

Jesus Feeds the Crowds Christian Growth Hour June 21, 2026

What is special about sharing a meal with loved ones?

Table Time

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Background: The apostles had been sent out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (Luke 9:1-2). This event occurs near the town of Bethsaida, which is located on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, in Jewish territory.

Luke 9:10 On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida. 11 When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing. 12 Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, "Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place." 13 But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." 14 For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." 15 And they did so, and had them all sit down. 16 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. 17 And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

What do you suppose the apostles told Jesus on their return from their mission work?

Why would the crowds want to follow Jesus (v. 11)? What do you think their motives were?

How did Jesus minister to the crowds (v. 11)? What does that tell you about Jesus?

Who said that the crowds should be sent away to get food and lodging (v. 12)?

What was Jesus' response and how did the apostles react (v. 13)? Was that a reasonable response to the situation? How would we have responded?

How was the crowd fed (vs. 15-1)? Did each person get barely enough to eat (v. 17)? What does this say about God?

How many baskets of broken pieces were left over and why is that significant (v. 17)?

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

Background: This event occurred in the region of the Decapolis (ten cities) predominately occupied by non-Jews with a Greek influence.

Matthew 15:29 Jesus went on from there and walked beside the Sea of Galilee. And he went up on the mountain and sat down there. 30 And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, 31 so that the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel.

How would the crowds know about Jesus in this region separated from Israel? (Hint: *Luke 8:38 The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.*)

What does that say about the power of testimony?

How did Jesus minister to the crowds (v. 30)? Did he treat them any differently than the Jews?

What does that say about Jesus? What does that mean for us?

Who was glorified as a result (v. 31)?

32 Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." 33 And the disciples said to him, "Where are we to get enough bread in such a desolate place to feed so great a crowd?" 34 And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." 35 And directing the crowd to sit down on the ground, 36 he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 37 And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up seven baskets full of the broken pieces left over. 38 Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

Who indicated that the crowds needed something to eat (v. 32)? How was that different from the feeding of the five thousand?

What was the disciple's response (v. 33)? Was that any different from their previous response to the feeding of the five thousand? What does that tell you about human nature?

How was this feeding like that of the feeding of the five thousand (vs. 35-37)?

How many baskets of broken pieces were left over and what is the significance of that number (v. 37)?

Group Debrief

Any thoughts, comments, questions?