

# THE WORD BECAME FLESH



## CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

### #20 – Feeding the 5,000 Luke 9:1-6, 10-27

**PICTURES** (Note: Inserted in brackets at the appropriate place in the lesson is the number of the picture to show the students.)

20-1 Feeding of the 5,000

#### REVIEW (Before teaching lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review) What did the woman who touched Jesus' garment believe? What happened to her because of her faith? What did Jairus ask Jesus to do? What happened to his daughter?
- **Big Question Review:** What is the life we gain through Jesus? Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** John 5:24 By believing in Jesus we gain eternal life.

*I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.*

## LESSON CONTENT

**Note:** The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

The disciples had been with Jesus for some time watching him perform miracles, listening to his teaching and learning from his character. Jesus then gave them responsibility to share what they had seen and been taught.

### Luke 9:1-6

*<sup>1</sup>When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, <sup>2</sup>and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. <sup>3</sup>He told them: "Take nothing for the journey--no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. <sup>4</sup>Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. <sup>5</sup>If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them." <sup>6</sup>So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.*

What did Jesus give the Twelve power and authority to do? Power to drive out demons and cure diseases

What did he send them out to do? Preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick

What does it mean to preach the kingdom of God? A kingdom is a sphere (area) where a ruler has authority over those who are in it. To preach the kingdom of God is to assert who God is. When we believe in Jesus, we become his subjects and he becomes our king. That means we put ourselves under God's authority and he becomes the ruler of our lives. We leave the kingdom of darkness and become a citizen of heaven. It is both a present reality and a future hope.

What is the present reality and the future hope? The present reality is that we submit our lives to Jesus for him to rule over us on earth. The future hope is that one day we will enter the kingdom of heaven. We need to remember, too, that one day when Jesus comes again the kingdom of God will actually be established on earth.

Why didn't Jesus want the Twelve to take anything with them? Probably he wanted them to learn to rely on the Father for their provision. He wanted their faith and dependence on God to grow. They weren't doing this for their own benefit but for God's. What were they to do if people didn't welcome them? Shake the dust off their feet when they leave.

What does that mean? It was a testimony of the rejection of the people to the message of Jesus. They would have nothing on them associated with that place. All ties were cut. When we reject Jesus we are separated from God. There is no connection.

### Luke 9:10-14a (picture 20-1)

*<sup>10</sup>When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, <sup>11</sup>but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.*

*<sup>12</sup>Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here."*

*<sup>13</sup>He replied, "You give them something to eat."*

*They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish--unless we go and buy food for all this crowd." <sup>14</sup>(About five thousand men were there.)*

What were the disciples concerned about? They were concerned about what they were going to do about all the people who needed food. They were looking to Jesus to solve the problem. They didn't think they could do anything about it.

How did Jesus respond to their concern? He told them to give the people something to eat, to take care of what the people needed themselves. He wanted them to do the work.

How did they respond to his command? They thought they couldn't do it because there wasn't enough food there. They weren't looking to God. They looked at what they had rather than what God was able to provide.

What had Jesus just given them power and authority to do? Miraculous things in terms of driving out demons and healing the sick, but they didn't make the transition or connection to feeding the people. They were short-sighted. They focused on the material world rather than the spiritual.

**Luke 9:14b-17** Jesus then took charge.

*But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."*

*<sup>15</sup>The disciples did so, and everybody sat down. <sup>16</sup>Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people. <sup>17</sup>They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.*

What did Jesus do before he had the disciples pass out the bread? He looked up to heaven and gave thanks.

Why was that important? It showed that the Father was the source of power for what he did.

Why would Jesus turn a few loaves of bread into food for the people when he wouldn't turn the stones into bread for himself in the desert when he was hungry and tempted? The point of miracles was to show the power and love of God to the people. Miracles were proof that Jesus was sent by the Father to do the Father's will, not to gain something for himself. Satan wanted Jesus to take his focus off of the Father.

What can you learn from that? Whatever God does through us is to be for his benefit and glory, not our own. We shouldn't be self-focused.

Even after seeing Jesus feed the 5,000 and perform many other miracles, the disciples still struggled to understand who he was. They wavered in their understanding. Sometimes they saw clearly who he was and other times they faltered in their faith.

## Luke 9:18-27

<sup>18</sup>Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

<sup>19</sup>They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

<sup>20</sup>"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

<sup>21</sup>Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. <sup>22</sup>And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

<sup>23</sup>Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup>For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. <sup>25</sup>What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? <sup>26</sup>If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. <sup>27</sup>I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

What did Peter call Jesus? The Christ, which is the Greek word for the Hebrew word, Messiah. Both Messiah and Christ mean "anointed one," one chosen by God.

What was Jesus chosen by the Father to be? The Savior of the world.

Why didn't Jesus want the disciples to tell the people who he was? The people had a misconception of the Messiah as they were looking to someone to rescue them from Roman oppression. Jesus probably didn't want the peoples' preconception of what they thought the Messiah would be to cloud the truth of who he was and what he came to do. He wanted the people to listen to him and come to faith when they heard the truth, not expect something from him.

What did Jesus say someone must do to follow him? "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

What does that mean? Continual action of daily sacrifice and self-denial. Cross = death. The putting to death of self. Our greatest problem is that we don't die to self. We follow and indulge our flesh, our sinful desires. We must be willing to crucify all that on the cross for Jesus.

We have two choices of what to focus our lives on. What are those choices? Our choice is to focus on this life on earth or the eternal life we will have with Jesus in heaven. If we gain one, we will lose the other. We have to determine which one we want the most. Following Jesus is not a half-hearted commitment. If Jesus is our Savior, he also needs to be our Lord. In dying to self we can gain true life.

As we study who Jesus is and what he has done we need to truly put ourselves under his authority and be part of his kingdom. Being part of his kingdom means we die to self-interest and serve him fully. We humbly bow before him as our king and let him work in our lives for his glory and benefit. We focus on spiritual life rather than physical.

We're not to be like the crowd of people who followed Jesus because he satisfied their physical hunger. We have to recognize our need for Jesus. We seek Jesus, the Bread of Life, the only one who will satisfy the spiritual hunger of our souls.

John 6:35 says, <sup>35</sup> Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

What does the verse mean? When we fully come to Jesus, we won't lack anything we need to be truly filled. Our spiritual hunger will be satisfied.

## LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** What did Jesus send the twelve disciples out to do? How did Jesus feed the crowd of 5,000 people? Why did he do that? Who did the disciples think Jesus was? What did Jesus mean when he said, *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*?
- **Thought Questions:** How do we die to self? Why is it so hard to die to self? What would be evidence that a person has died to self? What does Jesus mean when he says, "I am the bread of life."
- **Prayer:** Thank Jesus that he is Lord and demonstrated that through his life on earth. Pray that you would truly make him Lord of your own life and want to please and serve him in all things. Pray that you would learn to focus on what has eternal benefit and not pursue the things of the world.
- **The Big Question: How does Jesus want to feed us?**  
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: John 6:35**  
Jesus wants to satisfy our souls.

<sup>35</sup> *Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."*

Questions: What does Jesus do for those who believe in him.

## ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: Jesus challenged the disciples to do what he did and give themselves completely to him (taste the kingdom of God) by dying to self and putting themselves under his authority.

1. Jesus sent the disciples out with power to heal, drive out demons and preach the kingdom of God.
2. Jesus challenged the disciples to feed the crowds but did it himself when they couldn't.
3. Peter recognized that Jesus was the Christ of God (the Savior).

Why do I need to know this? Everything Jesus did shows he is worthy of devotion. If I focus on him I will remain devoted. If I look to my circumstances my faith will falter.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the booklet and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse in the inside.

- ★ **Activity Page:** Unscramble the phrases.

Instructions: Unscramble the phrases that Jesus says are things we are to do.

Take up cross

Lose life

Overcome world

Believe in him

Deny self

Worship God

Die daily

Honor the Father

- ★ **Further Understanding:** Bible Study Skills

Instructions:

1. Read the whole passage below to the students as they read along in their Bibles or on the discussion notes.
2. Read the passage verse by verse and have the students explain each verse.
3. Have the students extract one important truth from the passage. This can be done as an entire class or you can break into pairs or small groups.
4. Have the students answer the additional two questions: How can you apply this truth in your life? What will be the result of applying that truth?

### Isaiah 55:1-7 – Seek the bread that will satisfy.

*“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.<sup>2</sup> Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.<sup>3</sup> Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.<sup>4</sup> See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples.<sup>5</sup> Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.”*

*<sup>6</sup> Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.<sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

Discussion Questions: What is the bread that satisfies that doesn't cost money? Why will only that bread satisfy our true hunger? How do we eat of that bread?

## JOURNAL

The daily journal inside the booklet has six readings that relate to a theme. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Journal Focus: How is Jesus the bread of life?

Reading 1: John 6:25-34 True bread comes from heaven.

Why did the people come to Jesus? What does the true bread do? What does that mean?

Reading 2: John 6:35-40 Those who come to Jesus will never be hungry.

What does Jesus say about himself? What does he say is God's will?

Reading 3: John 6:41-51 The bread of Jesus is his flesh.

What does Jesus mean when he says he is the living bread and that bread is his flesh? How do we eat that bread? What is the result of eating that bread?

Reading 4: John 6:52-59 Those who feed on Jesus will live.

What gives life? How do we gain that life? What does that mean?

Reading 5: John 6:60-71 Many reject the bread of life.

Why did many of the disciples desert Jesus? Why wouldn't Peter desert him?

Reading 6: Isaiah 55:1-7 Seek the bread that will satisfy.

What is the bread that satisfies that doesn't cost money? Why will only that bread satisfy our true hunger? How do we eat of that bread?