

**TITLE AND NUMBER:** 144. Jesus feeds the five thousand



**REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S):** Matthew 14:13-21

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so that they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.' Jesus replied, 'They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.' 'We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,' they answered. 'Bring them here to me,' he said...he gave thanks and broke the loaves...They all ate and were satisfied.

**LOOKING FURTHER:** John 6:1-13

### What does this Bible passage tell us?

This passage occurs immediately after Jesus had heard of the death of His cousin, John the Baptist. He wanted to be alone with His close friends, so He withdrew by boat to a quiet place. However, the crowds followed Him by land. He could have gone somewhere else to be alone but He did not. Even at a time of great grief for Himself, He had compassion on the crowds and He healed people who were sick.

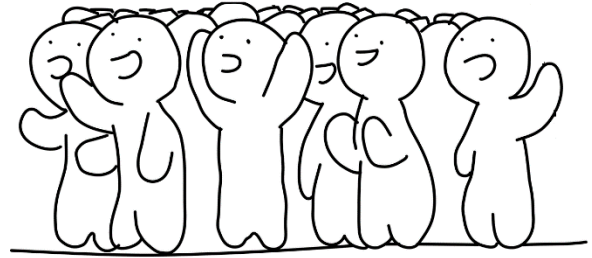
As evening approached, the disciples reminded Jesus that they were in a remote place and the crowds had little to eat. Again, Jesus had compassion on the people. He took the picnic of one small boy, asked for God's blessing on it, and more than enough was provided for all to eat. Five thousand men, as well as women and children, ate that day. Jesus again met their needs.

Jesus can meet both our spiritual and physical needs today. But we must trust Him because the way that He does it may not be as we expect or even want. He will always walk alongside us, giving us strength to cope. Recognising this may help us feel that He is there. Learning to understand God's ways is a lifetime's journey. However, the more we persevere, the more we come to realise that God knows the bigger picture, has our best interests at heart and loves us more than we can imagine.

### Reflections:

- Jesus responds with human grief to John's death. Think of other stories in the Bible where we see that He is fully human as well as fully divine.
- Compassion is a great gift. And, with God's help, we can learn to be compassionate. Ask God to help you see situations from other people's points of view so that you can respond to their needs. In showing compassion, you too will be blessed.

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.

