

The Big Picnic

Jesus feeds 5,000
Mark 6:30-44

Character Trait: Compassion

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recall that Jesus did what only God could do—performed a miracle to feed over 5,000 people.
- Children will identify specific ways God has shown compassion towards them personally.
- Children will describe various ways that they can personally show compassion towards someone else.

Supplies:

- *The Big Picnic* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- Small paper cutouts of loaves of bread *(set of five for each child)*
- Small paper cutouts of fish *(set of two for each child)*
- Envelopes or resealable plastic bags *(one for each child)*
- Paper *(one piece for each child, optional)*
- Glue *(optional)*

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children. Ask the children to raise their hand if they have ever been hungry. Next, ask them to put their hands on their stomach if they have ever heard or felt their stomach rumble because they were so hungry. Share that in today's lesson, they will learn about a huge crowd of people who were hungry, also. Jesus performed a miracle to feed them all!

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following:

- **What did Jesus tell Jairus?** *(He told Jairus not to worry, to believe, and his daughter would be healed.)*
- **What happened after Jesus spoke to the little girl?** *(She came back to life and walked around the room!)*
- **What does this tell you about who Jesus is?** *(Answers will vary but should include that it tells us that Jesus is God because Jesus did things that only God can do—like bringing people back to life!)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *The Big Picnic* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- Jesus had finished teaching.
- Everyone was hungry.
- "Send them away to buy food," His disciples said.
- But Jesus wanted to show the people that they could trust God.
- "Why don't you feed them?" Jesus asked.

- "It would take a year's wages to buy bread for them all!" His disciples cried.
- "How much food do you have?" asked Jesus.
- "There is a boy here," said Andrew, "who has five loaves of bread and two little fish."
- Jesus smiled. "Perfect. Tell the people to sit down on the grass."
- So the people sat down all over the mountainside.
- Jesus thanked God for the bread and the fish.
- Then He broke them into pieces for His disciples to hand out.
- Jesus' disciples passed out bread and fish to the whole crowd.
- There were five thousand men and lots of women and children, too.
- Everyone ate as much as they wanted!
- Afterwards, the disciples gathered up the leftovers.
- There were twelve baskets full, from just five loaves and two fish!
- The people knew they could trust God to care for them.



Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **What did Jesus' disciples suggest they do about the hungry crowd?** *(They suggested that the people be sent away to buy food.)*
- **What did Jesus want to do instead?** *(Jesus wanted to show everyone that they could trust God to care for them.)*
- **What did the boy give Jesus to use?** *(Five loaves of bread and two little fish)*
- **What did Jesus do before He broke the bread and fish into pieces?** *(He thanked God for the food.)*
- **What happened after Jesus thanked God and broke up all the food?** *(Jesus' disciples passed out food to the whole crowd. Everyone ate as much as they wanted!)*
- **How many people were in the crowd?** *(Five thousand men and lots of women and children)*
- **How does it make you feel to know that God cares about you this much, too?** *(Answers will vary.)*

Jesus' disciples only saw a problem: a crowd full of hungry people! But Jesus saw an opportunity to show everyone that God could be trusted to care and provide for them. When Jesus performed the miracle of making all of the food from so little, He also showed that God can do amazing—and big!—things with even the small things that we are willing to give to Him.



God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

Jesus did something great with the very small amount of food the little boy gave Him. Jesus showed the people that they could trust Him to provide for their needs, even when it seemed impossible. God also showed that He can do amazing things with even the smallest things we give Him.

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

A total of 5,000 men *(with palms up, lace fingers together and wiggle them)* **and their families** *(pretend to place hand on top of imaginary children's heads)* **were fed** *(pretend to eat)*.

Mark 6:44 (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

Begin by explaining that you will briefly retell the story. However, ask them to listen carefully so that they can catch if you make an error. Ask them to stand up as soon as they catch an error. Call on one of the children to politely point out your error and provide the correct information.

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

Provide each child with small paper cutouts of five loaves of bread and two fish. Then, invite the children to tear the cutouts into different pieces. Next, challenge the children to put the various pieces back together again *(like a puzzle)*. Explain that no matter how small they tore up their bread and fish cutouts, it did not make more paper. It only made smaller pieces. Point out that this is not what happened when Jesus broke the loaves of bread and small fish into pieces. Instead, He performed a miracle. Jesus took the small amount of food and made more from it—enough to feed over 5,000 people and have leftovers! End the activity by providing each child with a small envelope *(or resealable plastic bag)* to place their cut-out pieces in to take home.

For younger children...
Help younger children be more successful at this activity by limiting the number of pieces into which they tear their cutouts. For example, tell them to only rip up each cutout three times. *(This will help ensure that they can be successful in piecing the cutouts back together again and will help ensure that they do not lose any of their "puzzle" pieces.)*

For older children...
Challenge older children to glue down the torn up pieces to create a mosaic of the five loaves and two fish to take home as a reminder of the story.

Character Trait: Compassion

(10 minutes)

Compassion is care and concern for the suffering of others. Jesus showed compassion on the hungry crowd by providing for their immediate need for food instead of sending them away.

Encourage the children to think more about compassion by asking the following:

- **Has anyone ever shown compassion towards you? How?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **How has God shown compassion towards you?** *(Answers will vary but should include by sending Jesus, by offering a way to be forgiven, and providing guidance, encouragement, and instruction through His Word, the Bible.)*
- **What are some specific ways you can show compassion towards people in your life?** *(Answers will vary.)*

Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

Think about someone you know who is experiencing a hardship right now. This can be someone who is ill, trying to learn a new skill, or even just someone who needs encouragement. Think of one specific way that you can show compassion towards this person. Turn to someone next to you and share. *(Provide a few moments for the children to do this. Then, call on a few volunteers to share aloud.)*

Closing:

(2 minutes)

It would have been easy for that boy not to offer Jesus his five loaves of bread and two fish. It was so little food, and the crowd was so big. The crowd was so large that even Jesus' own disciples thought the only answer was to send them away! But the boy was faithful to give Jesus all that he had, and Jesus performed a miracle with it! It may be tempting as children *(and young people)* to assume that you have nothing worth giving to God. But that is not true. God can do great things with everything that we are willing to give Him, no matter what our size or age!

Prayer:

(2 minutes)

Dear God,
How grateful we are to know that You care about and will meet our needs. Help us to show our trust in You by giving You all that we have daily.
Amen.

Notes