

Use Week of:

Unit 24 • Session 2

Jesus Fed a Crowd

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 14; Mark 6; Luke 9; John 6

STORY POINT:

Jesus miraculously fed a crowd with five loaves and two fish.

KEY PASSAGE:

Psalms 40:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus perform miracles?
Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.



INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 174



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 176



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 182



Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit ministrygrid.com/gospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

Jesus' disciples had been working hard, teaching people and healing them. Jesus called them to go away with Him to a desolate place so they could rest. By now, Jesus' popularity was so great that finding a place to be alone was difficult. When Jesus and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee, the crowd of people were already waiting for them on the other side.

Jesus saw the crowds, but He wasn't frustrated or angry. He didn't tell them to go away. Instead, He had compassion on them because they were lost—like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who seeks and saves the lost. (See Luke 19:10; John 10:14.)

The miracle Jesus performed that evening—feeding 5,000 men plus women and children—is the only miracle during Jesus' earthly ministry that is recorded in all four Gospels. The same God who provided manna for the Israelites in the wilderness multiplied loaves and fish to satisfy the crowd.

But Jesus' didn't intend to only meet people's physical needs. He came to satisfy their spiritual needs as well. In John 6:35, Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." He said that no one who comes to Him will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Him will ever be thirsty again.

Jesus is the bread that came down from heaven. (See John 6:41.) God provided His Son as the perfect sacrifice to take away our sins. At the first Lord's Supper, Jesus broke bread—a symbol of His death on the cross. (See Matt. 26:26.)

As you teach kids this Bible story, help them know that God can and will provide for our needs. Kids can trust Him for their "daily bread." (See Matt. 6:11.) God met our greatest need in giving us salvation through Jesus. Will He not graciously give us all things? (Rom. 8:32)

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Fed a Crowd

Matthew 14; Mark 6; Luke 9; John 6

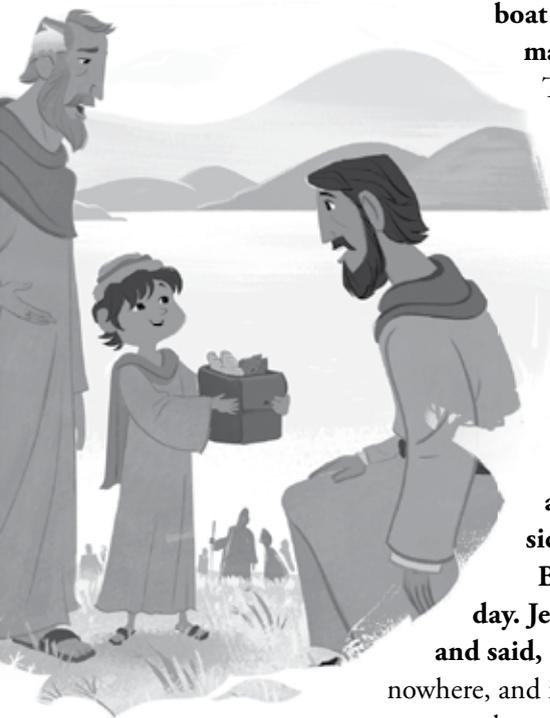
Jesus' disciples had been hard at work. They had been healing people and teaching them. So many people came and went that the disciples did not even have time to eat! **So Jesus said to them, "Come with Me. Let's go to a quiet place where we can be alone and get some rest."**

Jesus and His disciples got into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee, but many people saw them leaving.

The people traveled by foot, and they ran ahead of Jesus. When Jesus and His disciples got to the shore, the people were already there waiting for them. Jesus saw the crowd and He cared about them because they were like sheep who needed a shepherd. So Jesus taught the people many things about God's kingdom, and He healed people who were sick.

By this time, it was late in the day. Jesus' disciples came to Him and said, "We are out in the middle of nowhere, and it's getting late. Tell the people to go away so they can go to the farms and villages to buy themselves something to eat."

But Jesus said, "They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat."



Jesus' disciples were confused. "We can't feed this many people," they said.

"It would cost a whole year's pay to buy enough bread for them to eat," Philip said.

Jesus asked them, "How many loaves of bread do you have? Go look."

Jesus' disciple Andrew said, "A boy here has five loaves and two fish, but what good will that do for so many people?"

Jesus told the disciples to instruct everyone to sit down. So all the people sat down in big groups on the grass.

Jesus took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up to heaven, and then He blessed the bread. He broke it into pieces and gave it to the disciples. He also divided up the fish. The disciples passed out the food to the people, and they all ate until they were full.

Then Jesus told the disciples to collect any leftover food. The disciples collected 12 baskets full of pieces of bread and fish. **Jesus fed about five thousand men that day, plus women and children.**

Christ Connection: By feeding the five thousand, Jesus provided for the physical needs of the crowd. The next day, Jesus called Himself the bread of life. (John 6:35) Only Jesus is able to satisfy our souls forever by providing forgiveness, peace with God, and eternal life.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use gestures:** Look up as you tell about Jesus looking to heaven, use hand motions to mirror Jesus' breaking bread, and extend arms as Jesus distributed bread and fish.
- **Use props:** Position 12 baskets at the front of the room. Emphasize that the people in the crowd ate until they were full, and the disciples collected 12 baskets of leftovers.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Fed a Crowd

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 14; Mark 6; Luke 9; John 6

STORY POINT: Jesus miraculously fed a crowd with five loaves and two fish.

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 40:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to imagine they were attending a picnic with their friends. What favorite food would they bring to share?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Fish and Loaves Sudoku” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Fish and Loaves Sudoku” on the activity page. Guide kids to fill in the grid so each row, column, and box contains each of the six pictures.

SAY • How many people do you think you could feed with five loaves of bread and two fish? [*Allow kids to respond.*] In today’s Bible story, we will hear how Jesus fed a crowd of more than five thousand people with just five loaves and two fish.

LOW PREP

- index cards
- marker

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Food charades

Before the session, list various foods on separate index cards: *corn on the cob, popcorn, taco, sandwich, ice cream, soup, cereal, hot dog, chips, spaghetti*, and so on. Call on one kid at

a time to draw a card and act out preparing and eating the food. The group should try to guess the food.

SAY • Show me how you might eat bread and fish. [*Pause for kids to respond.*] In the Bible story we will hear today, Jesus and His disciples were with a large crowd of people, and they didn't have anything to eat. Jesus told the disciples to give the people something to eat. Let's find out what they did.

OPTION 2: Grocery list

Tape a large sheet of paper to a focal wall. Form two or more teams of kids. Give each team a pen. Explain that kids will make a grocery list. Write the word *bread* at the top of the list. Explain that when a team adds an item to the list, the item must begin with the last letter of the previous word. For example, the second word must begin with *d* because bread ends with *d*.

A team can quietly discuss and send one team member to add an item to the list. Then play passes to the next team. Continue as time allows or until kids run out of ideas. (Sample sequence: bread, donut, tomato, oatmeal, lasagna, apple, egg, ginger, radish, honey, yogurt, tuna, asparagus, spinach)

SAY • Imagine the grocery list you would need to buy enough food to feed more than 5,000 people! In today's Bible story, we will see how Jesus fed a crowd with just five loaves of bread and two fish.

- large sheet of paper
- tape
- pens or markers

Tip: Use singular form to avoid always beginning with *s*.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• travel brochures
• Bible

[Leader enters wearing business casual attire and a headset. He or she also carries travel brochures and a Bible.]

LEADER • Greetings! Welcome to The Big Picture Travel Agency. I'm [*your name*]. Wow, what a crowd. Let me tell you about the fantastic group rates you can get to several destinations ... hey, wait a second. I recognize you! You aren't here for a vacation, are you? That's OK. [*Hold up a Bible.*] I have a perfect story to share with you today. I think you can relate to it because it's about a crowd. Are you ready?

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • We've been learning about Jesus' miracles. Remember, a *miracle* is an unusual event that only God can cause to happen. Jesus didn't do miracles just to impress people. Our big picture question is, ***Why did Jesus perform miracles?*** Who can tell me

the big picture answer? Remember, the answer has three explanations for why Jesus performed miracles. *[Allow kids to respond.] Jesus performed miracles [hold up one finger] to glorify God, [hold up a second finger] to show He is the Son of God, and [hold up a third finger] to care for people.*

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

· Giant Timeline

LEADER • Last time we heard the story of Jesus' calming a storm. Jesus' disciples knew Jesus was a good man and a good teacher. But when Jesus calmed the wind and the waves, He showed His disciples that He is also God. God rules the sea and stills its waves. *[See Ps. 89:9.]* As God the Son, Jesus has power over nature. Today's Bible story is called "Jesus Fed a Crowd." What do you think we will learn about Jesus today? Let's find out.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 14; Mark 6; Luke 9; John 6. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Fed a Crowd."

· Bibles
· "Jesus Fed a Crowd" video
· Big Picture Question Poster
· Bible Story Picture Poster
· Story Point Poster

LEADER • Jesus' disciples needed a vacation. They had been working so hard healing and teaching people that they didn't even have time to stop and eat. So Jesus and His disciples got into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. But people followed them! People actually ran along the shore and met them on the other side.

I don't know about you, but I would feel a

little frustrated if people bothered me when I was on vacation. Was Jesus frustrated? Look at Matthew 14:14. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] Jesus wasn't frustrated! He saw the people, and He cared about them. Jesus didn't tell the people to go away; He taught them about God, and He healed people.

After awhile, Jesus' disciples told Jesus to tell the people to go away and find something to eat. No food was available where they were, but the people could go to the farms and villages nearby and buy something to eat.

Did Jesus tell the people to go away and come back after dinner? Look at Matthew 14:16. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] Jesus told His disciples to give the people food. But there were five thousand men to feed, and that didn't even count all the women and children! How would the disciples feed that many people? That much food would cost a fortune!

What Jesus did next was amazing. **Jesus miraculously fed a crowd with five loaves and two fish.** He took a boy's lunch and blessed it. Then He broke it into pieces, and the disciples gave the food to the people. Everyone ate until he was full. There were even leftovers! The disciples collected 12 baskets full of pieces of bread and fish.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 181 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • You know, I love this Bible story because it reminds me that God always takes care of us. God can and will provide for our needs. Receiving food

when you are hungry is great, but everyone has a need that is much bigger than physical hunger.

We all sin, and our sin separates us from God. Jesus gives us what we need the most—a right relationship with God. He took the punishment for our sin when He died on the cross. By feeding the five thousand, Jesus provided for the physical needs of the crowd. The next day, Jesus called Himself the bread of life. (John 6:35) Only Jesus is able to satisfy our souls forever by providing forgiveness, peace with God, and eternal life.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 24, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about what needs they can trust Jesus to meet. What role could they play in how God meets the needs of others?

• “Unit 24, Session 2” questions from kids video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the Myanmar photos and a world map. Keep the description cards to distribute to volunteers. Point out the country of Myanmar (next to Thailand) on the world map.

• “Missions Work in Myanmar” printable
• world map

LEADER • Missionaries are helping people in Myanmar understand who Jesus is. They want the people to understand the miracles that Jesus did and how much He loves them. Only Jesus, the one true God, can do miracles, like feeding a crowd of people with one boy’s lunch! Let’s find out more about missions work in Myanmar.

Ask volunteers to read the “Missions Work in Myanmar” descriptions. Invite kids to look at the photos while

listening to their friends read. Close in prayer for the missionaries in Myanmar and around the world.

Key passage (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- “None Can Compare with You (Psalm 40:5)” song

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Psalm 40:5.

LEADER • The Lord has done so many wonderful things.

Jesus’ feeding a crowd is just one of many miraculous things Jesus did when He was on earth. We can read about many more of them in the Bible. Let’s sing our key passage song to remember Psalm 40:5.

Lead boys and girls in singing “None Can Compare with You (Psalm 40:5).”

Sing (4 minutes)

- “Miracle Maker” song
- Bible

Open your Bible and read aloud John 20:31.

LEADER • Do you know anyone else who has ever calmed a storm or who has fed more than five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish? I don’t either. Jesus performed miracles—and the writers of the Gospels wrote them down—so that we would believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Let’s sing. Sing together “Miracle Maker.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father God, You are good. You provide all we need. You satisfy our souls by giving us Your Son, to save us from our sin. Help us live generously, as You have been so generous to us. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- large sheet of paper
- sticky notes
- marker

Before the session, write the key passage on a large sheet of paper. Leave out several of the key words. Write the missing words—and additional words—on separate sticky notes.

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading Psalm 40:5 aloud together.

Challenge kids to attach the sticky notes in the blanks to complete the key passage. For an added challenge, prepare sticky notes with words not included in Psalm 40:5. Kids must sort out the correct words from the word choices.

SAY • Great job, everyone! When we memorize God's Word, we remember what is true about Him and about ourselves. This is a long verse, but I know if we keep working on it together, we can all memorize it in no time.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to John 6. Explain that the story of Jesus' feeding the five thousand is recorded in all four Gospels. Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 6:11,14.

SAY • A crowd had gathered in the hill country near the

Sea of Galilee. [*Point to the Sea of Galilee (D6) on the New Testament Israel Map.*] They sat down in the grass to eat. **Jesus miraculously fed a crowd with five loaves and two fish.**

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. How was Jesus able to feed the crowd with just five loaves of bread and two fish? *Prompt kids to recall that Jesus' feeding the crowd was a miracle! Recall how God provided manna as food in the wilderness for His people. When the people saw this sign, many believed Jesus was the Prophet whom God had promised to send.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:33.)

2. What did Jesus mean when He said He is “the bread of life”? *Lead kids to recognize that like bread satisfies the body, Jesus satisfies the soul. Only Jesus is able to satisfy our souls forever by providing forgiveness, peace with God, and eternal life. Emphasize that the eternal life Jesus provides for our souls is better than bread that temporarily satisfies our bodies.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 6:27.)

3. How has Jesus recently provided for some of your needs—physically or spiritually? *Invite kids to share ways the Lord has provided for their needs. Remind kids that every good gift comes from God. He provided for us in the greatest way by sending His Son to give life to the world.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 6:33.)

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Cooking in Myanmar

Before the activity, write each of the following ingredients on a separate index card: *catfish, noodles, fish*

**LOW
PREP**

- index cards
- pen
- cooking pot
- bowl

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

sauce, fish paste, ginger, banana stem, lemongrass, onions, garlic, chickpeas. Fold the cards and put them into a bowl.

SAY • We've been learning about ways that missionaries are sharing Jesus in Myanmar. In the Bible, we learn that **Jesus miraculously fed a crowd with five loaves and two fish.** What do you think people eat in Myanmar? Let's see what missionaries eat when they visit their friends. *Mohinga* is one of the most popular dishes. What do you think is in it?

Pass around the bowl and invite volunteers to choose an index card, read the ingredient, and add the card to the cooking pot. Ask your group if this sounds like a dish they would like to try. Explain that this soup is even eaten for breakfast!

SAY • Missionaries have to get used to eating some different things, but sharing food is an important way to build relationships. In the Bible, we read that Jesus shared many meals with people. He ate and talked about who He is and how He loved them. We can do that right where we are too!

Discuss any upcoming meals (picnics, potlucks, or fellowships) at your church that kids could invite friends to and share the love of Jesus.

OPTION 2: Head to head

Form two teams of kids. Choose one player from each team to stand at the front of the room. Ask a Bible story review question. The first player to ring the bell, buzz in, or raise his hand may answer. If he answers correctly, award his team one point. If incorrect, give the other player a chance to answer and earn a point.

If neither player answers correctly, provide Bibles and a

• "Review Questions"
printable
• Bibles
• bell or buzzer
(optional)

reference for kids to find the answer. Then call up two more players to go head to head with a new review question.

Continue as time allows.

SAY • *Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.*

By feeding the five thousand, Jesus provided for the physical needs of the crowd. The next day, Jesus called Himself the bread of life. (John 6:35) Only Jesus is able to satisfy our souls forever by providing forgiveness, peace with God, and eternal life.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, acknowledging God as powerful and loving. Ask Him to meet your specific needs.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Power to Provide" on the activity page. Kids should cross out the fish that match the descriptions and color in the remaining fish to reveal a hidden message.

· pencils
· Journal Page
· "Power to Provide" activity page,
1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.