

Big Idea: Jesus is powerful.

Primary Scripture: John 6

Supporting Scripture: Romans 10:14

CAPTURE (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)

- Funny video of a lawyer who can't turn off the cat filter on his camera.
 - **'I'm not a cat': lawyer gets stuck on Zoom kitten filter during court case (0:48)**
 - <https://youtu.be/lGOofzZOyl8?si=2Sq3OUglnhHXL6Ok>

SCRIPTURE (What does God's Word say?)

² A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. ³ Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. (John 6:2-3 – NLT)

- By this point, Jesus had become pretty famous for teaching and performing miracles.
- Tons of people showed up wherever He went, but this was a big problem because the crowd was getting hungry.

^{5b} Turning to Philip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" ⁶ He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do. (John 6:5b-6 – NLT)

- Have you ever been in a situation where a teacher asks you a question, and you don't know the answer... but you feel like you're still supposed to say something anyway?
- That's probably how the disciples felt. So even though it was completely ridiculous, this is how Andrew (one of Jesus' disciples) answered:

⁹ "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?" (John 6:9 – NLT)

- That's definitely not much food, but it was still more than enough for Jesus to do something incredible.

¹⁰ “Tell everyone to sit down,” Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. ¹² After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, “Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.” ¹³ So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves. **(John 6:10-13 – NLT)**

- “The men alone numbered about 5,000” means that the crowd was closer to 10,000 including women and children.
- The crowd got so excited that they tried to capture Jesus, take Him to Jerusalem, and install Him as their king.
 - To say the least, this was NOT something Jesus wanted, so John tells us that He escaped to the hillside by himself to avoid the crowd.
- That night, since the disciples couldn’t find Jesus, they decided to go ahead and cross the Sea of Galilee by boat to the town of Capernaum with the hope that Jesus would meet them there. However, after they had rowed about halfway across (keep in mind, the Sea of Galilee is about 8 miles wide), they noticed Jesus WALKING ON THE WATER toward the boat! And then, as soon as He got in the boat, they somehow immediately arrived at the other shore.
- This is what happened the next morning:

²⁵ They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” ²⁶ Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. ²⁷ But don’t be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval.” **(John 6:25-27 – NLT)**

- It seems like Jesus is upset at the crowd because they were only following Him because of the miracle He performed.
- Jesus wanted them to see that there was more to it than that.

²⁹ Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.” (John 6:29 – NLT)

- He wanted them to understand that believing in Him was more important. But many people missed the point.

³⁰ They answered, “Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do?” ³¹ After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, ‘Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” (John 6:30-31 – NLT)

- Wait! Are you kidding me? Show us a miraculous sign? Did they forget yesterday’s miracle?

³² Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, Moses didn’t give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. ³³ The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴ “Sir,” they said, “give us that bread every day.” ³⁵ Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (John 6:32-35 – NLT)

- Jesus told them He was the bread of life and that whoever believed in Him would never be spiritually hungry or thirsty again.

⁴⁷ “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ Yes, I am the bread of life! ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness, but they all died. ⁵⁰ Anyone who eats the bread from heaven, however, will never die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so the world may live, is my flesh.” (John 6:47-51 – NLT)

- Jesus often spoke using metaphors.
 - In this case, He was saying that just like bread can give us a full stomach, Jesus can give us a full life.
- But the crowd didn’t seem ready to understand what Jesus wanted them to learn.

⁵² Then the people began arguing with each other about what he meant. “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” they asked. (John 6:52 – NLT)

- Many people following Him decided they were done with Him.
- In the following verse, it seems that Jesus was heartbroken:

⁶⁷ Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?” (John 6:67 – NLT)

- At this moment, when everyone else seemed to miss what Jesus was telling them, Peter says something incredibly profound that shows Jesus that someone actually got what He was saying:

⁶⁸ Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. ⁶⁹ We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:68-69 – NLT)

INSIGHTS (What might this Scripture mean?)

1. Jesus’ miracle is about more than food.

- John sees this miracle as evidence of Jesus’ deity (He IS God).

2. Jesus truly cares about our physical needs.

- Jesus chose to show His power by feeding hungry people. And since Jesus is God, this can teach us a lot about what God is like.
- There’s also something really interesting about *HOW* He met the needs of the crowd. Did you notice that Jesus wasn’t the one who distributed the food to the hungry people? He invited His disciples into the process, much like He invites us to help meet the needs of those around us.

3. Not everyone is ready to see Jesus for who He really is.

- When people encounter Jesus, some will believe in Him while others will reject Him. This was true in Jesus’ day, and it remains true today.
- The people in the crowd weren’t ready to see that Jesus is God, but that didn’t stop Him from meeting their needs, and it definitely didn’t cause Him to love them any less.

- The same goes for our friends and loved ones who don't yet see Jesus for who He really is. Scripture tells us over and over that He loves all of us the same and that we should follow His example by also loving others.

ACTION (How could we live this out?)

1. Help someone in need:

- Be on the lookout for people in need, and when you can, meet that need, just like Jesus did.

2. Answer Jesus' question for yourself:

- He asked them, "*Are you also going to leave?*"
- If you aren't sure, I want to encourage you to continue your faith investigation. One of my favorite things about our time together is that this is a safe place to learn and ask questions.

3. Tell someone about who you know Jesus to be:

- One of the best ways you can respond to your decision to follow Jesus is to tell someone else about Him and the impact He's had on you.

¹⁴ *But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? (Romans 10:14 – NLT)*

- Sharing your faith with others can be overwhelming, but it might help you to know that you're not responsible for how they respond. Just like the people in the crowd, some may reject Him. But you aren't responsible for someone else's choice.