

Get Ready!

Jesus Feeds the 5,000

By: Linda Carlblom



Text

Matthew 14:15-21; Mark 6:33-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14

Key Quest Verse

“In everything give thanks” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Bible Background

Jesus was always the center of attention. Many persons from many villages followed Jesus and His disciples everywhere they went. They wanted to hear His words, see His wonders, and experience His love. All day long, the multitude had been with Jesus in a solitary place on a grassy hillside, overlooking the Sea of Galilee. Now they had become hungry and were far from home. Jesus looked upon them and had compassion for them. A boy had a basket of five loaves of barley bread and two fishes. This was the only food found anywhere by the disciples. The boy gladly made his food available to the Lord. Jesus first lifted His head toward heaven and prayed to His Father in heaven. Then, in this amazing miracle, Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed the 5,000. Jesus continually broke the bread and divided the fishes. More than enough was provided. In fact, twelve baskets of surplus food were gathered by the disciples after everyone had finished eating. Jesus always works in an orderly way. He told the disciples to arrange the people in groups of fifty. No doubt, they reclined on the grass like they would in a Roman and Jewish dining room. On three sides of a rectangle area, they reclined as if they were on couches or cushions facing the open central area. The disciples could then serve them with food, entering the area from the open fourth side. The discovery of Pompeii in southern Italy, enables us to know what Roman homes were like in New Testament times. Buried by the eruption of the volcano, Mount Vesuvius, August 24, 79 A.D., Pompeii was preserved by cinders and ashes like a time capsule city. Since 1748, Pompeii has been in the process of being excavated. Dining rooms and wall frescoes in the houses uncovered enable us to know much about life in Bible times. Dining rooms were called tricliniums, indicating use of three sides of a table. Some leaders probably would have tossed the broken bread and pieces of fish into the air and let the multitude scramble to get something to eat. Jesus, on the other hand, would never do that. He did all things decently and in order. Avoiding chaos and confusion, His activities were characterized by order, calmness, and peace. An inspiring concept is involved in the three L's. The Lad shared his Lunch with the Lord. Place whatever you have in your hands and life into the hands of the Savior. Wonderful results will multiply.

Get Ready!**Lesson Quest****What I want my students to:**

- Know:** That Jesus can do miracles.
- Feel:** That Jesus cares for our needs.
- Do:** Be thankful for what we have and share it with others.

Leader's Devotion

There on the grassy hillside were Jesus and His disciples along with thousands of people. The sun shone brightly on them. Children ran and played while parents shooed away buzzing flies and waited for Jesus to speak. They hung on His every word, their souls filling with the life He offered. No doubt, they didn't even notice their growling stomachs. Who cared if they missed a meal? They were listening to the Great Teacher, the very Son of God. The disciples were the first ones to mention food. Maybe they were the first ones to get hungry. "It's a long way to the village to get food. We'd better let them go before it gets too late," they suggested. Jesus' response was point blank. "You give them something to eat." I would love to have seen the look on the disciples' faces. It may have looked like one my husband has seen when he invites guests over without consulting me. So, often I think I have nothing to offer, just as the disciples did. But, Jesus took the boy's meager lunch and used it in unimaginable ways. He lifted the child's meal toward heaven and gave thanks for it. No whining or complaining about how little it was and how many mouths there were to feed. Only thanksgiving for God's provision. His provision is always enough. Always. Whatever we have, if we offer it heavenward with thanksgiving, God multiplies it and uses it for His glory. Children sometimes seem too small or wiggly to soak in any great Biblical truth. But, when their names are lifted to heaven on the wings of your prayers, their faith grows in His love. God will use them in ways beyond your imagination, just as He did a child's lunch.

Get Set!**Option A****PICNIC WITH JESUS**

Materials: A tablecloth or blanket to spread on the floor or ground, cheese and crackers or a small snack food, juice or water

Procedure: If it's a nice day, have your picnic outside. Hand snacks out for children to munch on while they listen to the story.

Story Tie-In: The Bible tells us about a big picnic that Jesus had with thousands of people. It was one of the biggest picnics ever! But, there was a big problem. Let's listen and see what it was.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B**IT'S NOT ENOUGH!**

Materials: A lunch box or brown bag with a lunch inside, a knife to cut the sandwich into pieces

Procedure: Sit on the floor or ground. Bring out the lunch.

Story Tie-In: I brought my lunch with me today, because sometimes I get hungry before church is over. Do you? Are you hungry now? (Let children respond.) Oh, dear. I don't know what to do. I only have one sandwich. What should I do? (Let kids answer. Share.) Good idea. I'll share my lunch with you. Remember, you may not get very much since one sandwich has to feed us all. But, let's say thank you to God for what He has given us. Say aloud together, "Thank You, God."

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY



Get Set!**Bible Story**

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles.

Jesus and His disciples were on a green grassy hill and a huge crowd of people had gathered to listen to Jesus. It was a beautiful day. The sun was shining and the sky was clear and blue. Children ran and played. Maybe they even rolled down the side of the hill. Have you ever done that?

They were having a wonderful day with Jesus. But, the disciples were thinking ahead to dinner. They knew it would take a lot of food to feed this many people, and they hadn't brought any along.

“Hey, Jesus,” one of them said. “Maybe you should send everyone away so they can go buy food for supper before it gets too late.”

What do you think Jesus said? Jesus surprised them and said, “You feed them.” “But, we don't have enough money to buy that much food!” the disciples sputtered.

Then Andrew, one of Jesus' helpers, spoke up and said, “Here is a boy with a lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish. But, that would never be enough to feed all these people!”

Jesus had a plan. He told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups all along the hillside. Then He took the boy's lunch and thanked God for it. He may have thanked God for the kind little boy who shared it, too. Then He passed the basket of food around to the groups of people. How many people do you think it fed? (Let children guess.) It fed *all* the people – over 5,000 of them! There was even food left over!

How do you think that could happen? (Let children respond.) It happened, because God did a miracle. What is a miracle? (Let children answer.) A miracle is when God does something that is too hard for a regular person to do. He can do things that we can't do. That's why we can trust Him with anything. We can't make five loaves and two fish feed thousands of people. We can hardly make one little sandwich feed our whole class! But, God can. He can do miracles. And, He does them because He loves us and takes good care of us.

Go!**Basket Weaving****CRAFT**

Materials: Plastic fruit basket like what strawberries come in, strips of construction paper in various colors, a slip of paper with the Key Quest Verse on it

Quest Connection

In Bible times, kids didn't have lunch boxes in which to carry their lunches. They used baskets instead. The little boy who shared his lunch probably had his lunch in a basket, too. Let's weave a basket.

Procedure: Give children strips of construction paper to weave in and out of the plastic basket. Glue the Key Quest Verse on the completed basket.

Teacher Tip: Cut the strips of paper before class. The weaving will help the children develop fine motor skills.

Close

What will you put in your basket? (Let children answer.) Whatever you put in it, remember to thank God for it.

Go!



Giving Thanks Makes Life Sweet

COOKING: Be sure to check for food allergies!

Materials: Two packets of unsweetened Kool-Aid, two pitchers, a 1 cup measuring cup, a long spoon for stirring Kool-Aid, a canister of sugar, a teaspoon
 Make two pitchers of Kool-Aid, leaving out the sugar. Set aside one pitcher of Kool-Aid. Children will add the sugar later.

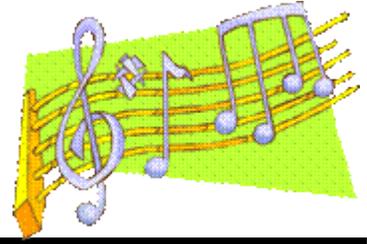
Quest Connection

Our Key Quest verse tells us to give thanks in everything. Do you think we can remember that? Let's have a refreshing drink and see how long we remember to give thanks in everything.

Procedure: I have a pitcher of Kool-Aid here. Would you like some? Give each child a paper cup of unsweetened Kool-Aid. Wait and listen for their reactions to the sour taste. **What's the matter? It's too sour? You're right! I forgot to put in the sugar. But, do you know what else we forgot to do? We forgot to give thanks for our drink. When we forget to thank God, life isn't as sweet as it could be, just like Kool-Aid without sugar has flavor, but isn't very sweet. Let's pour our drinks back in the pitcher and let's start over with this other pitcher of Kool-Aid. Let's practice giving thanks. You may add one teaspoon of sugar for each thing you're thankful for until this measuring cup is full.** Have children say aloud what they're thankful for before adding a teaspoon of sugar to the measuring cup. **When the measuring cup is full, we'll stir the sugar into the pitcher of Kool-Aid and then have our drink.**

Close

It's easy to forget to say thank You to God. Jesus thanked God for the boy's lunch, even though it wasn't very much. Then God blessed the little lunch and made it feed 5,000 people. When we thank God, He'll bless us, too.

Go!

Let's Be Thankful**MUSIC****Materials:** Your voices!

Quest Connection

Let's show God how we can lift our voices to Him to show Him how thankful we are for all the many things we have.

Procedure: Sing the following echo song to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"

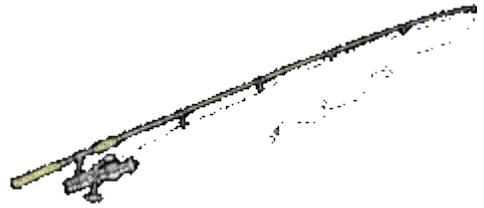
Let's be thankful
(Let's be thankful)
Let's be glad
(Let's be glad)
For the many good things
(For the many good things)
That we have
(That we have)

-Author Unknown

Teacher Tip: This easy song can become your class prayer song. Use it before snacks, or to open or close each session. It's a good way to get children praying even if they are uncomfortable praying aloud.

Close

Prayer: Thank You God, for giving us so many good things. Help us remember to give You thanks every day. Amen.

Go!**Fishing****GAME**

Materials: A fishing pole with a magnet at the end, or a wooden dowel with a string attached to the end and a magnet at the end of the string, at least two paper fish and five paper loaves with a paper clip on each one (Teacher Resources), some paper tires and boots with a paper clip on each (Teacher Resources), a vinyl tablecloth “pond,” a basket to put the caught fishes and loaves in

Quest Connection

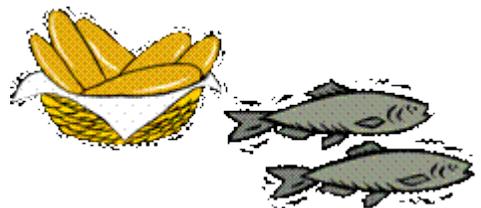
Jesus fed a crowd of 5,000 people with a little boy’s lunch of only five loaves and two fish. Let’s see if we can catch two fish and five loaves to put in our basket.

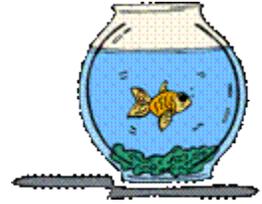
Procedure: Let each child take a turn to see if he/she can catch a fish or loaf of bread. If they do, let them put it into the basket to make a lunch for the 5,000. If they catch a tire or boot, they must throw it back. If you have enough children, you can play this in teams. The first team to get five loaves and two fishes in their basket wins.

Close

What did Jesus do with the boy’s lunch before He handed it out? (He thanked God for it.)
Let’s thank God for the lunch you just caught.

Prayer: Thank You, God, for the fun we had catching these fish and bread. Help us to remember that You always give us what we need. Amen.



Go!**Counting and Sharing Fishes and Loaves****SNACK****Materials:** Goldfish crackers, saltine crackers**Quest Connection**

God gives us everything we need, so we don't have to be afraid to share with others.

Procedure: Tell children you have a snack for them, but you'll need them to help you hand it out. Ask the children to wait to eat their snack until everyone has theirs. Choose one child and ask him to give the next child four goldfish crackers. Count out loud together as he gives them out. Then ask him to give the same child ten saltine crackers. Count aloud. Remind the child receiving the crackers to say thank you if he forgets. Then have the child who just received the snack count out two goldfish and five saltines from his snack to share with another child, and so on. When everyone has received their snack (they should all end up with five saltines and two goldfish), have children hold their snacks in their hands and lift them toward heaven as Jesus did to thank God for them.

Close

Prayer: Thank You God, for this snack. Help us to share what we have with others. Amen.

Go!**Water Table****DISCOVERY TABLE**

Materials: Large tub(s) of water with plastic boats and fish, small nets or fishing poles to catch the fish.

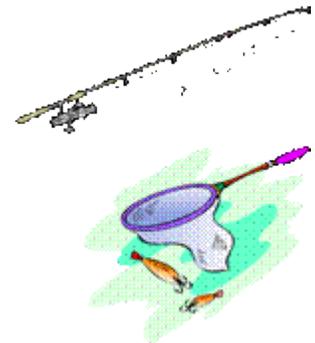
Quest Connection

What kinds of things do you find in water? (Fish, boats, plants.) **The boy in our Bible Story had two fish in his lunch that he shared with Jesus and the crowd. Maybe he and his daddy had been fishing that morning and caught them to add to the five loaves of bread his mommy had put in his lunch basket.**

Procedure: At our Discovery Table today we have water to play in. See what things you find in it.

Close

God gave Jesus the power to do miracles like making a little boy's lunch feed over 5,000 hungry people. God cared for those people, and He cares for us.



Journal Page

The little boy in our Bible Story shared his lunch. Draw a picture of something you can share.



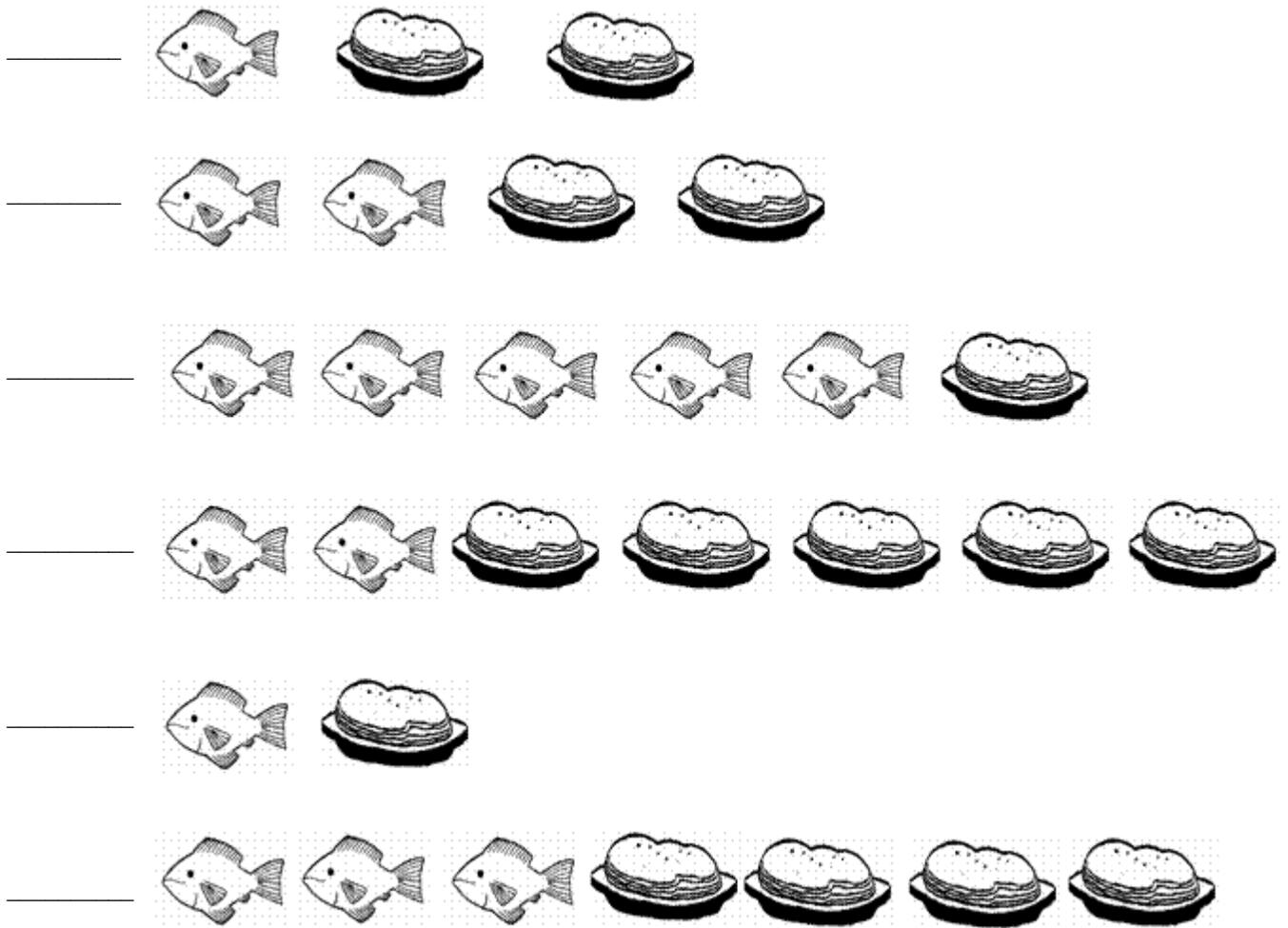
“In everything give thanks” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Color and cut out this bookmark.

**"In everything give thanks"
(1 Thessalonians 5:18).**



How many fish and loaves are in each row? Circle the row that shows what the little boy's lunch had in it.



Let us take our “catch” of good fish home with us today. They will help us remember how Jesus wants us to live. Color and cut out the fish. Punch a hole at the mouth of each fish. From a small stick and string, make a fishing pole. Tape the fish onto the string.

Resource Page

