

Learning Together

A Study of God's Word (John 6:1–13) Feeding of the Five Thousand

Use the figures from Reproducible 1A and 1B to tell the story. Sing (to the tune of “The Bear Went over the Mountain”/“For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow”) with the students: **A boy walked up on a mountain, a boy walked up on a mountain, a boy walked up on a mountain to see what he could see.** (*Show the boy walking upward.*)

Say: **Close your eyes and imagine a huge crowd of people. Do you remember being in a crowd at a baseball stadium, at a Fourth of July fireworks display at your city park, or at an amusement park? Now open your eyes and see a large crowd gathered along the shores of the Sea of Galilee.** (*Show the crowd.*) **The town was actually not that large of a city compared to most of ours today, but many people were traveling through the area on their way to Jerusalem for the Passover. It seemed that everyone in the whole town and thousands more wanted to catch a glimpse of Jesus and hear Him preach!** (*Hold up Jesus.*)

Sing the refrain with the students: **And what did that boy see? And what did that boy see? Jesus caring for people, Jesus caring for people, Jesus caring for people is what the boy did see.**

Say: **The people had heard about this man named Jesus, who healed the sick and performed miraculous signs. They wanted to see for themselves! Many even dared to hope that Jesus would bless them or heal them from their illness. So the crowd followed Jesus and His disciples up on the mountainside.** (*Hold up group of disciples; move crowd close to Jesus.*)

Close your eyes and imagine the small boy in the crowd. (*Add boy figure hidden behind crowd figure.*) **Do you think he was toward the back of the crowd or right up near the front in order to see Jesus’ miracles? Can you picture a pleasant,**

warm spring day and a large grassy area? Now open your eyes and see the boy in the midst of the crowd. Do you think the boy was tired from walking to Jerusalem or from walking up the hillside? Or perhaps he woke up early to go fishing in the lake with his father? Do you think he was getting hungry as the afternoon wore on?

Jesus loved the people very much. He took care of their sicknesses. He gave them the healing that they needed. Sing with the students: **For He’s our loving, kind Savior. For He’s our loving, kind Savior. For He’s our loving, kind Savior. He gives us what we need.**

Say: **Jesus also knew people would be getting hungry. He wanted to give them the food that they needed too. So Jesus asked one of His disciples, Philip, “Where should we buy bread for these people to eat?”** (*Show disciple shrugging shoulders.*) **Philip said, “There’s no way we could afford enough food for this crowd! I don’t see how we could do it, Jesus!” Andrew noticed the little boy’s basket.** (*Move boy in front of everyone.*)

Sing with the students: **The crowd on top of the mountain, the crowd on top of the mountain, the crowd on top of the mountain was very hungry now. And all that they could find, and all that they could find, was barley loaves and two small fish, barley loaves and two small fish, barley loaves and two small fish was all that they could find.**

Say: **Do you think the boy willingly shared his food? If he was really hungry, do you think that made it harder or easier to give away all of his food? Perhaps he offered even before Andrew asked. Do you think he piped up and said, “Here, Jesus! I’ll share my food!”? He wasn’t**

a rich boy with many, many loaves of wheat bread to give. He was probably just a poor, ordinary boy, who wanted to give his best—to give all that he had. The boy loved Jesus and saw how Jesus loved others.

The disciples may not have known Jesus' plan, but the boy had faith. He knew that Jesus could do anything He wanted to with His gift. The boy shared, and Jesus took care of the rest.

Jesus smiled at the boy, had the crowd sit down in groups of about fifty people each, and then gave thanks to God our heavenly Father for the food. Jesus broke the bread; He kept passing it out until all the people had as much as they wanted. Jesus did the same with the fish. It never ran out! There was more and more and more fish . . . for all!

Sing with the students: **For He's our loving, kind Savior. For He's our loving, kind Savior. For He's our loving, kind Savior. He gives us what we need.**

Say: After everyone had enough to eat, Jesus told the disciples to collect the leftovers in baskets, so no food would be wasted. Close your eyes and imagine each disciple walking around with a large wicker basket. Now open your eyes. (*Show disciple with basket.*) Each basket was overflowing with leftover pieces of the bread! There had been plenty for everyone, and they did not waste any, even though they didn't need the rest. They were good stewards of God's abundant gifts.

Sing with the students: **The boy walked down from the mountain, the boy walked down from the mountain, the boy walked down from the mountain, so happy he could share.**



Discussion Questions/ Life Application

Jesus also gives us something else we really need: forgiveness of our sins. Jesus loved us so much that He gave all that He had—His whole life. Jesus' unselfish gift to us was that He died on the cross, giving us new life in heaven. We're so thankful that we, too (just like the little boy in the story), offer our gifts out of love for Jesus. We may not know how God will use them, but we trust that He can put our gifts to use to serve His people's needs. Because we're small, we may not think we have much to give. Just like the boy, we're probably not rich, but we can have faith like the little boy that Jesus can take care of the rest. Jesus multiplies our offerings of our time, talents, and treasures.

Just as the little boy gave his lunch to others, we can share the things that we have. (Do you have a talent? Do you have an allowance? Do you have time to show someone you care?) Are there blessings that you have so much of that you sometimes waste them? Jesus forgives you and helps you to share your blessings so others will be blessed through what you share.

Prayer

Let's thank Jesus for caring so much for us that He gave us His life, and let's ask Him to bless the gifts that we share with others.

Dear Jesus, thank You for taking care of all my needs—especially I think of the gift of food and of forgiveness of my sins. Move me to share these blessings with others, so that my gifts can be used to meet other's needs. Let me learn to share and to love You always. Help me to willingly offer my time, talents, and money as a gift to others, as You have first loved me. Amen.

Sharing Activities Together

Bible Application Activities

Use these activities as you study or review the Bible story.

Bible Story Puppets

Duplicate Reproducible 1A and 1B. Make stick puppets for the Bible story. Color and cut out the figures. Attach them to craft sticks and practice the skit before presenting it to your class.

B-L-E-S-S Game

Duplicate copies of Reproducible Page 2 for each student. Play “B-L-E-S-S” as you would the traditional bingo game. Students will create their own gameboard by cutting out the squares on the bottom, then arranging them in their own way on the blank board and gluing them down. The middle cross is a free space, because everything centers in Christ. As you call out ways students can use their gifts to bless others, they will cover up that idea (with a bingo dauber, candy, or tokens you provide them). After students mark five in a row, sing “B-L-E-S-S” to the tune of “B-I-N-G-O.” Each time you sing the song, replace a letter with a clap, until all five letters of the word are clapped instead of sung.

There is a way that we can show
God’s love, as He has loved us:
B-L-E-S-S, B-L-E-S-S, B-L-E-S-S—
We love as He has loved us.

Here are possible descriptions for the game pieces: picking up toys, setting the table, calling someone on the phone, giving money to a Lutheran school, giving money to a needy family, playing the piano, helping someone with homework, delivering a message to the office, collecting mail for an out-of-town neighbor, walking your dog, giving money to a missionary family, picking up bulletins after a church service, picking up your video game remotes, baking a cake, hanging up

your coat, picking up your shoes, pushing someone on the swings, holding the door open for others, picking up wrappers or scraps off the floor, giving someone a hug, and putting clothes away.

One=More Than One

Make copies of Reproducible 3 for each student. Guide them to see how their actions can affect others. One effort affects more than just one person. Help them to determine which action was first. Students number the events in order from 1 to 3 to show how that one act of love can bless many others. You may want to explain:

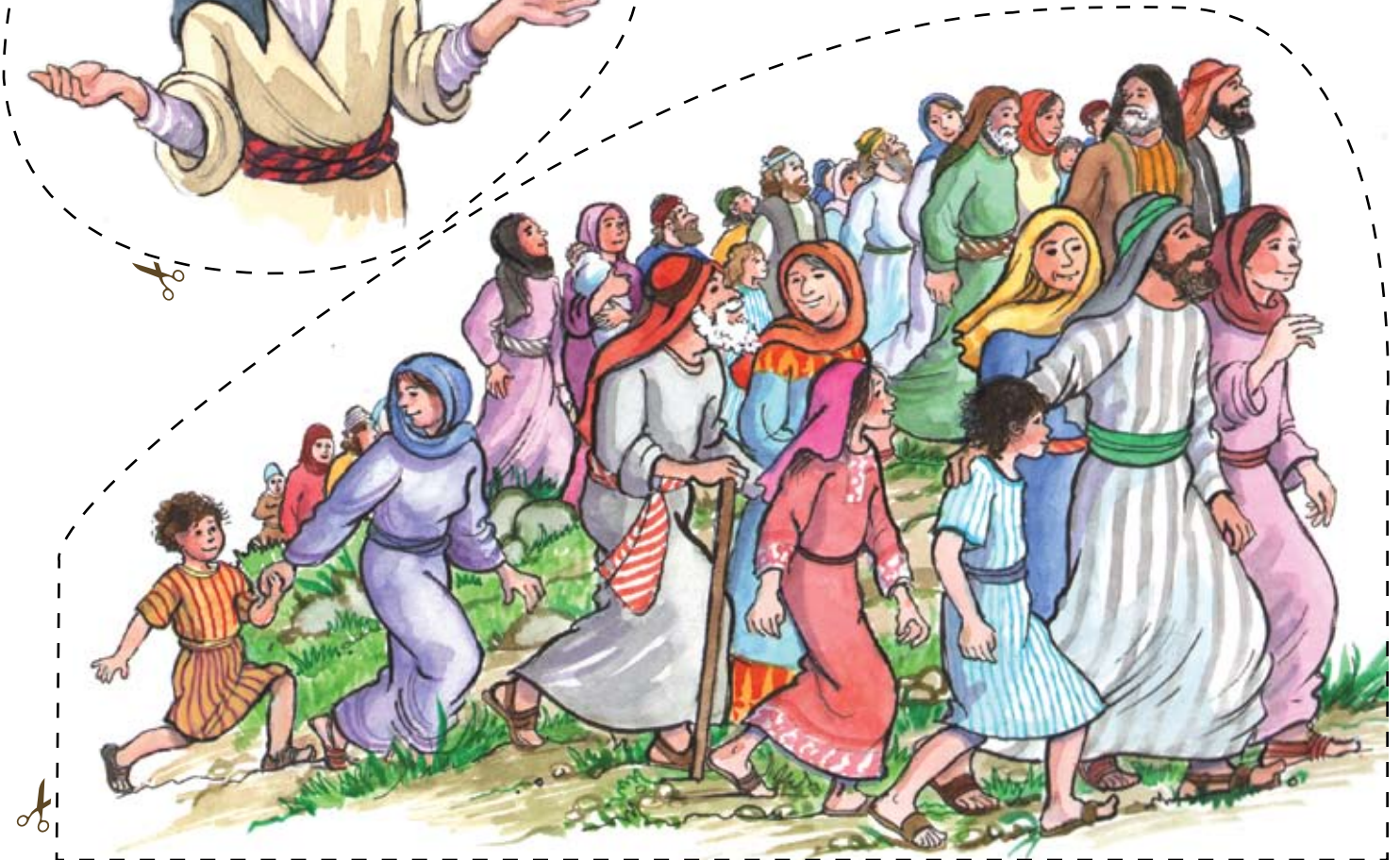
- 1. If a girl writes an encouraging letter to someone, how will that person feel? That person may even share those kind words or that good news with others, cheering them up too.**
- 2. If a girl makes cookies for others, how will they feel? They may even share the cookies with others, making them happy too.**
- 3. If a boy listens to his mother and puts his toys away, what kind of an accident is avoided? The person who might have tripped and the mother feel thankful.**

Bonus: On the back, draw your own three squares with the following story scenes: (1) If a boy participates in a walk-a-thon, (2) he helps to raise money for medical research (show a doctor in a lab). (3) A doctor may be able to give better medicine to someone who is sick (show someone in the hospital but feeling better).

Bible Story Puppets



Bible Story Puppets



Reproducible 2

B-L-E-S-S Game

Directions: Cut on the dotted lines. Glue squares in any order on your B-L-E-S-S gameboard.

