

7 SIGNS

JESUS REVEALED IN
THE BOOK OF JOHN

SESSION 4: JESUS FEEDS THE GREAT CROWD



In this series, we discover seven signs of Jesus in the gospel of John. Water turns into wine, a man born blind is healed, and a man four-days-dead is raised to life! Are these random miraculous acts, or do they point to something more? Together we will explore what these miracles tell us about who Jesus is. Today, Jesus feeds a great crowd of 5000-plus people!



Share

- What is your favourite meal?
- Can you think of a time when you were really hungry or thirsty? How did it feel when you finally had something to eat or drink?



Pray

Before we read today's Scripture, let's pray together.

Pray that the Holy Spirit would speak to us through God's Word.



Read

Read John 6:1-15.

You might like to read it in a couple of different translations.

¹ Jesus crossed Lake Galilee, which was also known as Lake Tiberias. ² A large crowd had seen him work miracles to heal the sick, and those people went with him. ³⁻⁴ It was almost time for the Jewish festival of Passover, and Jesus went up on a mountain with his disciples and sat down.

⁵ When Jesus saw the large crowd coming toward him, he asked Philip, "Where will we get enough food to feed all these people?" ⁶ He said this to test Philip, since he already knew what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered, "Don't you know that it would take almost a year's wages just to buy only a little bread for each of these people?"

⁸ Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the disciples. He spoke up and said, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five small loaves of barley bread and two fish. But what good is that with all these people?"

¹⁰ The ground was covered with grass, and Jesus told his disciples to tell everyone to sit down. About 5,000 men were in the crowd. ¹¹ Jesus took the bread in his hands and gave thanks to God. Then he passed the bread to the people, and he did the same with the fish, until everyone had plenty to eat.

¹² The people ate all they wanted, and Jesus told his disciples to gather up the leftovers, so that nothing would be wasted. ¹³ The disciples gathered them up and filled twelve large baskets with what was left over from the five barley loaves.

¹⁴ After the people had seen Jesus work this miracle, they began saying, "This must be the Prophet who is to come into the world!" ¹⁵ Jesus realized that they would try to force him to be their king. So he went up on a mountain, where he could be alone.

(Contemporary English Version)

¹ After this, Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. ² A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. ³ Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. ⁴ (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.) ⁵ Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?"

⁶ He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip replied, "Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!"

⁸ Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. ⁹ "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?"

¹⁰ "Tell everyone to sit down," Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. ¹² After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, "Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted." ¹³ So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves.

¹⁴ When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, "Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!" ¹⁵ When Jesus saw that they were ready to force him to be their king, he slipped away into the hills by himself.

(New Living Translation)



Share

- Have a go at retelling this story in your own words.
- Thousands of people were following Jesus, because they had heard he could do miracles. What do you think the energy was like in the crowd? What sorts of things do you think they were saying to each other?

- In verses five and six, Jesus asks one of the disciples, Philip, a question he already knew the answer to. If you were in Philip's position, what do you think you would have thought or felt? Why do you think Jesus asked Philip this question?
- Philip states that even if they worked for more than half a year, they wouldn't have enough money to feed the hungry crowd. It seemed impossible. Can you think of a time in your life when you had a need that seemed impossible to meet?
- In verse nine, Andrew says, "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish."¹ The boy doesn't have much to offer, but he gives it to Jesus, and Jesus does something miraculous. Have you ever felt like God did something big even though you offered him something small? In what ways does this idea challenge you?
- In verses 11-13, Jesus provides more than enough food for everyone, so much that there are leftovers. Why do you think there were leftovers? What does this suggest about Jesus? Have you ever felt like God went above and beyond in providing for you?
- In John 6:35, Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."² For those listening, bread was a central part of every meal – essential for survival. With this in mind, what do you think Jesus means when he calls himself, 'The bread of life'?
- In what ways is Jesus like food and water for people who are hungry and thirsty? What are some other places people look for satisfaction in life?
- What part of today's study would you like to apply to your life?



Pray

Spend some time listening to the Holy Spirit in silence. Then spend some time praying for each other about the things you've shared today.

¹ John 6:9 (CEV)

² John 6:35 (NIV)

Notes

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