

Christ Church Kid's Lesson

Jesus Feeds 5000

John 6:1-15



Many people heard about Jesus. They heard that he was a good teacher and helped people to learn more about God. They heard that he could make sick people well. Sometimes big crowds of people would gather to hear Jesus speak.

One time Jesus and his apostles wanted to spend time together away from the big crowds of people. Where could they go to be alone?

They decided to get into a boat and sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. They could rest and talk together in the quiet of the grassy green hills away from cities and people. So they sailed across.



The Sea of Galilee is not very big. It is not actually a sea but it is a lake. The people could see Jesus and his apostles landing the boat on the distant shore. The people wanted to be with Jesus so much that they decided to follow him. They walked around the lake to the other shore. Soon there was a huge crowd of people gathered again to hear Jesus preach.



There were five thousand men plus women and children. Jesus knew that the people must really be serious if they walked all the way around the lake. He did not rest but spent all day teaching the people about God.

When evening came the apostles began to wonder how all of these people were going to eat. They were far away from any towns. Maybe Jesus should stop preaching so the people could walk to a town and buy some food. Jesus knew the apostles were worried. He asked one of the apostles, "Philip, where are we going to buy bread for all of these people?"

Philip was from a town near there and he knew that it would cost a lot to buy food for over five thousand people. Philip answered Jesus, "I would have to work for eight months to earn enough money to feed this crowd!"

Andrew was another apostle. He had been asking people in the crowd if they had any food. He found one boy who had brought his lunch. The boy did not have much food. He only had two small fish and five small loaves of bread.



Andrew did not know how this small amount would feed over five thousand people but he took the food to Jesus anyway. He knew that Jesus could do anything!

Jesus said, “Divide all of the people into groups of fifty and tell them to sit down on the grass.” Soon the whole crowd was divided into small groups.

Then Jesus did a wonderful thing!



He prayed to God to thank Him for the food and then he began handing bread and fish to people. Jesus began with only two fish and five loaves of bread but every time he handed it to someone, more bread and fish would appear. Jesus gave bread and fish to everyone in the whole crowd. Everyone ate bread and fish until they were full!

Finally, when everyone was finished they cleaned up all of the small pieces of bread left over. The leftover bread was enough to fill twelve baskets full!

How did Jesus do such a spectacular miracle? Well, we know that Jesus could have done anything, so for us it shouldn't be too surprising. But He

didn't have to use that little lunch. He was God. He could have produced food out of a couple of rocks. Yet He took what someone had, and out of compassion for the people, He used it to feed the multitude. All the boy had to do was be willing to be used. And we can allow God to use our lives, too. We trust Him to provide for us, and we trust Him to use whatever we give Him.

We might not think that we have a lot of talent or ability or potential. But God sure does. He will take care of our needs, and He will use us in ways we can't even imagine. We bring ourselves, and He makes a new and wonderful creation out of our sinful lives. What a miracle!

I know we have all heard this story before, but here is a little background information that I find interesting if you want to share it.

Jesus had been teaching for about two years when he sent his disciples out in pairs to teach. They went from town to town teaching people about God and the need for repentance. They were able to drive out demons and heal the sick (Mark 6:12). The disciples all came together again to be with Jesus. They wanted some time alone with him but a crowd of people showed up. It seems everyone had heard about Jesus and wanted to spend time with him.

The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle (besides the resurrection) found in all four gospels (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17). It took place in a remote area on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and his disciples took the boat over to the shore but the crowd seems to have hurried around the lake to join them there.

Philip, Andrew and Peter were originally from nearby Bethesda (John 1:44). They might have known some of the people in the crowd. They would have known what food was available in the area and how much the food would cost. For this reason they asked Jesus to dismiss the crowd so that everyone could go and buy their own food.

Jesus surprised the apostles by telling them to feed the crowd (Mark 6:37). They looked among the crowd to see what the situation was. The only food that they came up with was two small fish and five small barley loaves. It would be impossible to feed the crowd.

Barley loaves were inexpensive and would have been about the size of hamburger buns. The bread might have been something like pita bread. If packed in a lunch, the fish were probably dried and salted and the size of sardines.

Jesus organised the crowd by having the disciples divided them into groups of fifty. It was springtime, and the hill was covered with grass on which the people could sit. There were women and children – we don't know how many – besides the five thousand men (Matthew 14:21).

None of the gospel accounts detail exactly how the food multiplied. However it happened, the result was that the food was prayed for and then divided. Five loaves and two small fish became enough food for the whole crowd. The leftovers were more than the original amount of food.

Jews always gathered the scraps because they regarded bread as a gift from God. Small wicker baskets were part of the clothing of the day. They would have been useful for carrying all sorts of things

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for using whatever we have for your will

Please help us to trust in You

And let our lives be used for your glory

We know you will always provide

And make great things out of small things

Thank you for miracles

In Jesus name, Amen!