

BIBLE STORY: THE FEEDING OF THE 5,000

John 6:1-14, 35

Central Thoughts

- Jesus is the Bread of Life—the true and only source of forgiveness, life, and salvation.
- Jesus is the Prophet greater than Moses who’s Word and Sacraments satisfy our every need (our “hunger and thirst”) for salvation.
- The sign of the Feeding of the 5,000 points forward to the Lord’s Supper and how Jesus feeds us with His holy body and precious blood for the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation.

Discussion Questions

Why did a great multitude follow Jesus?

Because they saw the signs that He performed on those who were diseased.

What prophet does Jesus remind us of when He went up on the mountain?

Moses

What did the Lord do for Israel through the prophet Moses?

He redeemed them from slavery in Egypt, gave them His Word and the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, and fed them with manna in the wilderness.

What feast of the Jews was near?

The Passover, when the children of Israel were redeemed from slavery by the blood of the Passover Lamb

Who is the true Passover Lamb?

Jesus is the true Passover Lamb whose body was offered up on the cross and whose blood was shed for our forgiveness.

Why did Jesus ask His disciples, “Where shall we buy bread that the multitude may eat?”

Because He wanted to teach them that He alone could feed the multitude

What did Jesus use to feed the multitude?

Five barley loaves and two small fish

Were the five barley loaves and two small fish enough to feed the multitude?

No

What did Jesus ask the disciples to do?

Make the people sit down on the grass, like sheep in a pasture.

How many men were there in the multitude?

5,000

How did Jesus perform the miracle of feeding the 5,000 with the five loaves and two small fish?

He took the loaves, gave thanks, distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down, and likewise the fish, as much as they wanted.

What did this miracle teach them?

That Jesus is the Bread of Life and the prophet greater than Moses who came to give us the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation.

What do Jesus’ actions with the loaves and fishes remind us of?

The Lord’s Supper: taking the bread, giving thanks, and distributing the bread with His Words, “This is My body which is given for you.”

How many baskets of fragments did they gather up and what does this teach us?

12 baskets, one for each of the twelve disciples and twelve tribes of Israel, showing that Jesus is sufficient for all that we need for life and salvation.

What did the people confess about Jesus after this miracle?

That He was the Prophet (greater than Moses) who was to come into the world.

What promise did Jesus teach us through this miracle? (See vs. 35)

“I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

Meditation on the Bible Story

Jesus is the Bread of Life and salvation. He shows this to us in the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000. He took the disciples up on the mountain and fed the multitude in the grace, like Moses who shepherded the children of Israel out of Egypt and brought them to Mount Sinai to give them God’s Word. The Passover reminds us of the blood of the Lamb, the unleavened bread, and the manna in the wilderness through which the Children of Israel were fed by the Lord. Jesus is the true Passover Lamb. His blood was shed to redeem us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He was offered up on the cross for our salvation and by His Word and Sacraments He feeds us with Himself. He is the Bread of Life that God the Father sent down from heaven. We come to Him by faith to receive Him in His holy Word and Sacraments. Like bread that satisfies hunger, Jesus satisfies our need for forgiveness and salvation. The words of the miracle remind us of the Lord’s Supper in which Jesus gives us to eat of His true body and to drink of His true blood. Jesus teaching and preaching draws us to receive Him in faith, believing that His body and blood was “given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Whoever believes these words is “worthy” to receive the Lord’s Supper and “whoever believes these words has exactly what they say, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.”

Prayer on the Bible Story

O Lord Jesus, in feeding the 5,000 with five loaves and two small fish You showed Yourself to be the Bread of Life. Feed us with Your holy Word and Sacrament that, coming to you for the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation, we may never hunger, and believing in You we may never thirst, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR

(See Catechism or Congregation at Prayer for the Week)

Prayer for Faith in Jesus’ Words in the Sacrament of the Altar

O Lord Jesus, by Your words “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins” you teach us to believe that in the Sacrament “forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words.” We give thanks to You for the precious gift of Your body and blood. Forgive us for taking this gift for granted, for doubting Your promises, and for trusting in our own merits as we approach the altar. Give us firm faith in Your words that we might know with certainty that where there is forgiveness of sins in Your body and blood, that there is also life and salvation for us and for all who believe in Your promises; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer Before Receiving the Lord’s Supper

Lord God, heavenly Father I come to the Altar at Your invitation to receive the holy body and the precious blood of My Savior Jesus Christ. I confess to You all my sins. I am heartily sorry for them. For Jesus’ sake, I forgive my enemies and all who have sinned against me. I believe that You give me the forgiveness of sins and the gift of new life and salvation through the body and blood of My Savior. Through the Lord’s Supper strengthen my faith in Christ, increase my love for others, grant me faithfulness in my vocation, and give me the joyous hope and confidence of eternal life and salvation in Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



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