

Feeding of 5,000

30 The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught. 31 Then Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat. 32 So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone.

33 But many people recognized them and saw them leaving, and people from many towns ran ahead along the shore and got there ahead of them. 34 Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

35 Late in the afternoon his disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. 36 Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat." 37 But Jesus said, "You feed them." "With what?" they asked. "We'd have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!" 38 "How much bread do you have?" he asked. "Go and find out." They came back and reported, "We have five loaves of bread and two fish."

39 Then Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred. 41 Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. He also divided the fish for everyone to share. 42 They all ate as much as they wanted, 43 and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish. 44 A total of 5,000 men and their families were fed from those loaves!

Mark 6:30-44 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- After a busy day, how do you like to unwind?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

V30-34

- O: Why did Jesus decide to take the disciples away? What happened as soon as they left?
- I: Discuss the balance Jesus had to ministry (v.30-32). *Ex. crowds vs. disciples, active vs. rest, active vs. solitude, His ministry vs. other's ministry (v.30)*
- I: Discuss the heart of Jesus as well as the situation of humanity revealed in v. 34.
- I: Discuss how Jesus responds to this interruption in his break/rest time (v.33-34). What does this say about His character & mission?
- A: How are you balancing the pulls of life in many different directions?
- A: When's the last time you went to a quiet place and got some rest and time with Jesus (v.31-32)?

V35-38

- O: What is the difference between how the disciples view/approach the problem vs. how Jesus views the problem (v.37)?
- I: What emotions might have been expressed by the disciples in v.37? In v. 43?
- A: Where is God calling you to share what you have (v.38)? How could he use that to do far greater than you could do with it on your own?

V39-44

- O: Look at the simplicity of how Jesus "does" this miracle. He doesn't make a big scene, he doesn't stir up emotion... it seems just very normal. How does this compare with most "portraits" of miracle workers?
- I: Notice that Jesus didn't share with the disciples how this miracle was going to play out, he simply told them to collect/report on their food level, to gather the people. Why didn't Jesus tell them in advance of how He would provide?
- I: How does Jesus use the resources the disciples had (v.41)? What can we "get" from this picture of resources and Jesus?
- I: If God can multiply food, why save the scraps (v.43)? Do you think Jesus miscalculated, or is there a reason He provided much more food than was needed?
- A: Have you yielded your resources to Jesus (*seems He can do much more with them than we can*)? What's holding you back?
- A: How have you seen God use meager resources to meet a challenging situation?

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. These guides rely heavily on a few different study guides; including "LifeChange Series" (ISBN 0891099107), N.T. Wright's guide (ISBN 9780830821822), James Hoover's guide (ISBN 9780830830046), and the Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A)

Walking on Water

⁴⁵ Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and head across the lake to Bethsaida, while he sent the people home. ⁴⁶ After telling everyone good-bye, he went up into the hills by himself to pray.

⁴⁷ Late that night, the disciples were in their boat in the middle of the lake, and Jesus was alone on land. ⁴⁸ He saw that they were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. He intended to go past them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the water, they cried out in terror, thinking he was a ghost. ⁵⁰ They were all terrified when they saw him. But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage! I am here!" ⁵¹ Then he climbed into the boat, and the wind stopped. They were totally amazed, ⁵² for they still didn't understand the significance of the miracle of the loaves. Their hearts were too hard to take it in.

Mark 6:45-52 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- What is the funniest thing that has happened to you in a boat? The scariest thing?
- : What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

V45-46

- : Why did Jesus send the disciples away (see John 6:14-15)?
- l: Why does Jesus need to pray, isn't He God?
- A: If Jesus made a point to spend dedicated time in prayer, how much more should we?

V47-52

- : What problem do the disciples encounter (v.48a)?
- : Does Jesus solve the problem first & then say "don't be afraid" (v.50)? (*why does Jesus say "take courage I am here" instead of just solving the problem first?*)
- l: If Jesus' original intent was to help the disciples, why do you think "He intended to go past them" according to v.48?
- l: How would have understanding the feeding of the 5,000 help the disciples in this situation (v.52)? How could understanding these two miracles help/apply to your situation(s)?
- l: What can we learn about miracles from the disciples response in v. 52? (*remember, these are the guys who spent significant time with Jesus.*)
- A: What kind of situations cause you to panic. How do Jesus' words in v.50 speak to that terror?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Respond:** Based on these two passages, spend the week praying about how you can submit your resources to God (v. 38) as well as how understanding and applying the learnings from these two miracles could play out in the reality of your life.
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (9/5/2010) will focus on Mark 8:27-38. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.