as group prayer, group praise, silent meditation, singing, listening to music, reading scripture, collecting an offering, drama, dance, visual arts, and/or a physical exploration of nature or neighborhoods.

Ideas for Optional Visuals: _____

Today, we worship Jesus as the God of Wonders. Wonders are miracles. God performs miracles each time He takes our offering and multiplies it to serve many people. That's what happened when the boy gave his food to Jesus. Jesus distributed it to five thousand people!

To distribute is to divide up something to share with others. God has blessed us with gifts to distribute so everyone has what they need to build God's kingdom. Let's give thanks to God for all He has given us. Let's ask Him to perform miracles with anything we have.

Read the Unit 1 Focus Verse: Ephesians 3:20-21.



Sing worship songs and guide students to focus God's miracles.



Read 1 Chronicles 29:12-14.



Invite students to offer sentences of praise to God by completing the following sentence:
"Lord, we worship You for _____."



Jesus fed five thousand people

THE WORD Presentation

Note to Leader: Adapt this segment to your setting (Sunday School class, youth group, multi-age gathering, youth camp, retreat, etc.). In some settings, you may choose to have a student read the scripture aloud, and then have the leader, in his or her own words, briefly communicate the Teaching Points, the Christ Connection, and the Big Question. In other settings, a teacher, pastor, or other experienced speaker may present a lecture or extended message that includes those same elements.

Ideas for Optional Visuals:

You may choose to include an object lesson, video clip, drama, dance, song, or work of art to illustrate the teaching points.

Option 1: _____

Option 2: _____



TEACHING POINTS

Consider current culture and influences impacting your students, and adjust the teaching accordingly.

Read the suggested scripture and communicate each of the points noted.

Last time, we learned Jesus brought Jairus' 12 year-old daughter back to life. That miracle showed Jesus was God's Son and He had the power to raise the dead. Today, we will explore a miracle that took place at Bethsaida near the Sea of Galilee. This is the only miracle, besides Jesus' resurrection, recorded in all four gospels (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15), and it's probably the most well-known of all Jesus' miracles. Let's read John's report.

The leader or a student reads John 6:1-15.

- The people had seen Jesus' miracles. Some were fascinated just seeing what He was doing. Others needed miraculous healing for themselves or their loved ones.
- Even as they were arriving, Jesus was wanting to provide for the people. Jesus doesn't just care for our spiritual needs, He also cares for our physical needs.
- Jesus asked Philip where they might buy bread because He knew he was from Bethsaida which was the town closest to where they were.
- Jesus knew exactly how He would feed the people, but He asked His disciples this question to test their faith. Based on their responses, they didn't understand yet what Jesus could do even though they had seen Him do miracles.
- (v. 7) A denarius would have been equivalent to a day's wages for a laborer.
- Jesus asked for the boy's meal of loaves and fish and the disciples brought it to Him even though they could never have imagined what Jesus would do with it. Both the boy and the disciples performed an act of obedience when they gave the lunch to Jesus. Acts of obedience and trust in God are often necessary when God does miracles. In what other miracles have you seen people trust Jesus? (Mary trusted Jesus to help when the wine at the wedding was gone. The disciples let down their nets at Jesus' command.)

THE WORD Presentation *continued*

- The blessing and breaking of bread is something the disciples would see Jesus do many times, including their last supper together on the night Jesus was betrayed.
- The disciples gathered what they had and gave it to Jesus. Jesus blessed and performed a miracle with it. Jesus uses whatever we give Him to perform miracles. The miracles bring Him glory and help build His kingdom.
- (v. 14-15) The people would have known Moses' prophecy of a prophet (or Messiah) who would come into the world (Deuteronomy 18:15). However, they thought the Messiah would come to rule them here on earth and save them from Roman rule. They wanted to proclaim Him as the long-expected king.
- The disciples and the boy not only witnessed the miracle feeding of the 5,000, they were part of it.
- Like the boy and the disciples, we may see challenges that no one person can meet such as homelessness, hunger, poverty, crime, discrimination and injustice. We can choose to think there's nothing that can be done or we can have faith that Jesus can do the impossible through us.
- Jesus didn't need to use the boy or the disciples in this miracle but He did so they could see who Jesus was and what He could do. Jesus does the same for us. He challenges us to do tasks that we cannot accomplish without trusting in Him so our faith may grow.
- When believers give what they have to Jesus. He will bless it, multiply and distribute it, and do miracles with it!



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

In the whole story of God, what's the connection between this New Testament story and the Old Testament?

God includes us in and expects us to participate in His miracles. We can choose to say no, to think that what He's asking for is impossible, or we can have faith in Him and say, "Here am I! Send me."

- The leader or a student reads aloud Isaiah 6:8.



THE BIG QUESTION

Introduce and elaborate on this question. Students will answer it in their discussion group.

What is God calling you to do?



THE WAY Discussion



GETTING STARTED Display and review the Discussion Group Covenant below:

**We will include everyone here, treating one another with respect and kindness.
We will encourage everyone here to express their thoughts and opposing views.**

Every student shares his or her best experience or greatest challenge of the past week.



READ IT AGAIN

Read John 6:1-15 silently or aloud.

How would you describe the crowd that is following Jesus?

Why did Jesus ask Philip where to buy bread when He already had a plan?

How much did the people eat? What does this tell us about Jesus' miracles? (He always provides in abundance.)

What do you think the disciples learned about themselves that day?



THE BIG QUESTION Invite students to share their answers.

What is God calling you to do?



TAKE ACTION Lead students in a discussion using the questions below.

How does it make you feel to know that God tests people to help them better understand Him?

Why do you think acts of obedience and trust in God are often necessary for miracles to happen?

Have you ever faced an impossible situation where you felt overwhelmed and completely unable to meet the needs of your situation?

Have you ever experienced a time when God provided more than you needed?

Ask each student to complete this sentence: **God calls us to trust Him to provide SO THAT others might _____.**



PRAY Share prayer requests and answered prayers.

Have students pray with partners, or have the whole group pray together.



FINAL FIVE MINUTES When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

Give each student Action Card #5 and Journal Entry #5. **Take home today's Action Card as a reminder of how we can join in what God is doing. Use the Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Complete your Journal Entries at home and keep them together in a notebook or in your Bible.** Optional: Provide parent or guardian with Family Discussion Card #5.

GOD OF WONDERS

JOURNAL ENTRY #5

Feeding the Five Thousand

John 6:1-15

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

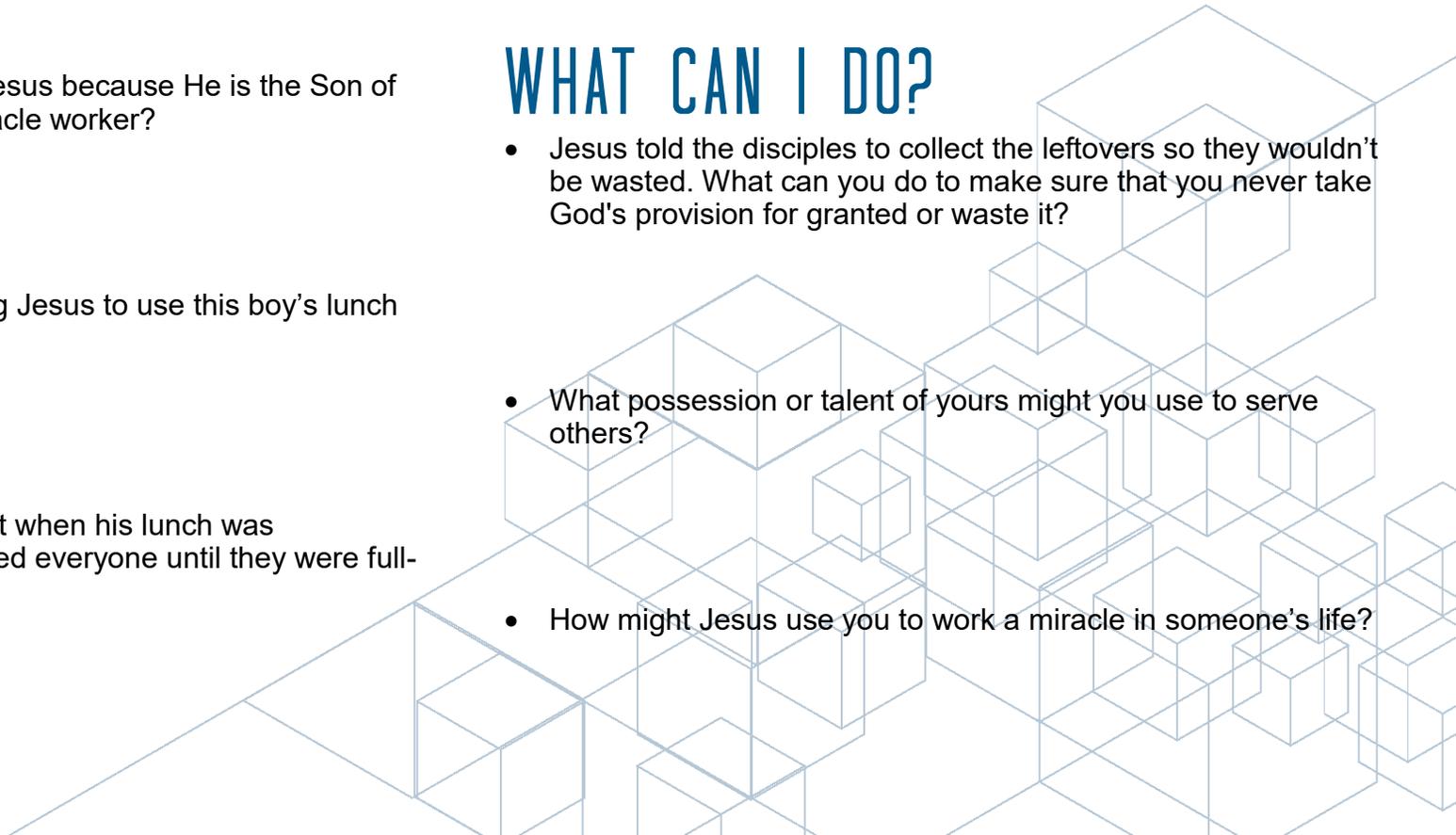
- **Pray!!!** Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what He wants you to learn from this passage.
- **Read John 6:1-15.**
- Were the people following Jesus because He is the Son of God or because He is a miracle worker?
- Was Andrew really expecting Jesus to use this boy's lunch to feed the crowd?
- How do you think the boy felt when his lunch was miraculously magnified to feed everyone until they were full-with lots of leftovers?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Describe this miracle from the crowd's point of view.
- Describe this miracle from the disciple's point of view.
- Why did Jesus test the faith of the disciples?

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Jesus told the disciples to collect the leftovers so they wouldn't be wasted. What can you do to make sure that you never take God's provision for granted or waste it?
- What possession or talent of yours might you use to serve others?
- How might Jesus use you to work a miracle in someone's life?



Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Action Card #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

JOHN 6:1-15

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE PART OF JESUS' MIRACLES.

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?

Family Discussion #5/GOW

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

READ JOHN 6:1-15.

JESUS FED 5,000 PEOPLE WITH 5 SMALL LOAVES OF BREAD AND 2 FISH.

WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO?