



Unit .24

Session .02

Jesus Feeds A Multitude

Scripture



John 6:4-14, 26-27,32-35

4 Now the Passover, a Jewish festival, was near. **5** So when Jesus looked up and noticed a huge crowd coming toward him, he asked Philip, “Where will we buy bread so that these people can eat?” **6** He asked this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. **7** Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread wouldn’t be enough for each of them to have a little.” **8** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, **9** “There’s a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish—but what are they for so many?” **10** Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place; so they sat down. The men numbered about five thousand. **11** Then Jesus took the loaves, and after giving thanks he distributed them to those who were seated—so also with the fish, as much as they wanted. **12** When they were full, he told his disciples, “Collect the leftovers so that nothing is wasted.” **13** So they collected them and filled twelve

baskets with the pieces from the five barley loaves that were left over by those who had eaten. **14** When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, “This truly is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” ... **26** Jesus answered, “Truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled. **27** Don’t work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set his seal of approval on him.” ... **32** Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, Moses didn’t give you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **34** Then they said, “Sir, give us this bread always.” **35** “I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again.

What are some reasons we fail to notice the needs of others?

What are some reasons we might refuse to show compassion to others? Are any of these justified? Why or why not?



99 Essential Doctrines

Social Concern

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in their own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the Spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends, Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth (Mic. 6:8; Eph. 6:5-9; 1 Thess. 3:12).

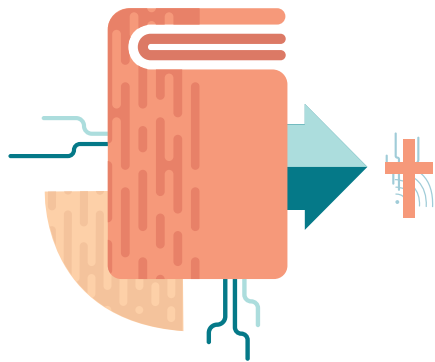
Main Point

Jesus teaches us to meet the physical and spiritual needs of others.

What are some additional ways you and your group can serve others to meet their needs?

What are some areas in your life that Jesus could use to be a blessing to both you and others?

What are some ways we might come to Christ for the bread He can provide instead of the bread that He is?



Christ Connection

When the Israelites were hungry in the wilderness, God provided manna from heaven. Jesus is the greater Moses, the One who not only provides bread from heaven but who also speaks of Himself as the bread who gives life to the world.



Head

What is the danger of coming to God for what He can give and not for who He is?

How does this account teach us that the ultimate longing of our hearts is found in Christ alone?



Heart

What does it look like in the life of a person who finds Jesus more satisfying than the things of this world?

Have you experienced a deep soul-satisfaction in Jesus? If not, pray and ask Jesus to help you experience Him in that way?

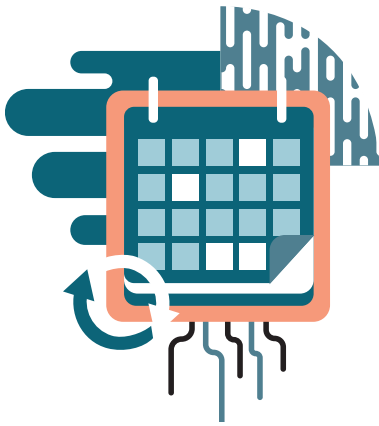


Hands

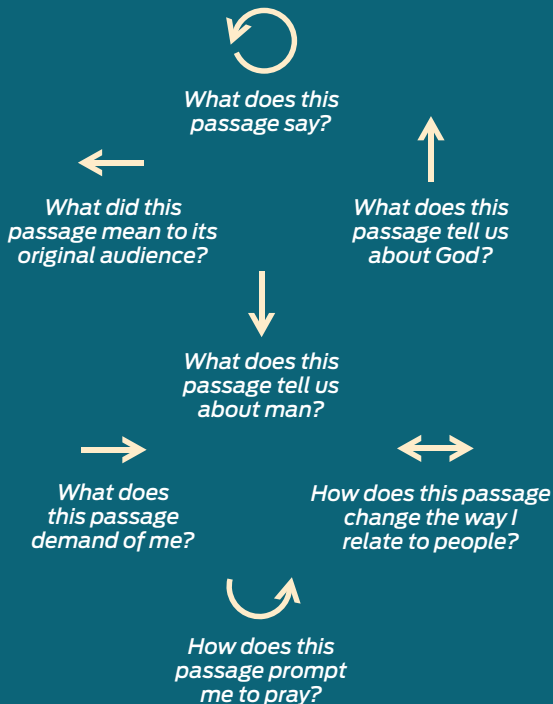
What does this account teach us about compassion?

What are some recent situations where you have felt compassion? How can you act on those feelings?

Daily Devotions



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day 1

John 6:1-10

Being the incarnate Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus knows all things (though there are times when He chose not to act on that prerogative according to the will of God the Father). Here, Jesus saw the hungry crowd and already knew how He would feed them.

Yet Jesus took this opportunity to test Philip with a question, not for His sake but for Philip's. A test shows something about the person being tested. The teacher already knows the material and presumably has taught it to the students, so the test reveals whether or not the students have grasped the material. Philip believed Jesus was the Prophet greater than Moses (John 1:45), but how far did that belief go? When tested, Philip resorted to earthly considerations for providing food; yet he was about to learn through a hands-on, miraculous experience that with Jesus, nothing is impossible.

How is your faith in Jesus being tested today, and how will you respond?

John 6:11-14

Every word of Scripture has been inspired by God for our benefit, that we may be taught, rebuked, corrected, and trained in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16). Even small phrases serve this purpose, such as “giving thanks,” which Jesus did when He received the bread and fish and began breaking them apart to pass out to the hungry crowd. Jesus, who already knew what He was going to do to feed the crowd, thanked His Father for the provision of bread.

Jesus Himself had experienced hunger, though on a much greater scale, and still He trusted in His Father to provide for His needs at the right time (Matt. 4). He also taught His disciples to pray to the Father for their daily bread (Matt. 6:11). So if we are going to follow Jesus’ example and teaching, we ought to pray to God in faith for His provision, and when we receive it, just as God has promised to give it, then we ought to thank Him for His care.

What are some ways you need to thank the Lord for His faithful provision in your life?

John 6:22-27

Have you ever had a person in your life who only talked to you when they wanted something? The crowd that Jesus had fed so well the day before couldn’t find Jesus, so they began investigating where He went and eventually found Him on the other side of the sea.

We could applaud their diligence in searching for Jesus; it seems like they wouldn’t stop until they found Him. But Jesus knew why they were looking for Him: They had gotten a free lunch the day before and were looking to keep that benefit going. They were following Jesus because of what He gave them.

Jesus loves blessing His people, but His gifts pale in comparison to who He is. When we follow Him in faith, He promises that He’ll give us more of Himself, and we’ll find out that’s what we needed all along.

How has Jesus satisfied your heart this past week?

John 6:28-46

The day after Jesus fed the five thousand, the crowd searched Him out, hoping for another round of bread. They had visions of their glorious history in mind when manna was provided for their ancestors in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt (Ex. 16). (Incidentally, manna was first graciously provided for the Israelites in response to their grumbling about being hungry and blaming Moses for their troubles.) They mistakenly attributed this miracle to Moses, but Jesus was clear that manna was a provision from God Himself. Still, Moses was the prophet and leader in charge while the people received manna from heaven.

Manna was a temporary bread. It lasted for the day, or the weekend, to sustain the people. Any leftovers the people tried to keep overnight spoiled. They received exactly what they needed for the day. But Jesus is the greater Moses. He Himself provided bread and did so in abundance, to the tune of 5,000-plus full bellies and twelve full baskets. And Jesus is the greater manna—Jesus is the true bread from heaven.

What are some other ways you have seen Jesus portrayed as greater than a person or thing from the Old Testament?

John 6:47-59

Jesus' words point to His sacrifice on the cross: His body broken and blood poured out so that we might have eternal life. Whoever believes in Jesus and what He has accomplished will be saved. But we're so prone to forget what Christ has done and accomplished for us.

The night before He was betrayed, Jesus instituted a practice for believers to commemorate the cross and remember Jesus. We call this the Lord's Supper. As we eat the bread, we remember the body of Christ broken for us, and as we drink the cup, we remember the blood that was poured out for the forgiveness of sins. This practice isn't a magical ceremony, as if we physically eat the transformed body and blood of Jesus; it is a regular reminder and proclamation of the gospel for those who have put their faith in Jesus. We aren't just remembering the facts of an event 2,000 years ago; we are remembering the experience of true deliverance from our sin!

What are some ways you can "remember" what Jesus has done and worship Him?

Use the following thoughts and questions to have a spiritual conversation as a family. Don't emphasize having the right answer, but focus on spending time discussing the Word as a family.

Scripture

John 6:4-14,26-27,32-35

Session Summary

Jesus, the Son of God, the divine teacher and healer of humanity, on His way to the cross to die for the forgiveness of sins, noticed others' physical needs and made plans to meet those needs. Jesus could have fed all the people right away by speaking food into existence or turning the stones on the ground into bread. The story tells us the number of men who were in the crowd was five thousand, not counting women and children. Five biscuits and some fish jam for over five thousand hungry mouths just wasn't enough. But Jesus does the impossible: He took a meager meal and multiplied it into a fantastic feast. Jesus told His hearers, and us, not to chase after things that perish but to go for the eternal bread that satisfies forever.

Conversation Questions

- What are some physical needs that we see around us that our family could meet this week?
- Why is it important to not only address the physical needs of someone?
- How has our family seen God make much with only a little?
- What things are we tempted to chase after in this life that have no eternal value?

Family Challenge

Create a game plan of how you could meet some physical needs around you this week. This may mean helping a neighbor clean up their yard, helping babysit for a family who couldn't afford it otherwise, providing dinner for someone recovering from surgery, and so on. Be creative and do it together! Don't forget to point them to Christ as the One who can provide for both their physical and spiritual needs.