



Jesus Is the Bread of Life

5

Key Theme

- Jesus is God.

Key Passages

- John 6:5–11, 6:27, 6:35

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 Puzzle. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a partner or to the teacher.



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: Ready, Aim, Toss!

Students will compete in teams to earn points by answering questions and tossing beanbags into baskets.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print one Memory Verse Review Puzzle from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student or team.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Puzzle 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



READY, AIM, TOSS!

- Print one copy of the Ready, Aim, Toss! Components from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use. Keep the Questions and Answer Key for your use.
- Cut out the Point Labels and attach to the baskets or boxes.

- Ready, Aim, Toss! Questions and Answer Key
- Ready, Aim, Toss! Point Labels
- Two beanbags
- Three laundry baskets or boxes
- Masking tape



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW GAME (OPTIONAL)

- This is an optional activity to use in some or all of the lessons to review the memory verse if time allows.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Nine Memory Verse Review Puzzle Pieces used during the Come On In Activity
- Masking tape



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!

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Puzzle. 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 wanted the people to learn about Him.



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.**

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. He was fully God and fully man. Jesus also showed that His power went beyond the physical things we can see and touch.**

► The class notes are designed and written simply. Please encourage and help your students to read them as the class progresses. They are an excellent means to review important lesson principles.

John 6:5–6

► 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.

OMNISCIENT

(Refer to Attributes Poster.)

John 6:7

► Re-read the verses or the portion of the verse(s) that answer the questions you are asking of the text.

John 6:8–9

Just as He brought Lazarus from the dead back to physical life, Jesus can bring sinners from death in sin to eternal, spiritual life in Him.

Today we'll take a look at another one of Jesus's miracles. When this miracle happened, Jesus was with a GREAT crowd of people. They had come to Him because they heard He could do miracles and heal the sick!

Jesus saw this HUGE crowd of people and wanted to do something for them. Listen and tell me if you know what it was Jesus wanted to do. I am going to read John 6:5–6. *Read John 6:5–6.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? **What did Jesus see when He lifted up His eyes?** *Re-read John 6:5. A great multitude was coming toward Him.*

Yes! Jesus was up on the mountain looking down, and He saw a huge crowd of people—a multitude—coming toward Him.

? **Now look at your class notes. Who can read #1 for us? How will you answer that?** *Assign a reader. Crowd. Have students complete #1.*

? **So what happened? Jesus wanted to do something for these people. Listen again to John 6:5. What was it Jesus wanted to do for the huge crowd?** *Re-read John 6:5. Jesus wanted to feed all the people.*

? **What did He ask Philip?** *John 6:5. Where shall we buy bread that these may eat?*

? **The Bible says that Jesus already knew what He was going to do. Let's look at our Attributes of God Poster. What attribute have we talked about that means Jesus knows everything?** *Omniscient.*

That's right! Jesus is God. And He knows everything—past, present, and future!

? **So, what did Jesus want to do? Look at #2 on your class notes. What is the answer?** *Assign a reader. Feed. Have students complete #2.*

There were a lot of people! And the disciple Philip wasn't sure about feeding all of them. Listen to John 6:7 while I read it. *Read John 6:7.*

? **What was Philip's comment?** *John 6:7. Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough to feed these people.*

Denarii was the money they used. What Philip was saying was they just didn't have enough money to buy food for all of these people!

? **But who already had a plan?** *Jesus!*

Let's see what Jesus had planned! Listen as I read John 6:8–9. *Read John 6:8–9.*

? The disciple Andrew found someone and something. What did he find?

Re-read John 6:9. A lad, 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. But that is all they found according to the Bible.

? Let's go back to the class notes. Will someone read #3? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Five. Two. 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. Do you? But Jesus knew what He was doing. Listen as I read a little more. *Read John 6:10–11. Read the verses enthusiastically!*

? This tells us a lot about what was happening. Who was in control of this situation? *John 6:10. Jesus.*

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

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.*

? Have you ever been in a big crowd? Maybe at a fair or a ball game where there were lots of people everywhere? *Allow discussion.*

Some people think this 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? *Re-read John 6:11. Jesus took the loaves of bread and the fish, He gave thanks to God, and He started to pass the bread and fish out.*

? Was there enough food? *John 6:11. Yes!*

? How much did the people eat? *Re-read John 6:11b. As much as they wanted.*

? Look at your class notes. Someone read #4. What is the answer to that? Jesus was in what? *Assign a reader. Control. Have students complete #4.*

? And will someone read #5? What is the answer there? *Assign a reader. God. Have students complete #5.*

? And #6? Will someone read that? Was there enough food? *Assign a reader. All. Have students complete #6.*

Discover the Truth

The feeding of this great crowd of people was another amazing 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. He had power over nature, disease, and death.

OMNIPOTENT

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

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

That's right! Jesus is God. Jesus is omnipotent. He is all-powerful to do what He wants. Let's say that word together. Repeat "omnipotent" together.



READ THE WORD

Jesus fed the people with bread and fish. After feeding that huge crowd of people, the word got out! And the people continued to follow Him. They wanted more bread to eat! Jesus knew that was all they wanted. They were not interested in who He was or why He had come! But He had an answer for them. He told them about a different kind of food!

John 6:27

Listen to what He said. I'm going to read John 6:27. *Read John 6:27.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

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. In other words, He was saying there is something that is much more important than regular food.

- ? What kind of food should we labor for? Listen again as I read it. *Re-read John 6:27. The food which endures to everlasting life.*

- ? Where would we get the food that endures to everlasting life? Who will give it to us? *John 6:27. 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 spend all your time and energy to get 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. He told them to work for the food that only Jesus—the Son of Man—can give them.

? Let's go back to the class notes. Will someone read #7 for us? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Eat. Have students complete #7.*

? And will someone read #8? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Food. Have students complete #8.*



READ THE WORD

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

Jesus answered their questions in John 6:35. Listen as I read this. *Read John 6:35.*

John 6:35

EXAMINE THE WORD

Wow! This must have really surprised the people.

Observe the Text

? What did Jesus call Himself? *John 6:35. The bread of life.*

What? Jesus is bread? That doesn't make sense when we first hear it, does it?

Refer to Lesson Theme Poster. But Jesus wasn't talking about a loaf of bread! No! Jesus was not talking about the food we eat—food that perishes. He was not talking about bread that we eat to keep our physical bodies alive.

Discover the Truth

Jesus is the bread of life from heaven. What He means is that He is the ONLY way to have 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 true eternal life. It is only through Jesus that we can have spiritual life forever. And this life is promised to all who turn away from their sins and turn to Jesus. Jesus is the only one who can offer this kind of life—spiritual and eternal life!

? Let's go back to the class notes. Who can read #9 for us? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Life. Have students complete #9.*

? How about #10? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Jesus. Have students complete #10.*



➤ If time allows, do a quick review of each point on the class notes.



Ready, Aim, Toss!

MATERIALS

- Ready, Aim, Toss! Questions and Answer Key
- Ready, Aim, Toss! Point Labels
- Two beanbags
- Three laundry baskets or boxes
- Masking tape

INSTRUCTIONS

Use masking tape to make a tossing line. Bring in three laundry baskets or boxes. Set the baskets in a line making each one a little farther away from the tossing line. Label the baskets with 5, 10, and 25 points so the farther away it is, the higher the score. Divide the class into two or more teams depending on size. The teams will take turns answering questions from the lesson. When someone answers correctly, he will have a chance to toss the beanbags into the baskets. Keep track of the scores for each team on the board. If the team misses the question, another team may try. If no one gets the answer, give the answer and repeat the question later in the game. Repeat questions, or add others according to your class and your lesson.

Were you paying attention? We are going to play a game. I'm going to tape down a tossing line here and line up these baskets. Each basket is worth different points—5, 10,

and 25. Each team will get a turn to answer a question. If you answer correctly, you will get to toss beanbags into the baskets. If you miss the baskets, you don't get any points. We will keep track of your points on the board. *Play the game.*

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 of people 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 in their stomachs to a more important hunger—a spiritual one in their souls. Jesus wanted them—and wants us—to understand that only He could provide them with eternal life.





Memory Verse Review Game (Optional)

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

If you find you have extra time, please consider reviewing the memory verse with your class.

MATERIALS

- Memory Verse Poster
- One set of the nine Memory Verse Review Puzzle Pieces used in the Come On In Activity
- Masking tape

INSTRUCTIONS

Allow students to look at the Memory Verse Poster and say the verse together as a class a couple of times. Remove or cover the poster before the game begins. Tape the Memory Verse Review Puzzle Pieces onto nine students' backs. Students will work together to put themselves in order according to the memory verse. Once they think they are standing in order, check the verse by reading the words out loud according to how they are standing.

If you have fewer than nine students, tape more than one piece, in the proper order, on some students. If you have more than nine students, repeat if time allows.

We're going to practice our memory verse. Let's say the verse together a couple times. *Cover the poster before starting the game.*

Now I am going to tape these nine Memory Verse Review Puzzle Pieces onto your backs! Once I have done that, I want you to work together to get into the right order. We'll check the verse when you are finished. *Tape the nine puzzle pieces onto the students' backs.*

Most groups may need a time limit to encourage them to move at a quick pace. If so, let them know the limit and use a timer to count down the time. Once the students think they are in the right order, check them by reading the words out loud.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

There is only one way to eternal life. We must know the one true God and Jesus Christ— who is the bread of 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 the food out. All those people ate as much as they wanted.

Jesus used this miracle to teach an important lesson. Just like we need physical food to stay alive, we need Jesus for spiritual life—eternal life. Jesus explained that we should not labor and work for food that perishes—that is, food that just fills our stomachs. Jesus taught that we should labor for food that endures to everlasting life by believing in Jesus.

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.

? Where would we find the "word" that Jesus is talking about here? *Hold up Bible. 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 for our bodies. 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 children 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 move your students to desire His Word and eternal life.