

Jesus Feeds the 5,000

Bible Skills and Games Workshop: Moved by the Spirit

This lesson is based on a lesson written by Carol Hulbert from: First United Methodist Church, 120 S. State Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Copyright 2005, Permission to copy materials granted for non-commercial use provided credit is given and all cited references remain with this material.; Adapted by Beth Tobin for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA, in 2013.

OVERVIEW:

Students will compare this story as it is found in all four Gospels. They will learn about a Concordance and how to use the one found in their Bible along with locating this story on the maps found in their Bible. Students will also construct a visual representation of this story and what “5,000” looks like using dot stickers.

Bible Text: John 6:1-14

(Also in Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, and Luke 9:11-17)

Memory Verse: John 6:14 NIV

After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

Leader Preparation:

- Read the scripture for this lesson.
- Read and reflect on the background material provided for this lesson.
- Watch the Bible Study Video found at www.gloriadeikids.org
- Arrange for three youth actors to visit the class each week.

Supplies:

- Bibles
- Concordances
- Poster board for stickers
- 5,000 smiley face stickers, incentive size
- Pencils
- “This is what happened” answer sheet. 1/child
- Props for Actors - Check with Youth/Youth Director
- Three Youth for the “Visual Recall” Drama, Connect with Youth Director regarding timing. Drama suggestions follow this lesson.
- Cross Reference Sheet comparing this story in all four Gospels.
- Fish Crackers
- Napkins
- 12 cups to hold extra Fish Crackers

Opening:

Warmly welcome everyone to class and introduce yourself and others. Shepherds will take attendance.

Note: Sometime during this Bible Review at the beginning of the lesson, three youth will come in and interrupt you (on purpose). They will do a sequence of things. After they leave, ask the students the big question: "What just happened here?" Hand out the "What just happened here?" papers and have them quickly write an accounting of the events for you to come back to a bit later in the lesson. Option: wait until after doing the Bible review and then write down what happened.

Tell students we are going to learn about the story of the Feeding of the 5,000 and compare how it is told four different ways.

Distribute Bibles & Review the following:

(This part should go quickly, 2-3 minutes, but if for some reason it is taking longer, go with it. We want to make sure students know this information.)

- The Bible is divided into two main parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament
- The Old Testament contains stories that take place before Jesus was born.
- The New Testament contains stories that take place after Jesus birth.
- Our story today is about one of the miracles that Jesus performed. Will we find it in the Old Testament or the New Testament? NT
- Does anyone know where in the New Testament? (Accept any Gospel name, and get around to the story being in all four Gospels.)
- What are the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (Repeat 1-2 times.)
- What does Gospel mean? Good News
- The Gospels contain the stories about Jesus birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection.
- How can we tell just from the title of this story, "Jesus Feeds the 5,000" that it can be found in the Gospels? (See previous bullet item.)
- What is a quick way to open your Bible to one of the four Gospels? Place your Bible spine down, open it half way, and then open the right side half way again.

Practice navigating to the gospels a few times.

Make sure students understand how to use the guide words at the top or bottom of each page of their Bible showing the name of the Book of the Bible, and the Chapter numbers. Then, call out a gospel and have them navigate to that specific gospel. Make sure they are able to use the guide words to know whether to go forward or backward as they navigate through the pages.

Depending upon how they are doing and how much time you have, hold a Bible race, calling out the name of a Gospel or the story locations below and seeing who can find them first. (Bibles start lying flat. Hands are in laps.)

Dig In:

Assign each student one of the four versions of the story to look up:

- Matthew 14:13-21
- Mark 6:31-44
- Luke 9:11-17
- John 6:1-14

Make sure children understand that the large numbers are the chapter numbers and the small numbers are the verse numbers and offer assistance as needed.

Keep Bibles open to the four locations as a reference and hand out the Cross Reference sheet. Compare the lists being sure to stress where all four gospels agree: on the number fed (5000 men), the use of 5 loaves and 2 fish, and the number of baskets leftover (12). What are some differences that students notice?

Why do students feel each gospel writer didn't record the story exactly the same? *(Review a few answers from "What just answered here?" when the youth actors "interrupted" the beginning of the class. Everyone experiences things differently.)*

Pass around fish crackers for those who would like to eat them while you discuss the next section.

What is so important about this story that it is included in all four gospels? What message or messages do you think the gospel writers want us remember?

- God can take what little we have to offer and turn it into something great! - leftovers! (John 6:8-13)
- Age is not a limitation to serve God. (John 6:8-9)
- Jesus wants us to share what we have with others. (John 6:9)
- Jesus is the Messiah, God's son, the Prophet who was to come into the world! (John 6:14)
- Miracles can open the hearts and minds of people to experience and respond to God in the world.

What is a miracle? (A wonderful event showing us the power of God.)

What miracle occurred in this story? (A lot of people were fed with just a little food. The kids might also recall seeing people healed by Jesus.)

What other miracles do you know about from Bible stories? (numerous answers).

Why did Jesus perform miracles? (To demonstrate the power of God. As proof that Jesus was the Messiah).

How many men are fed in this story? (5,000) How many women? Children? Where did this story take place? (Bethsaida) Have students find the map titled "Jesus Ministry" in the back of their Bible. Where did the story of "Jesus Feeds the 5,000" take place? Find Bethsaida and spend some time exploring the maps. What other stories and place do you recognize?

While students are exploring the map, have them each take some time to work on creating a poster showing 5,000. Use 1,667 stickers each week. Students can group them in 50 and 100 if desired as they add them to the poster.

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Let's talk about another tool that can help us use our Bible. Does any one know what a Concordance is? (A list of key words in the Bible, that shows where to find a Bible verses that contains those key words. A concordance is a tool that can be used to find a Bible verse.)

Show the kids the Bibles with Concordances. Show them how to know if a Bible has a Concordance. (It will usually say so on the spine.)

Their Bibles have a Dictionary/Concordance in the back. Have them look up the word "bread". Explain that the verses listed will show "b." instead of spelling out bread. Have them look through the list to note familiar verses (such as "Man shall not live by b. alone").

Also show the kids the more comprehensive Concordance. An Analytical Concordance gives references to passages via a word from the Greek text of the Bible. A word that means "church" in Greek might be translated in the English version as "congregation". This particular Concordance would give all the listings of "church" and also the verses that got translated to "congregation".

There is another useful feature in some Bibles. Ask one or two kids to look up the story in John 6:1-15 using one of the Bibles that has a Concordance in it. Ask: What do you see at the heading to chapter 6? (It lists: Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6: 30-44, and Luke 9:10-17.)

Closing Prayer:

God of miracles, we give thanks for the signs and wonders revealed to us to strengthen our belief. Amen.

Encourage everyone to come back next week for another workshop, and to invite friends to come too!

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References for all lesson materials:

The web sites: www.rotation.org including material written & shared by: Christ Church in Summit New Jersey, and Memorial Presbyterian Church in Xenia, OH
AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project (directions for fish prints) www.northcoast.com/~fishhelp/edu_f/print.html

Books:

Johnson, M.G. Ron, et. al. Bread from Heaven: Activity & Resource Book. Irving, TX: Nest Entertainment, 1996.

Mays, James L. ed. Harper's Bible Commentary. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988. Younger, Barbara. Food for Christian Thought: Thirty-Five Programs for Church Gatherings. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991.

Alexander, Pat ed. The Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible. Batavia, IL: Lion

If you have found these workshops useful it would make my day if you let me know about it. Thanks!

Edited to correct non-functioning links to fish print examples on line. - Carol

Drama suggestions: (1-2 min. max)

Youth: Hi Stephanie, Hi Jason! We'd like to tell you about our last ALYVE Board meeting! We're sooooo excited about the retreat we are planning! As board members, we plan activities and events for all of the youth in our synod from Vancouver to Tacoma and the Pacific Ocean to the Cascades!

Another option is to talk about a mission trip and how they respond to God's love by helping others.

Youth: Share ideas and plans.

Youth: While sharing, do some of the following, all of the following, or some other similar ideas.

- Tape a construction paper shape to the wall.
- Take the hand of a student and have them stand, then sit down.
- Determine a phrase that all three youth will say at the same time.
- Tape the letters for ALYVE on the wall and explain the acronym.
- Carry in a chair or something to leave in another spot.
- When describing the music at the retreat, some one plays the conga drums.
- Bat an inflated balloon around.