

# A God Who Can Provide

John 6:1-15

Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17

The feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four gospels, except for the resurrection. It demonstrates two significant truths: (1) *Jesus meets us right at our point of need and provides what we lack*; and (2) *Jesus can use our weaknesses and limitations to increase our faith and trust in him*.

**Jesus provides rest for the weary** (John 6:1; Matthew 14:13; Mark 6:32; Luke 9:10)

There is a gap of approximately six months between the events of John 5 & 6. During that period, Jesus and his disciples were involved in a heavy season of ministry—teaching, preaching, healing, meeting needs.

Jesus and his disciples board a boat and head to Bethsaida on the north side of the Sea of Galilee to get away and rest.

**Jesus feels compassion for the lost** (John 6:2; Matthew 14:13-14; Mark 6:33-34; Luke 9:11)

The crowds learn where Jesus is headed and set off on foot, arriving before he does.

Rather than view the crowds as an intrusion or inconvenience, Jesus feels compassion because he sees them as sheep without a shepherd—lost and helpless, without guidance, nourishment, or protection.

**Jesus heals the hurting** (Matthew 14:14; Luke 9:11)

Having heard of the miracles Jesus had done previously, many who needed healing came searching for Jesus. Jesus demonstrates compassion in curing their ailments.

**Jesus instructed the seekers** (Mark 6:34; Luke 9:11)

Jesus took the opportunity to teach the crowds about the kingdom of God.

**Jesus challenged the self-sufficient** (John 6:5-7; Matthew 14:15-16; Mark 6:35-37; Luke 9:12-13)

As Jesus ministered, the shadows lengthened. Late in the day, the disciples encouraged Jesus to send the crowds away so they could find something to eat.

Jesus asks Philip, who was from the region, where they could buy food. Philip responded helplessly that they did not have the resources to meet the need. Jesus told the disciples to solve the problem themselves.

Jesus was using this situation as a teachable moment to deepen his disciples' faith.

**Jesus demonstrates that he can use limitations and inadequate resources** (John 6:8-11; Matthew 14:17-19; Mark 6:38-41; Luke 9:13-16)

Andrew discovers a young boy who brought a sack lunch of five barley rolls and two small fish. The disciples felt the resources were too small and inadequate to make a difference.

**Jesus provides satisfaction for the hungry** (John 6:11-12; Matthew 14:19-20; Mark 6:41-42; Luke 9:17)

Jesus looked up to heaven, gave a blessing, and distributed the meal to all. He wanted to make sure that the people witnessing the miracle would know that God provides.

No explanation is given as to how the miracle occurred, but all ate enough to feel satisfied. The provision was abundant and satisfying.

**Jesus provided encouragement for the faint-hearted** (John 6:13; Matthew 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17)

Not only did Jesus feed the crowd of 5,000-20,000, but there were leftovers—one basket for each of the doubting disciples?

God doesn't merely meet needs. He provides abundantly and generously.

### **Lessons to Learn**

- God can provide.
  - A God who can feed 5,000+ from five loaves and two fish can do anything.
    - *Where do you need ... rest ... compassion ... healing ... instruction ... a challenge ... significance ... satisfaction ... encouragement?*
  - A God who can multiply inadequate resources can use your weaknesses and limitations.
    - *Are you willing to give God your weaknesses and allow him to use them?*
  - *Will you put your trust in the God who provides in every situation?*
- God wants to increase our faith.
  - Jesus involves his disciples at every level of ministry.
  - Spiritual growth comes from serving.
    - *Where are you using your gifts and talents to serve God?*