

LESSON AIM: Jesus can use you to meet the needs of others.

KEY SCRIPTURES: Mark 6:30-44

REVIEW QUESTIONS: (*“Ok, who remembers from last week’s lesson...”*)

- 1) What was the name of the man who questioned God about doing right?
- 2) What was his final conclusion?
- 3) Can someone explain last week’s Bible verse in their own words?

I. INTRODUCTION

(Have children close their eyes.) As I say a word, think of someone it describes: poor... lonely... mean... odd... teased... worried.

Did you think of someone for each word? What could you do to help these people? "But I'm just a kid!" you might say. "What can I do?" That's what the little boy in our story might have thought.

II. PROGRESSION OF EVENTS

A. Thousands of people ran to find Jesus, perhaps because they had heard about or seen miracles He had done during His first two years of ministry (v. 33).

B. Jesus and His disciples were looking for a quiet place to rest (v. 32).

[Jesus had just learned of the execution of His good friend John the Baptist. He and His disciples, exhausted after intense ministry and saddened by this traumatic news, wanted to be alone and to rest (see Mark 6:30 and Matthew 14:10-15).

C. When Jesus saw the crowd, He was moved with compassion (v. 34).

As the Lord Jesus looked across the crowd, He knew the inside needs of each one--their need for someone to love them, their need for peace, joy and forever life with Him. Jesus could meet their needs.

D. The disciples, seeing the physical need of the people, encouraged Jesus to send the crowd away to buy food (v. 35-36). [See **Matthew 14:21**; 15,000 to 20,000 people, including the women and children, needed to be fed.]

E. When Jesus told the disciples to feed the people, they began calculating the needed cash (v. 37).

[200 denarii was the pay a common laborer earned in about eight months (see Matthew 20:2-15). To help children understand this great need, compare Biblical times with today. Choose a favorite fast food restaurant and figure out how much it would cost for 15,000 hamburgers with fries!]

How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them to feed all those people? Perhaps the same way you feel when you see the needs of others. (*Discuss "outside" needs: no lunch, hand-me-down or over-sized clothes, rusted out toys or no toys at all, a crippling handicap; discuss "inside" needs: no friends, worries or fears, struggles with schoolwork.*) Perhaps you've felt bad when you've seen the needs of others and wondered what you could do. Maybe you've never really noticed. God's Word says that if you are part of God's forever family, you should "be rich in good works, ready to distribute (give to others in need), willing to share" (**I Timothy 6:18**). Jesus can use you to meet the needs of others. Jesus wanted to use the disciples to meet the needs of the great crowd. But the disciples were overwhelmed, perhaps seeing the situation as impossible. What would they do?

F. The disciples, searching for good among the crowd, returned to Jesus with a little boy who had five loaves and two fish (v. 38; compare to **John 6:9**).

[Unlike our modern loaves of bread, these were very small and flat. One person could easily eat several of them in a single meal.]

G. Jesus helped organize the crowd into groups (v. 39-40).

H. Jesus blessed (thanked His heavenly father for) the food, and that small amount multiplied from food for one little boy to enough food for that giant crowd! He divided the food among the disciples, and commanded them to pass it out (v. 41).

Maybe the little boy who shared his lunch wondered how the Lord Jesus could use so little to feed so many. But he was willing to give the little bit he had to be used in a way greater than he could ever imagine. Jesus can use YOU to meet the needs of others, just like he used the little boy in this story! How? (Discuss "outside" and "inside" needs listed above; have children name specific ways Jesus could use them to meet those needs.) Why is it important to let Jesus use you? He says, "read Matthew 25:40b). When you are sharing with someone else, no matter who it is, it's like sharing it with Jesus! It's not how much you have to give, but how willing you are to give it. As you share the little bit you have with others, Jesus will use you in ways you can't even imagine! The little boy must have watched in anticipation as Jesus commanded the disciples to pass out his little bit of lunch to that huge crowd!

III. CLIMAX

The food was multiplied as they kept passing it out, and everyone (probably 15,000-20,000!) ate until they were full! (v. 42)

IV. ENDING

A. Conclusion:

The disciples gathered 12 baskets full of leftovers (one for each disciple or all for the little boy to take home to his mother) (v. 42).

B. Challenge:

Why didn't Jesus simply make food appear by His power? He wanted the little boy and the disciples to be a part of the miracle. He wanted them to share the joy of meeting the needs of so many people. Isn't it exciting to know that God can use you to meet the needs of others? You may be saying, "But I don't even have a lunch to give to the Lord." Will you let God use your "fives and two's" (two hands, five fingers each; two eyes; two ears, two lips, two feet, five toes!) to do his work in special ways? (**Romans 6:13, 12:1; Ephesians 3:20-21**) As you share the little bit you have with someone else, God can multiply it in ways you can't even imagine! If you don't have food or clothes to share, give a hug or some kind words. Turn off the TV and spend some time with someone who needs help. Offer yourself to someone needy as a friend to talk to and play with. Will you "be rich in good works, ready to distribute (give to others in need), willing to share"? Not only will Jesus help you see the needs of others, but He will give you the strength and ability to help meet those needs.

Carry-Over Activity:

Draw/print five loaves and two fish on take-home papers. Encourage children to record each day in one loaf or fish a way Jesus used them to meet a need.

MEMORY VERSE:

**"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
Philippians 4:19**