

Lesson 11

Jesus feeds over 5,000 people
Matthew 14:13b-21

Goals: That the students will:

KNOW:

Jesus cares about our needs and will provide.

FEEL:

Grateful for God's provision.

DO:

Express thanks to God for some of His provisions.

This lesson is intended to be taught on the week prior to Thanksgiving.



Attention Getter: (5-10 minutes)

We have a wonderful holiday coming up very soon! Who can tell me what that is? (Thanksgiving!) Right! Let's find out about what everyone's going to be doing for Thanksgiving day. This

holiday has a lot to do with food and eating, and since our Bible story today is also about food and eating, it seems like a good thing to talk about!

Give each student a copy of Resource 11-A to facilitate discussion. Helpers can write in students' responses. Put the student's name on the back. When you're finished with this activity, collect all the handouts for use again next week!

This Attention Getter is both an opportunity for you to get to know more about your students' family life, and a lead in to the story about an amazing feast! If you have a small class, you can stay together as a group to do this exercise. If it's large, divide into smaller groups (2-3 students per helper). Lower functioning or non-verbal students might not be able to answer these questions, so adapt them by talking about these things regarding your own Thanksgiving. Or you can ask leading questions such as **Are you eating at your mom's house? What do you think she'll cook? Will you have hamburgers and hot dogs, or do you think you will eat turkey on Thanksgiving?**

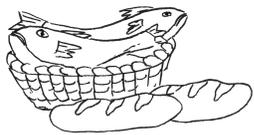


Bible Lesson: (20-25 minutes)

It's fun to get together with people we love and celebrate around a great meal, isn't it! Do you think Jesus enjoyed being with people when He was here on the earth? (yes!) We've talked about how much Jesus loved people and how He cared about their problems. In our Bible story today, we find a huge crowd has come to see Jesus! They've heard about the wonderful things He has done. What are some of the things Jesus did that we've talked about so far in this class? (healed the man with leprosy, changed people from loving their jobs or money most to loving Jesus most)

Rather than tell you about what happened when this huge crowd of people came to spend the day with Jesus, I want you to watch it on the video. Something very amazing is going to happen, and unless you watch it very carefully, you might miss it. So, let's see if you can see the wonderful thing Jesus does for these people.

Show Matthew 14:13b-21 on video 2.



Were you able to figure out the amazing thing Jesus did? Let students respond. **He took a very small amount of food—which would have been enough to feed one or two people—and He used it to feed thousands of people! It was a miracle—something only God can do! When Jesus' friends handed someone a piece of bread, they found there were still more in the basket! Only God can do something like that!**

That day was a very special day—even better than Thanksgiving! Let's see if we can answer the same kind of questions about this special dinner as we answered about the Thanksgiving meal we hope to have this week. Use Resource 11-B as a poster or transparency. Fill in answers.

Who Cooked: Jesus (disciples helped serve!)

Who Came: Over 5,000 people!

What They Ate: Fish and Bread

What they had for left-overs: 12 baskets of broken pieces

It's hard to imagine how many people were there that day and how much food Jesus made. The food Jesus had to start with was probably enough for one or two people. Now for us, since

we're thinking about Thanksgiving dinner, it might be like having two turkey drumsticks and five potatoes. Show students 2 turkey or chicken drumsticks and five potatoes on a plate. **That would probably be a small meal for two people. But Jesus took that little bit of food and fed thousands of people! Wow! That is amazing!**

Help students visualize how many people Jesus fed that day. If you know of an auditorium or arena that seats around 5,000-10,000 people, that your students might be familiar with, tell them He made enough food to feed everyone at that place. Or you might help them visualize it by having two jars. Have 1-2 M&M's or beans in one jar, and say, **This represents our class.** Then have a second jar full of M&M's or beans and say, **This is more like how many people Jesus fed that day!**

Let's watch the video a second time, in case we missed anything the first time through!

Rewind and show Matthew 14:13b-21 again.

Why do you think Jesus did it? Do you think Jesus was showing off to people that He could do things no one else could do? (no!) Jesus knew those people were hungry and He cared about them. He was happy they wanted to be with Him even more than they wanted to go and find supper. No one had left saying, "Sorry, we're hungry, we have to leave." Because He knew they were hungry and He wanted to bless them (to do something special for them), He performed a miracle and turned two fish and five pieces of bread into enough food to feed over 5,000 people.

Let's act out the story. Now, there is no way we can re-create the miracle that Jesus did, because a miracle is something only God can do! So we're going to use props to make it look like a

miracle is happening. We'll need someone to be Jesus, and at least one person to be one of His disciples. The rest of us will be people in the crowd.

Either read the passage from the NIV or an easier translation, and talk students through the actions, or summarize the story in your own words. Use small pita breads (similar to what's in the video because that's probably what the bread was like rather than loaves of bread like we have today) and have fish cut out of blue or gray construction paper. Have "Jesus" bless the two fish and five pita, and place them on top of a napkin in a basket. Have a larger supply of these under a cloth napkin in a basket, to represent the food that was miraculously provided. You might not have enough people in your class to need the food under the napkin, but help students to creatively imagine more people. Disciples can lay out pita and fish on a table for some of the additional people who were there that day.



Application Activity: *(15 minutes)*

Jesus took care of those people because He knew what they needed, and He wanted to help them. Did anyone notice what Jesus did, just before He handed the food to His disciples? (prayed!) He thanked God for it—when it was just a little bit. And how do you think the people felt at the end of their meal, besides full? (thankful) I bet they were thankful to Jesus for their supper!

Jesus knows our needs, too, and He is taking care of us. Most of the time, it's not through miracles, but in ordinary ways that God takes care of us. He has given us parents, guardians, staff at work or in our homes, or other people who help us. He has provided money for our groceries through jobs that our family or we have, or through government help like Social Security.

We all have houses to live in, and most of us have plenty of clothes in our closets. Jesus has taken care of us, as He took care of the people who came to Him that day. And, especially since Thursday is Thanksgiving, I think it'd be great for us to take some time to thank Jesus for all that He's given us.

I've brought in some magazines with all kinds of pictures in them. Use magazines like Good Housekeeping, Family Circle, Christian or missions magazines, and cooking, travel, sports or other theme magazines. **Together we're going to make a poster that will be a Thanksgiving card to Jesus. The poster says, "Thank You, Jesus, For Your Many Gifts." Let's look for pictures of things we're thankful for. We'll cut them out, and later glue them to the poster.** Encourage your helpers to help students identify things to be thankful for that they might not recognize at first (medicine, pets, sports equipment, things in nature) as well as the more obvious ones (food, clothes, homes, family, Bible, church).



Closing: *(5-10 Minutes)*

Now we're going to put the pictures you've chosen on this poster. As we do, I'd like you to say "Thank You Jesus for" and then say whatever it is in your picture. If students can't do that, you can do that as you help glue it on. This will be our "Thank You" to Jesus!

If there is time, you can also sing a few "Thank you" songs.



Supplies Check List:

- _____ **Attention Getter:** a copy of Resource 11-A for each student, pens or markers

- _____ **Bible Lesson:** video 2 cued to Matthew 14:13b, TV-VCR unit, Resource 11-B, markers, dinner plate with two chicken drumsticks and five small potatoes, jars or bowls of M&M's or beans, Bible, basket, cloth napkin, shapes of fish cut out of blue or gray construction paper, several small pieces of pita bread, any other props or costumes you want to use to act out the play

- _____ **Application Activity:** poster with "Thank You, Jesus, For Your Many Gifts" written on it, magazines for cutting pictures, scissors

- _____ **Closing:** glue sticks, any song visuals you desire