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Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

John 6:1–15 · Sprout · Ages 5–8

Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee, and a huge crowd followed him. They had seen him heal people who were sick, and they wanted to be near him. Jesus and his disciples found a place to sit on a hillside. It was almost time for the great Jewish feast of Passover.

Soon thousands of people were streaming toward him. He turned to his disciple Philip and asked where they could buy enough bread to feed all these people. Jesus already knew what he was going to do. He asked Philip to see whether he would trust him.

Philip did some quick math. Even if they spent more money than a worker could earn in many months, they still couldn't feed a crowd this big.

Then another disciple, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. A boy in the crowd had five small barley loaves and two fish. But Andrew wondered how far that could possibly go with so many people.

Jesus had everyone sit down on the green spring grass. Counting only the men, there were about five thousand!

Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and handed them out to the people sitting there. He did the same with the fish. Everyone ate as much as they wanted.

Jesus did not want any of his gift thrown away, so afterward his disciples went around collecting the leftovers. The leftover barley bread filled twelve baskets!

When the people saw this sign, they said that Jesus must be the great prophet God had promised to send. They got so excited that they wanted to crown him as their king, whether he agreed or not. But Jesus knew that was not the kind of king he had come to be. He slipped away from them and climbed higher up the hill, where he could be alone.

Jesus can take whatever little we bring him and do great things with it. And later, at the Last Supper, he would give an even greater bread: himself, in the Eucharist.

Talk about it

1. What did the boy have, and what did Jesus do with it?
2. How many baskets of leftovers did the disciples collect?
3. What can you bring to Jesus, even if it seems small?

Key verse: Jn 6:11. Look it up in your Bible.