



Jesus Is the Bread of Life

5

Key Theme

- Jesus is God.

Key Passages

- John 6:1–11, 6:26–27, 6:33–35

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how Jesus fed the 5,000.
- Explain what it means that Jesus is the bread of life.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by completing the Memory Verse Review Sheet using the letter clues. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a partner or to the teacher using only the letter clues.



Activity 1: Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes

Students will fill out the Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

Jesus took a small lunch and miraculously multiplied it to feed a crowd of 5,000 men and an untold number of women and children. He used the miracle to point out the spiritual hunger that physical bread cannot satisfy. Only Jesus, the bread of life, can provide the spiritual food necessary for eternal life.



Activity 2: Team Toss Review

Students will compete in teams to earn points by answering questions and tossing a beanbag onto the answers taped to the floor.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print one Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



JESUS IS THE BREAD OF LIFE CLASS NOTES

- Print one Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes for each student
- Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



TEAM TOSS REVIEW

- Print one set of the Team Toss Review Components from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Keep the Teacher Guide for your use.
- Print onto cardstock, and cut out one set of 12 Team Toss Review Answer Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Team Toss Review Teacher Guide
- 12 Team Toss Review Answer Cards
- Masking tape
- 2-3 Beanbags



Memory Verse

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above along with this background.

The miracles Jesus performed confirmed that He was God. He had power over all creation (Mark 4:39). He had the wisdom and knowledge to teach with authority (Luke 4:32). He had the authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:5). He had power over disease (John 9:6–7). And He had power over life and death (John 11). As we read these accounts and come to know Jesus better, we can understand the centurion's response as he watched Jesus die on the Cross: "Truly this Man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39).

Jesus's life was characterized by miracles, service, compassion, teaching, and truth. One event that demonstrated all of these characteristics was when Jesus fed the 5,000. Bear in mind that the crowd was far larger than 5,000, as this number would not have included women and children. Jesus had been teaching, and this multitude—estimated at 20,000—followed Him. Upon seeing the crowd, Jesus had compassion on them. Knowing what He was about to do, Jesus tested Philip: "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" (John 6:5). Philip responded that there were not enough funds available to even begin to feed all of them. But Jesus had a plan. They found a young boy with five barley loaves and two small fish. Jesus took this meager lunch, gave thanks to God, and passed out enough food to feed the entire crowd! Not only that but they filled 12 baskets with the leftovers. Here again, Jesus revealed who He was to those who had eyes to see (Matthew 13:16).

It was an amazing miracle indeed—one that met the physical needs of a great number of people. But Jesus would soon make a claim that would prove to be more amazing than even this miracle. He would claim that He Himself is the bread of life (John 6:35).

You see, the crowds continued to follow Jesus (John 6:24). But Jesus knew that they were captivated, not by Him, but by His miracles. They sought Him because they had recently eaten the food He had miraculously multiplied (John 6:26). They were more concerned with filling their stomachs temporarily than satisfying their spiritual hunger eternally. So Christ's address must have puzzled them when He said, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him" (John

6:27). What food would be available that would provide eternal life?

They continued to ask for more signs and miracles and even recalled that Moses had supplied manna in the desert (John 6:31). But what God had offered through the manna was merely a hint of what was to come—the true bread, Jesus Christ. And again, Jesus surely surprised them with His answer: "Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (John 6:32–33).

They asked the Lord to give them that bread. And again, Jesus startled them when He said, "I am the bread of life, He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

What did Jesus mean? Again, He was not referring to physical life that perishes or to bread that temporarily satisfies; He was referring to eternal life and spiritual bread that forever satisfies. Jesus is the living bread of life who has come down from heaven. He gives spiritual life; that is why He came. He is the only source of life. The "bread" Jesus gives is His own flesh, sacrificed on the Cross for the life of the world (John 6:47–51). He gave His precious, sinless life for the life of sinners everywhere—sinners who would one day come to Him in humility, repentance, and faith for the forgiveness of their sins.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Have you ever had someone ask you, "You don't take the Bible literally, do you?" Usually, they ask this because they think it is ridiculous to accept some of the things the Bible says. They may follow up with, "Jesus said, 'I am the door.' You don't think he's really a door, do you?" Or, "Jesus said to cut off your hand if it causes you to sin. So why do you still have two hands?"

The problem lies with our use of the term literal. It would be best if we avoid using this term with regard to Bible interpretation. It would be incorrect to state that we take the Bible literally, in the way that the person above means it. The Bible itself gives us some principles of interpretation in 2 Corinthians 4:2 and Proverbs 8:8–9:

But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by

manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; nothing crooked or perverse is in them. They are all plain to him who understands, and right to those who find knowledge.

In other words, we are to read and understand the Bible in a plain or natural manner. This is usually what believers mean when they say "literal interpretation of the Bible." It means we don't go looking for spiritual allegories everywhere or profound truths hidden under the surface of every passage. It would be better to say that we take the Bible "plainly" or in a "straightforward manner." Reading the Bible "plainly" means that we seek to discover the meaning of a passage as the original author would have intended and as the original hearers would have understood it.

As a matchless literary work, the Bible contains many literary styles, called genres. These genres include historical narrative, poetry, prophecy, parable, and proverb. We understand that historical narrative is to be interpreted differently from poetry, which may use allegory. It's also different from prophecy, which often uses fantastic imagery. And we know that proverbs are general truths that help us to live godly lives, not foolproof promises.

In addition to literary genres, the Bible employs a variety of figures of speech. These include simile, metaphor, allegory, hyperbole, sarcasm, metonymy, personification, anthropomorphism, imagery, and symbolism. For instance, we understand that when Jesus says, "I am the bread of life," He's using a metaphor—He's not an actual loaf of bread. Similarly, when someone says, "My uncle Bob is the black sheep of the family," we know they aren't talking about an animal with black

wool, but they mean that Uncle Bob is an odd or disreputable member of the family.

Reading the Bible plainly/straightforwardly (taking into account literary genre, figures of speech, context, authorship, historical setting and culture, etc.) is the basis for what is called the historical-grammatical method of interpretation, which has been used by theologians since the church fathers. This method helps to eliminate improper interpretations of the Bible and allows us to plumb the depths of God's Word.

As we study the Bible and seek to rightly interpret God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15), may we follow the example of the Bereans (Acts 17:11) and carefully examine the Bible to ensure that any teaching we hear is in line with Scripture.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Jesus, Bread of Life, Creator, Almighty God, I give you praise! You have such love and compassion for this sin-sick world. You are patient and kind. You, the great I Am, compassionately provided food for a hungry crowd who just clamored for more miracles. You, the Creator of life, spoke words of life into the ears of your disciples, yet many left you because they did not believe. You, the Bread of Life, offered yourself as spiritual food to a world of people who only wanted physical food. But some believed. I believe. I pray my students will believe. May they desire this food that only comes from you, that they, too, will hunger no more!



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes

MATERIALS

- Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes for each student
- Jesus Is the Bread of Life Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work ahead. We'll do it together.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete the class notes today, we will see Jesus do another amazing miracle, and we'll find out what He was showing the people through it.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Refer to Lesson 1 Lesson Theme Poster. Jesus had come to do the will of the Father. He glorified God in all He did. Many people believed Jesus and His claims as they saw the miracles He performed.

Refer to Lessons 2, 3, 4 Lesson Theme Posters. His power over creation, nature, disease, and even over death showed the people that Jesus was who He said He was—God in the flesh. Jesus also showed that His power went beyond the physical. Just as He brought Lazarus from death to life, Jesus can bring sinners from eternal death in trespasses and sins to eternal life through the gospel.

➤ Use the New Testament History Poster included with your teacher kit as you teach the lesson. Emphasize that Jesus ministered only 3 years, and He lived only about 35 years. Yet His life changed the world forever and brought eternal life to all who believe.

Today we'll take a look at another of Jesus's miracles. It's different from the others, but just as spectacular in proving that He indeed is the Son of God who came to bring eternal life to sinners. We'll start by reading John 6:1–9. Who wants to read? *Assign readers.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

The events in this account are really interesting. Let's answer some questions about what we read to make sure we understand what happened.

Observe the Text

➤ As you teach this lesson, have students re-read the verses that answer the questions presented.

? Who can tell me where this event occurred? *John 6:1. The Sea of Galilee which is the Sea of Tiberius.*

? Yes. And what was happening when Jesus and His disciples went there? Look at John 6:2. *Allow discussion.*

The crowds had seen Jesus's miracles, and now they were following Him—perhaps to witness more miracles.

? Where did Jesus go with His disciples? *John 6:3. Up on the mountain.*

? What did Jesus notice as He sat on the mountain? *John 6:5. Many people were coming toward Him.*

It was near the Jewish feast of Passover, and more people than usual were around. And they were coming to see Jesus.

? Someone read #1 on your class notes. How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. People. Have students complete #1.*

? Look back at John 6:5. What did Jesus say to Philip when He saw all those people? *Where shall we buy bread that these may eat?*

? What did Jesus want to do for the people? Look at #2 on your class notes. What is the answer? *John 6:5. Assign a reader. Crowds. Have students complete #2.*

? What did Philip say to Jesus? Look at John 6:7. *Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough to feed these people.*

Two hundred denarii was a whole lot of money! But there were a whole lot of people around. Philip was saying there just wasn't enough money to feed these people.

? Someone else entered the discussion in John 6:8. Who was that? *Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.*

? Andrew found someone and something. What was that? It is in John 6:9. *John 6:9. A lad, a young boy, with five barley loaves and two small fish.*

A lad is a small boy. And this small boy had a pretty small lunch—a lunch that clearly would not be enough to feed this great crowd of people.

- ? Will someone read #3 on the class notes? What are the answers there?
Assign a reader. Loaves, fish. Have students complete #3 on the class notes.

I don't think five barley loaves and two small fish would feed this great crowd of people. But Jesus knew what He was doing. He had other plans, as He often does. Let's see what His plans were. Who will read John 6:10–11? *Choose a student to read the verses.*

- ? Jesus was in charge, wasn't He? And what did He want the people to do?
John 6:10. Sit down.

- ? What were they going to sit on? *John 6:10. On the grass.*

- ? How many men does John 6:10 say were in the crowd? *John 6:10. About five thousand.*

So, there were about 5,000 men. Well, guess what? There weren't only men there. But women and children were there, too!

- ? How many people do you think there could have been total—men, women, and children? *Allow guesses.*

Some people think the crowd may have been as large as 20,000 people altogether! Jesus told them to sit down, and they sat down!

- ? Then what did Jesus do? Look in John 6:11. *John 6:11. Jesus took the loaves of bread and the fish, gave thanks to God, and started to pass them out to the disciples.*

- ? And what did the disciples do with the bread and fish? *John 6:11. They passed them to the people sitting down.*

- ? Was there enough? How much did the people eat? *John 6:11. Yes! As much as they wanted.*

- ? Let's do a quick review from our class notes. Someone read #4. What is the answer to that? *Assign a reader. Control. Have students complete #4.*

- ? And will someone read #5? This is what Jesus did with the young boy's lunch. What word is missing? *Assign a reader. Thanked. Have students complete #5.*

- ? And #6? Will someone read that? How did the disciples help? *Assign a reader. Food. Have students complete #6.*

- ? Was there enough food? Someone read #7 for us. How will you complete that? *Assign a reader. Enough. Have students complete #7.*

Discover the Truth

The feeding of this great crowd of people was another spectacular miracle. Jesus multiplied a few loaves of bread and some fish and fed thousands of people! This was something only God could have done! Jesus has such power. We have seen His power over nature, disease, and death. The power in His miracles was proving something to the people who were following Him.

OMNIPOTENT

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

- ? What was that? What was Jesus trying to show and teach the people through all of His miracles? *He was God!*
- ? Yes. And what attribute of God can we apply to Jesus here? What is the attribute that tells us that God is all powerful to do whatever He wants? *Omnipotent.*

Yes! Jesus is God. Jesus is omnipotent.



READ THE WORD

Jesus fed the people with bread and fish. And shortly after that He would say something that was confusing and magnificent. And it had to do with bread. Let me give you some background.

After feeding the thousands of people, word got out. Jesus could feed them! And so the crowds continued to follow Him—not because they believed He was God, the Savior, but because they had eaten the bread, and they wanted more! Jesus knew that those who were now following Him were only wanting to eat! They were not interested in who He was or why He had come!

John 6:26

Let's look at John 6:26. I think this will explain it. Jesus was talking to the crowds. Follow along as I read the verse. *Read John 6:26 enthusiastically emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Jesus knew why the people were seeking Him. What did He tell them? *You seek me because you ate of the loaves and were filled.*

Yes, they wanted more bread. But Jesus had an answer for them.

John 6:27

Someone read John 6:27. Jesus was still talking about bread, but not the kind of bread the people were looking for. *Assign a reader.*

- ? What did Jesus tell them, and us, in this verse—about food, about bread? *Allow discussion.*

Jesus said the people should not labor for food which perishes, but they should labor for food which endures to everlasting life.

- ? So what is food that perishes? What did Jesus mean by that? *Allow discussion.*

Well, food that perishes is pretty much anything we eat. All of the food we eat will eventually rot. If you leave apples on the tree or in the field, they rot. And if you leave food out in your kitchen for too long, it rots—it perishes! Jesus said we should NOT labor for this kind of food—food that perishes.

- ? What kind of food should we labor for? It is in John 6:27, too. *The food which endures to everlasting life.*
- ? Where would we get the food that endures to everlasting life? *The Son of Man will give it to us.*
- ? Who is the Son of Man? *Jesus.*

Discover the Truth

The people had eaten their fill, and they wanted more. They followed Jesus to see what He would do next. But Jesus stopped them in their tracks. He knew their hearts. He knew they wanted more food because they were hungry. They wanted to eat again! And so He said, don't work for food that perishes. Don't work for the food you eat each day. There is a far more important food that you need—it is a different kind of food. This food will last for all eternity. It will endure to everlasting life. Work for the food that only Jesus—the Son of Man—could give them.

- ? Let's go back to the class notes. Will someone read #8 for us? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Perish. Have students complete #8.*
- ? And will someone read #9? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Forever. Have students complete #9.*
- ? And #10? Where will this food that lasts forever come from? Who can answer that? *Assign a reader. Jesus. Have students complete #10.*



READ THE WORD

I'm sure the people had a lot of questions. Perhaps they wondered what the food Jesus was talking about would look and taste like. They may have looked for it, wondering where it was, wondering what this food that endures to everlasting life could be.

Jesus answered their questions in John 6:33–35. Let's read that together.
John 6:33–35. Assign readers.

John 6:33–35

EXAMINE THE WORD

Wow! Jesus's words may have stunned the people. Let's talk about what He meant by them.

Observe the Text

- ? Jesus spoke of the bread of God. Who is the bread of God? Look in John 6:33. *The bread of God is He who comes down from heaven to give life to the world.*
- ? Who came down from heaven to give life to the world? *John 6:33. Jesus.*
- ? What did the people say when they heard this? It is in John 6:34. *Lord give us this bread always.*

They wanted the bread Jesus spoke of. They wanted to eat and not be hungry again! But remember, that is not what Jesus was talking about. He told them that the bread is “He who came down from heaven.”

- ? So, Jesus had to make it very clear. What did He call Himself in John 6:35?
He said He was the bread of life.

That’s right. Jesus is the bread of life! Jesus is the bread who came down from heaven.

- ? And what does Jesus, the bread of life, offer to those who come to Him?
John 6:35. They shall never hunger. They shall never thirst.

Discover the Truth

As the bread of life from heaven, Jesus is the only one who can offer eternal life. The people had been fed by the loaves and the fish. But they were hungry again. And when we eat, we know we will be hungry again. But Jesus was not talking about feeding our bodies. He was talking about feeding our souls. Jesus is the one sent from God. Jesus is the only one who brings life. It is only through Jesus that we can live forever.

- ? Look back in John 6:35. How will we get this bread? What must we do? *We must come to Him and believe in Him.*

Jesus came to earth to do His Father’s will. And the Father’s will is that everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life. If we come to Him and believe in Him, we will not hunger or thirst again! He is the true bread of life who came down from heaven. He is the only source of this eternal life. Jesus is the only way to the Father.

➤ If time allows, assign students to re-read the points on the class notes as a review and briefly discuss them.

- ? Let’s finish up our class notes. Will someone read #11? Give us the answer.
Assign a reader. Life. Have students complete #11.

- ? And how about #12? What is the answer there? *Assign a reader. Souls. Have students complete #12.*

- ? And the last one—#13. Who will read it? How will you finish that sentence? *Assign a reader. Eternal. Have students complete #13.*





Team Toss Review

MATERIALS

- Team Toss Review Teacher Guide
- Team Toss Review Answer Cards
- Masking tape
- 2–3 Beanbags

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide the class into 2–3 teams. Tape the Team Toss Review Answer Cards on the floor. Tape a line on the floor at a challenging distance from the answers. Present the questions from the Team Toss Review Teacher Guide alternating between teams. If Team 1 answers correctly, award one point for the correct answer. If not, allow Team 2 to answer. Then allow teams to toss the beanbag to the appropriate answer on the floor. Award another point to the team that gets the beanbag closest to the correct answer. Continue play and repeat questions as time allows.

We read several passages of Scripture in this lesson. We're going to play a fun game to see how much you remember. Teams will take turns answering the question I give. Each correct answer will earn one point.

Then each team will try to toss the beanbag to the correct answer on the floor. The team that gets closest to the right answer will earn another point.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Determine the winning team when game is finished. And we have a winning team! Congratulations! That was a fun way to review our lesson.

When Jesus fed the great multitude by multiplying a few loaves of bread and small fish, He showed His compassion and love for people, and He revealed His almighty power. Jesus fed the hungry crowd to show the people that He was the bread of life. He wanted them to see past their physical hunger to a more important hunger, a spiritual one. Jesus wanted them—and us—to understand that only He could provide them with eternal life.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Today we saw what Jesus did when the people were hungry. He wanted to feed thousands of people. But all He had were five barley loaves and two fish. Jesus loved the people and had compassion for them. He took the bread and fish, gave thanks to His Father in heaven, and passed them to the disciples who then passed them to those who were sitting down. And thousands of people ate as much as they wanted—with twelve baskets left over! Jesus performed miracles like this one to show that He is God!

Jesus used this miracle to teach an important lesson. Just like physical food is necessary for physical life, Jesus is necessary for spiritual life—eternal life. Jesus explained that we should not labor and work for food that perishes—that is, food that fills our stomachs. Jesus taught that we should labor for food that endures to everlasting life. Only Jesus can offer

this food. He is the bread of life. He is the only one who can offer eternal life and forgiveness of sins.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Let's discuss the idea of Jesus being the bread of life a little bit more.

Raise your hand if you like to eat. *Pause for a response.* Of course, we all must eat to live. Food is necessary to live. But Jesus brought so much more than food. He wanted us to live forever. And so He compared Himself to the food that we eat. He wanted us to understand just how important He and His Word are to us.

? Could our bodies live very long without food? *No.*

No. Our bodies need food to live. And, just like we need food to live physically, we need the "bread" that Jesus brings—His life, His truth, His death on the Cross, His Resurrection, His Word—to live spiritually. We need the things only Jesus can provide in order to have eternal life.

Matthew 4:4 says that man does not live by *bread* alone but by every *word* that comes from the mouth of God. Let's read that verse together. It's on the bottom of your class notes. *Read the verse aloud with the students.*

? Where would we find the "word" that Jesus is talking about here? *In the Bible.*

Yes. We can only know about the eternal life that Jesus offers through His Word—the Bible. And we need that Word in order to have spiritual and eternal life.

The bread, or food, that Jesus offers is not like the food we eat each day. His bread nourishes our souls and allows us to grow in the knowledge and wisdom of who He is. His bread, His Word, offers eternal life in heaven for all who will trust in Jesus, believe His Word, repent of their sins, and turn to Him. This is the bread we should want and look for.



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise Jesus that He is all-powerful and sovereign. We can trust Him.
- Thank God for His spiritual food—His Word—which gives us what we need to know Him and grow spiritually.
- Ask God to help us desire His Word and eternal life more than the physical pleasures that this world has to offer.