

# SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

## WEEK TEN: JESUS FEEDS THE CROWD

### READING

5 Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" 6 He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. 7 Philip replied, "Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!" 8 Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. 9 "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?" 10 "Tell everyone to sit down," Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) 11 Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. 12 After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, "Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted." 13 So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. John 6 (NLT)

### TEACHING

Jesus was becoming very popular. People were excitedly spreading the news of the miracles and healings he was performing. In this story, a very large crowd gathered on a hill to receive ministry and teaching from Jesus, but there was problem: It was time to eat, there wasn't any food around and there were thousands of hungry people. The passage states there were five thousand men in the crowd; including the women and children there could have been anywhere from ten to twenty thousand people there! Philip knew that it would take eight months wages to buy enough food for this crowd. Today, that would be around between \$25-30K!

A young boy in the crowd had his lunch with him, but Andrew pointed out, "What good is that with this huge crowd?" Sometimes it can seem like God is limited by what we have to offer, but we learn here that if we will trust God with the little we have, He can do amazing things! Jesus gives thanks, breaks the bread and the disciples help pass out the food. Not only is there enough, there are leftovers!

Later in this chapter, Jesus calls himself the Bread of Life that came down from heaven. Jesus knew that about a year later, he would climb a different hill (Calvary) where his body would be broken (crucified) and "given away." In this story, the bread satisfied the physical hunger of the people, but Jesus came to satisfy the spiritual hunger of all people. Jesus, the Bread of Life, was broken so we could be made whole. The sacrificial love of Jesus seen at the cross sustains and satisfies our hearts and our lives.

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## RESPONSE

### OPENING QUESTION(S):

- What is your favorite thing to eat when you are hungry?

### TODDLERS/PRE-K:

- Who was becoming very popular? Why?
- How did Jesus feed the hungry crowd?

### CHILDREN:

- Why was Jesus becoming popular?
- How did Jesus feed the hungry crowd?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the bread of life?

### TEENAGERS:

- What were the series of events that led to the crowd being fed?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the bread of life?
- How is Jesus more satisfying than the other things people look to?

### ADULTS:

- How has Jesus shown himself to be the “bread of life” in your life?
- How has God used brokenness in your life to heal you and even help others?

## PRAYER

*God, thank you that you can take my little and do so much with it! Help me to not look down on myself because I think I don't have much to offer. Instead help me to keep my eyes on you and what you can do as I obey and trust you. Thank you that Jesus came to satisfy my heart with his life and his love. Thank you that he was broken so I could be made whole. Thank you that brokenness—both Jesus' and mine—is not wasted, but can be used for your purposes. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

Verse 6 (“He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do.”) teaches us two important things about God. On one hand, he already knows his plans and purposes. On the other hand, God wants us to participate and to understand both his heart and his mind. Why was Jesus testing Philip? He wanted Philip to think beyond the natural to the supernatural. He wanted Philip to believe that there was nothing impossible for God. Philip had already seen Jesus turn water into wine, but this was a different task. That miracle changed one substance into another. This miracle required the creation of new or more substance. Philip couldn't imagine that being possible. But he was about to learn that Jesus was even more amazing than he had previously thought or experienced. And that is still true for you and me! Jesus is better than you think!