



“I Was Hungry...”

Feeding the 5000

John 6:1-14

Level C

Ages 11-14

Series Theme: You shall love the Lord your God, and your neighbor as yourself.

Lesson Focus: We can help others in natural and spiritual ways. When we serve others we also serve the Lord.

Reading Summary: Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee. A great multitude followed Him up on to a mountain because they had seen Him heal the sick. Jesus and His disciples sat down. Seeing a multitude coming, Jesus asked Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for them to eat?” Philip answered, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough to feed them.” The disciple Andrew said, “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?” Then Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” About five hundred people sat down. Jesus took the loaves and the fish, gave thanks, and gave them to His disciples to distribute. When the people were filled, He asked the disciples to gather the remaining pieces. They gathered twelve baskets of leftover fragments. Then the people said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

Lesson 1		Materials Supplied	Materials Needed
1. Welcome Warm-up Activity (2-3 minutes)	Discussion and Activity	You Did It to Me directions p. 8	soup spoon, yard (meter) stick, tape, small candies or raisins
2. Focus on the Word Use all activities (5-7 minutes)	Read the Word and Talk About It	see <i>Reading Summary</i> above discussion guide p. 8	Bible or copy of John 6:1-14
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Video watch a video by Rev. Solomon Keal on hunger and follow up with a discussion	Helping Others, Helping God directions p. 9 video online at www.bitly.com/HelpingOthersHelpsGod	device for showing a video in class (If you cannot stream videos from the internet, see p. 6 for instructions about downloading the video to show offline.)
	Read and Discuss read a variety of stories featuring Jesus feeding people and look for similarities and differences	You Fed Me directions pp. 9-10 <i>You Fed Me</i> p. 11-12 <i>You Fed Me Reading Questions</i> p. 13	paper for printing, pens and pencils
4. Wrap It Up (2-3 minutes)	Take the Message Home introduce the quotation for the week	Take Home Cards p. 14	

1. Welcome Warm-up Activity

You Did It to Me

Supplies: soup spoon, yard (meter) stick, tape, small candies or raisins

Preparation: Tape the spoon securely to the end of the yardstick. Do not let students see the spoon.

Welcome! This lesson is the first of seven in a series on serving others based on Matthew 25:35-36, “I was hungry and you gave Me food...” Is anyone here hungry? I have some (candies/raisins) here that need eating, and I need a hungry volunteer to help me do it.

When someone volunteers, tell him or her that there’s only one rule. Bring out the long-handled spoon and announce that the snack must be eaten using the spoon. Put the snack into the spoon and let the student figure out how to eat it. (*Hint:* two students are required to eat the snack. One person holds the spoon and feeds the other person.) Today we are going to hear a story about a time when it seemed impossible to feed a large crowd.

2. Focus on the Word

Read: John 6:1-14

The place where something happens gives clues about the story’s inner meaning. Where does this story happen? On a mountain. This signals that the story is about higher heavenly thoughts.

Why was the disciple Philip worried when he saw a large crowd coming? It was time for a meal, and he knew they did not have enough food for a large crowd.

Have you ever worried that you are not good enough, or that you do not know enough about how to help people? Have you worried that you didn’t have enough of something to share with friends? Philip’s doubts about the money needed for food are like these doubts in our minds.

What did the disciple Andrew point out? A boy had five barley loaves and two fish. **Would this be enough to feed 5000 people? Bread corresponds to goodness and fish to the desire for knowing true ideas. There was not much of either—just as we do not have much goodness and knowledge of true ideas ourselves. In the Word five means “a little”—but a little that can be increased; two means wanting to know what is true so we can use it in our lives.**

What did the Lord ask the people to do? To sit down.

How were the people fed? The Lord blessed the food, causing it to multiply, and then His disciples distributed it. **The disciples are the good qualities in us through which we can serve the Lord. We grow spiritually by making efforts to put these qualities to work in our lives. For example, a desire to help needs to be put into action by actually helping when there is an opportunity. If we do this, the Lord will multiply His love and truth in us, even if we have just a little.**

Our theme for these lessons is serving others. The first kind of service described in Matthew 25 was feeding the hungry. What are some of the ways we can do this? Encourage thinking on the natural and the spiritual levels, e.g. we can give food to those in need, and we can also share spiritual ideas that help people have better lives.

The Lord said that in helping others we are serving Him. Why is this? All life is the Lord’s. Without Him we would have no life. So in serving what is the Lord’s in others, we are serving Him. The Lord wants to bless everyone. When we respond to His call to help others, we are responding to the Lord Himself. We are serving Him by serving others.

3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Helping Others, Helping God

The parable of the sheep and goats delivers the message that helping others is helping God. *Helping Others, Helping God* is a video that shows how this is true, using the example of how the Lord fed 5000 people with only five loaves and two fish. Students from the Oak Arbor New Church (Michigan, USA) share their experiences of helping others and of being helped by others. Select discussion questions from the options below.

1. Describe a time when you did a small act of kindness for someone else.
How did it make you feel?
How do you think it made them feel?
Did it seem like love multiplied?
2. Describe a time when you felt full of energy.
Where does energy come from?
3. Describe a time when you felt really happy.
Why do think that was?
What did it have to do with feeling loved, or feeling loving or useful?
4. Describe a time when you felt like you had no energy.
Why do you think that was?
5. What relationship might there be between feeling unhappy and feeling unloved, or *not* feeling loving or useful?
6. What makes the Lord feel "hungry"?
7. How does the Lord feel when people are loving to each other?

Choice

You Fed Me

The Lord fed various groups of people while He was on earth. In each instance He asked people to prepare for Him by finding a room and making a meal, or by bringing food themselves. Students will read a variety of stories from the New Testament and complete a question page to help identify similarities and differences between the stories. Conclude with a discussion of what food the Lord likes and how we feed Him.



Video Online

Hear song and sing along at www.bitly.com/HelpingOthersHelpsGod

Materials Needed

Device for watching video. If you do not have internet access in your classroom, download the video ahead of time. See directions for downloading on p. 6 of this book.

New Church Concept Food and Drink

"Food and drink" signify all things that nourish and sustain spiritual life, and these in general are knowledges of truth and good. Spiritual life needs nourishment and support just as much as natural life does; so it is said to be famished when a person is deprived of knowledges, or when they fail, or when they are unknown but are desired. *Apocalypse Explained* 386

Materials Needed for Each Student

You Fed Me pp. 11-12, *You Fed Me Reading Questions* p. 13, pen or pencil



You Fed Me *continued*

1. We're going to look at stories from the Word which mention the Lord feeding people during His life on earth. Working with a partner you will read one story and answer questions. Then we will gather as a group to discover similarities and differences between the stories.
2. Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair copies of *You Fed Me* (pp. 11-12) and *You Fed Me Reading Questions* (p. 13), and a pen or pencil. (For small groups, have students work individually to cover more stories for comparison.)
3. Decide who will read which story so that at least three different stories are covered. **Do not read number six. You will read this as a group later.**
4. Complete the question sheets.
5. Gather as a group. Go through the answer sheets one question at a time and ask students to share their responses. Look for similarities and differences in the stories.
6. Read story six, *Food and Drink for the Lord*, together. This story is unique because the Lord asks for a drink and the disciples are concerned about giving Him food.
7. In this story, what is the Lord's food?
8. How do we "feed" the Lord? (By humbly doing His will.) The Psalmist says,

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart—
These, O God, You will not despise.
Psalm 51:17
9. Doing the Lord's will means treating others as He would wish us to treat them. One of the things He charges us to do is to feed others—with natural food and with spiritual food from His Word. This is the love and support we can offer.



4. Wrap It Up

Take the Message Home

Read this quotation aloud: "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight in abundance" (Isaiah 55:2). In today's story, the Lord gave people food to satisfy their natural hunger, but the people had followed Him because they wanted to hear His words. What feeds us spiritually is goodness and truth. Often these gifts from the Lord come to us through the people around us, just as in the story the Lord gave food to the disciples who then handed it out to the crowd. Who do you find it satisfying to be with? How could you be that kind of person for your friends? How could you help the Lord to give others spiritual food?

Give Take Home Cards (two per page, p. 14) to the students as they leave and suggest they put them up where they will see them this week.

You Fed Me

1. Feeding of the Five Thousand

After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee.... Then a great multitude followed Him... And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.... Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.” One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?” Then Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.” Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.” John 6:1-14

2. The Last Supper

Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread...His disciples said to Him, “Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?” And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’” Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us.” So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover. In the evening He came with the twelve.... And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” Mark 14:12-17,22-25

3. Breakfast by the Sea

Simon Peter said to them [the other disciples], “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We are going with you also.” They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, “Children, have you any food?” They answered Him, “No.” And He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.” Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, “Come and eat breakfast.” Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, “Who are You?”—knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. John 21:3-13

You Fed Me

4. Food for the Risen Lord

So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.” When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Luke 24:33-45

5. Feeding of the Four Thousand

Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.” Then His disciples said to Him, “Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?” Jesus said to them, “How many loaves do you have?” And they said, “Seven, and a few little fish.” So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. Matthew 15:32-38

6. Food and Drink for the Lord

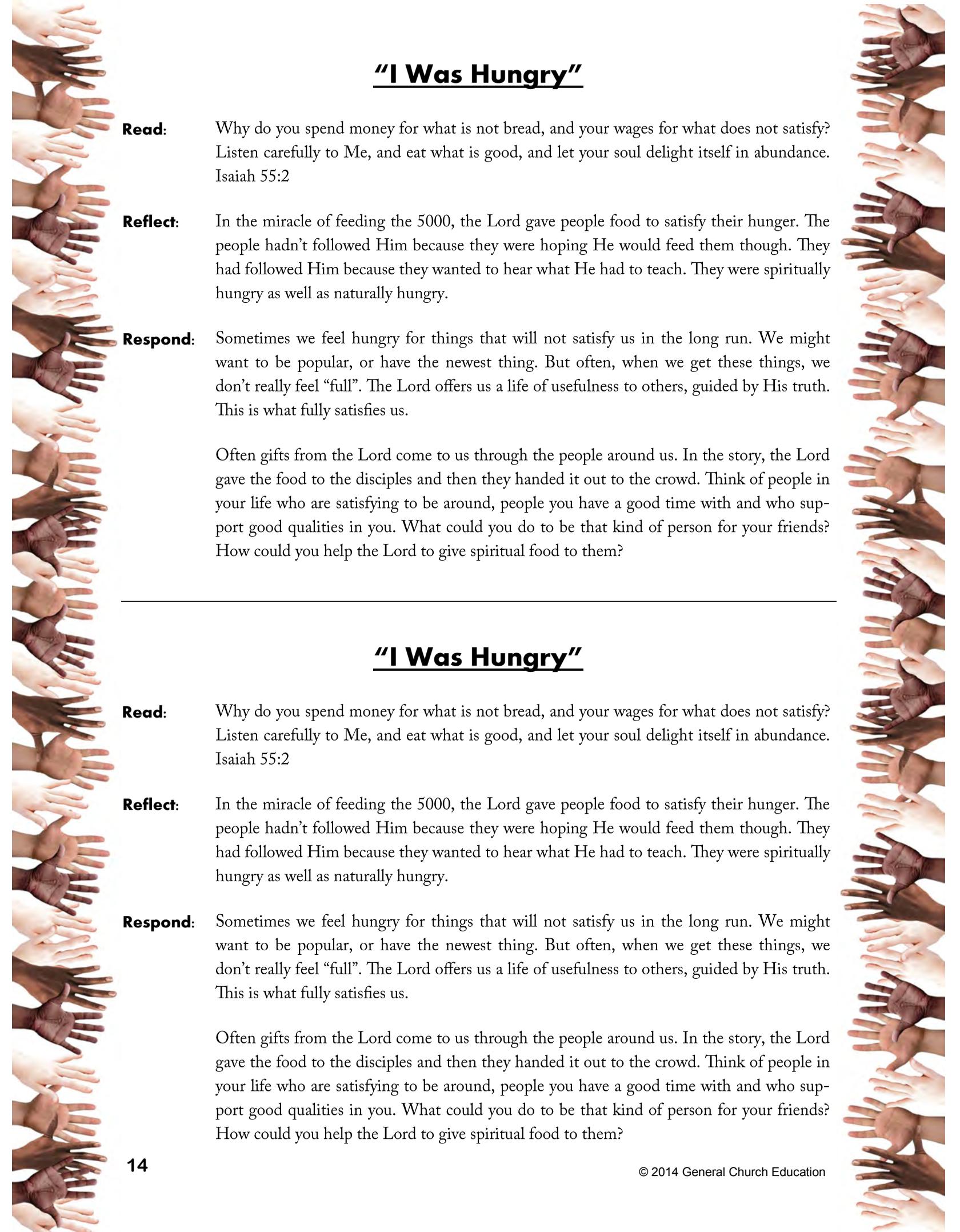
[Jesus came to Jacob’s well, and being wearied from His journey, He sat by the well.] A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.... Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.” And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?” The woman then left her water pot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.” John 4:7-10,21-38

You Fed Me

Reading Questions

Read one story about the Lord eating with people while He was in the world and answer the following questions.

1. Did the Lord ask a question?
2. If yes, underline the question the Lord asked in the story.
3. What did the Lord tell a person or people to do?
4. Who provided food? (*Note: Food might come from more than one source.*)
5. Who prepared the food?
6. What happened as a result of eating with the Lord?



"I Was Hungry"

Read: Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Isaiah 55:2

Reflect: In the miracle of feeding the 5000, the Lord gave people food to satisfy their hunger. The people hadn't followed Him because they were hoping He would feed them though. They had followed Him because they wanted to hear what He had to teach. They were spiritually hungry as well as naturally hungry.

Respond: Sometimes we feel hungry for things that will not satisfy us in the long run. We might want to be popular, or have the newest thing. But often, when we get these things, we don't really feel "full". The Lord offers us a life of usefulness to others, guided by His truth. This is what fully satisfies us.

Often gifts from the Lord come to us through the people around us. In the story, the Lord gave the food to the disciples and then they handed it out to the crowd. Think of people in your life who are satisfying to be around, people you have a good time with and who support good qualities in you. What could you do to be that kind of person for your friends? How could you help the Lord to give spiritual food to them?

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