

**TITLE AND NUMBER:** 38. Feeding the five thousand



**REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S):** John 6: 5-9

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

**LOOKING FURTHER:** John 6:1-4, 10-15; 1 Peter 1:3; Romans 5:5-11; Hebrews 11:1

### What does this Bible passage tell us?

The disciples faced a challenge – over 5,000 hungry people and no food to give them. In verses 5 and 6, we read how Jesus asked Philip, one of the disciples, where they were going to buy food. But Jesus "already had in mind what he was going to do." Jesus never challenges us with anything He doesn't already have the answer to.

Then Andrew pointed out a boy with five loaves and two small fish. Why would he think that was worth mentioning? Was it humour or panic? I like to think it was hope; hope that Jesus would actually do what seemed impossible.

The extra verses suggested above talk about hope. When we trust God, hope isn't like, "I hope it's not going to rain today." The Bible talks about sure and certain hope; a real expectation that God will do more than we can possibly imagine.

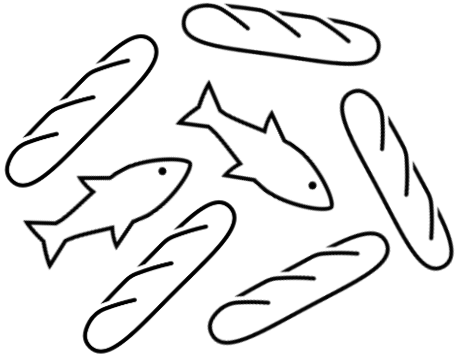
In the 1993 song "Are You Happy?", Terence Trent D'Arby sang, "When in doubt just live the questions and someday you'll grow into the answer." The disciples didn't have the answer but they realised they knew a man who did. They put their hope into action by asking the people to sit down, as Jesus told them to, and He did the rest.

The song "Defender" by Jesus Culture says, "You go before I know that you've even gone to win my war ... and all I did was worship." This story from the life of Jesus shows us what small steps we have to take in order to receive great answers from God.

### Reflections:

- What challenges are you facing that you can't see the answer to?
- Thank God that He sees the way through, and that He is already fighting your battle for you.
- Central to this story was a small boy sharing his picnic. What small thing could you offer to God for Him to do something big with? It might be a moment of prayer, a listening ear, a thought you have read, or just a cup of tea!
- Is there someone you know who needs God's help? Pray for them, and ask God to show you what "loaves and fishes" you might be able to bring to their situation.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

