March 1, 2015 Jesus feeds 5000 +

John 6:1-14

MEMORY VERSE: John 6:33 but Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, then all these things will be added to you. Matthew 6:33

**Ponder As You Prepare**: Last week we learned about giving our unconditional “yes” to following Jesus. I noticed in this account of “Jesus Feeding a Crowd” that a little boy put his “yes” on the table. A lot of hungry little boys I know wouldn’t have “given-up” that they even *had* a lunch; let alone share it. Many would wonder, “Why give my lunch? It won’t make a difference and then I’ll be out a lunch!” Or, I know some that might say, “If the rest of these idiots forgot their lunches, too bad! I was smart enough to bring mine, so it’s mine!”

But this little guy gave all he had and trusted Jesus to do something with it. (He couldn’t have imagined what Jesus was going to do! He probably thought Jesus would eat it himself! (He ***is*** Jesus!) Even if it meant he would go without, the boy still gave it. That’s true sacrifice. True sacrifice isn’t giving out of our left-overs or abundance; it’s giving out of our need.

2 Corinthians 8:2 speaks of the Macedonian church sending aid to the Jerusalem church, each under great persecution, much like Christians in the Middle East, Asia and Africa today- “In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled-up in rich generosity.” It’s the same kind of sacrifice each disciple made. They gave their “yes” to following Jesus, and left everything. It reminds me of Abraham leaving to go “to a place” where God would show him (Genesis 12), and the widow who gave her last “mite” (Mark 12:41-44). It reminds me of the widow in I Kings 17 that honored and obeyed Elijah by using her last flour and oil, knowing she and her son would die; yet because she was willing to sacrifice all she had, God miraculously provided.

***Look what happened when the boy gave all and trusted Christ with it: He ended up with more than he came with! He ate until he was full! He watched with joy as all his friends ate until they were full! When you trust Christ with your all you won’t go away empty handed. You will be filled, and so will others because of you! We can trust Christ to meet our needs.***

Matthew 6:31- 6:34: “ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Now for the lesson……

**HOOK:** *Before class, give a “fun-sized” bag of Skittles, candy bar or package of crackers, to an older child who will conspire with you! Have them hold onto it until you ask. As you begin, “notice” the child has the snack. Ask him if there is enough for the whole class. (He’ll say ‘no’.) Tell him you will go get a knife so that he can cut it up to share with all the kids (count how many). Ask the kids if that plan will work. (They will say ‘no’).*

**Say:** **“You know, this problem reminds me of a problem the disciples faced one time. Let me read you the story.”** **Let’s read about it in the Bible.**

**LOOK IN THE BOOK:** Read from the Bible the account found in John 6:1-14

**BRING IT HOME:**

Bring out these points- either/or during the story (like explaining 5000 people actually comes out to 15,000 to 20,000. It was actually 5000 men + women and children).

\* Jesus and his disciples were trying to get away for some quiet time with God.

Why were crowds of people following Jesus? (They had seen him heal the sick and perform other signs.)

\*Jesus was tired, and I’ll bet the disciples wanted a break. Everyone was hungry, Jesus had compassion on them. That means he cared a lot and wanted to meet their need. He wanted to meet their need for a Savior and for food.

\* The words “5000 men” in the Bible refers to 5000 “families”, so there were probably over 15-20,000! That could fill a stadium at a baseball game! How much money would it take to feed all those people? (Show a picture of a stadium filled with people!)

\*Jesus had been teaching the crowd for hours! The crowd got hungry, but there wasn’t any food nearby. One boy had 2 fish and 5 small loaves of bread. Why would he give his lunch to Jesus knowing it wasn’t enough to feed the crowd?

***\*Jesus blessed what the boy gave in faith. The boy and the whole crowd ate until they were all full! And they had plenty of leftovers!***

***\*Jesus meets our needs. He can use what you give, no matter how small or big to help bless others.***

**SAY:** ***We learn from this true story that when we give what we have to God, He will take it, bless it, and do more than we could ever imagine. Even though we may not have very much, little becomes much when it is placed in God's hands. So don’t be afraid to give to (sacrifice) and serve others. Jesus will still meet your need, and them some! I think the boy ended-up with more than he came with. He ate until he was full! There were 12 baskets of food left over!***

**PRAY***: Dear Father, just as Jesus used the lunch of a small boy to feed more than five thousand people, we pray that you will use the boys and girls here today to bless everyone they meet each day. Amen.*

Note: \*If you don’t do a “food” illustration activity, before dismissing from break-out session, say: *Since (name of the kid earlier) didn’t have enough to share with everyone, “I want to be like Jesus and give you blessing. I’m going to show compassion and give each one of you a (candy-bar/bag of Skittles package of crackers) when you leave today.*

BREAK-OUT SESSION:

**Younger Children and/or Older Children**

1. Review the lesson: “Today we heard a story about a boy giving the little lunch he had. Jesus used it to feed thousands of people!” The disciples wanted to send the hungry people away, but Jesus cared about them and told the disciples to feed them.

\*What was Jesus doing with all those people? (Teaching, healing)

\*What was in the boy’s lunch? (Five loaves and two fish)

\*What did Jesus do with it? (Blessed it and broke it apart.)

\*How many people did Jesus feed? (Over 5000—probably 15 to 20,000)

\*How much was left over? (Twelve baskets full!)

**What does it mean?**

\*What does God like to use to perform miracles? (**US!**)

***What does it mean to me?***

\*Can Jesus do miracles with the things that you share with Him?

\*Can you think if a miracle that God has done for you?

**\*Jesus did a lot with a little. God can do a lot with you if you give your life to Him.**

**Younger children activity options:**

\***Coloring Page-- included**

**\*”God do a lot with a little!” Option #1**

1. Give each child a penny, a dime, nickel or quarter.

2. Ask a few (or each), “What can you buy to help feed a hungry family with a penny, (nickel, dime, quarter)?

3. Now add them all together and count how much money there is, and ask, “What can you buy with this much to feed a hungry family?

4. When we give what we have, no matter how little we think it is, Jesus will bless it and use to bless others and meet their needs.

(This is the concept of tithing to your church body and giving to other ministries. Even if you make $10,000 dollars a year, or $100,000 dollars a year, God requires us, Jesus teaches us, and the Holy Spirit propels us to tithe. If your tithe is a dollar a week, or $100 a week, the amount is not the point. Obedience is the point. God will take what you gave in faith and do what He did with the fish and the loaves. But if you don’t give with obedience, faith, and joy………. you’ll miss the blessing. That’s why for years, your pastor and his wife have been obedient to tithe specifically to our church body and then give sacrificially in our church for special offerings/needs and the building, to individuals inside and outside of the church family, and other ministries and missionaries. We did it long before he was a pastor. Each year we pray and ask God to show us where we can give more. God has never neglected to provide for our needs; even when giving didn’t make sense.)

\*\****I’ll add this since I’m sending it out: Parent and grandparents, please start now teaching your children to tithe and to give. If you need help, let us know. We have some tools to help you.***

***I read or heard recently of a man that made a practice to give something away every month that was very precious to him. It helped him practice not being attached to the things of this earth. We should never give our left-overs.***

**\*”God can do a lot with a little!” Option #2 \*\* WOW YOU CAN DO THIS AT HOME TODAY ON THE SNOW DAY!!!!! SINCE YOU AT HOME, YOU CAN JUST GO AHEAD AND BAKE THE BROWNIES OR COOKIES!**

1. Tell the group you are going to give some a snack.

2. Give a couple of the children one of these in a sealed baggie: egg out of the shell, oil, water, brownie, or cookie mix.

3. They should look confused, and not want to eat a raw egg, oil, etc. Ask why not?

4. Say, “but if we put these things together and bake them, what will they make?

(Brownies or cookies).

5. “Well, let’s try this again”. Produce individual baggies with a cookie or a brownie.

6. While they eat, explain that God can take the small things he gives us and use them to make something wonderful! (Or something like that).

\*”**God can do a lot with a little!” Option #3**

1. Give the kids old magazines and safety scissors

2. Instruct them to look for and cut-out things that they could use to bless others.

3. Give them an example to get started: i.e. a picture of a bouquet of flowers and say, “I could give flowers to a neighbor who is sad”, or a picture of a pop can and say, “You and some friends could all collect pop cans, put them together and take them to the recycling center. Collect for a month, put your money together and give to the Missionary of the Month!

4. Have each kid share something the cut-out and how God might use it to bless others.

**PRAY AND BRING IT HOME AGAIN**: “Thank you, God for giving us good things. Show us how to use the things you give us to bless others and bring glory to You. Thank you for meeting my needs.” \*Ask if anyone wants to pray to give their life to God so that He can use it to bring glory to Himself and bless others.

\*\*SINCE THIS IS GOING OUT TO EVERYONE, THOSE WITHOUT KIDS, PLEASE SIT DOWN TOGETHER AND STILL DO THE LESSON. READ FROM GOD’S WORD. THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THAT. PRAY TOGETHER AND ASK WHAT GOD IS CALLING YOU TO DO REGARDING THIS LESSON.

I’ll also add the “ABC’s” of salvation. It’s certainly not the only way to explain or lead a child in a prayer of confession, repentance and salvation, but it gives some a starting point. Certainly today, offer your child an opportunity to receive Christ. Pray with them. If you need support, please give us a call! 629-8191 (Wendy) and 437-3965 (Darin) .

If there is a child/children who would like to pray to be saved, you may share this with them.

Then let them pray their own prayer.

The ABCs of Becoming a Christian:

**A**—Admit to God you are a sinner. Repent, turning away from your sin. Read Romans 3:23; 6:23; and Acts 3:19.

**B**—Believe Jesus is God's Son and accept God's gift of forgiveness from sin. Read John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; and John 1:11-13.

**C**—Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Read 1 John 1:9 and Romans 10:9-10,13.

If you have a child who you’ve led to Christ, or who is being drawn by the Holy Spirit to do so, encourage the parent to talk with them about it more. Be available to talk with them and tell their Sunday School teacher and the pastor so they can follow-up and encourage as well.