



## Week 10: Feeding of the 5000

### John 6:1-15

**GOAL:** To understand that Jesus is more than enough and trust that he will transform what appears insufficient into abundance for his kingdom purposes and glory.

#### CHECKLIST

- ☐ Invest in your own spiritual life by participating in the daily Growth Guide readings. (This will also prepare you to lead the question about it in your group again this week.)
- ☐ Reach out individually to anyone who did not attend last week. Let them know that you missed them and would love to see them this week.
- ☐ Prepare for your group meeting by praying for yourself and your group (feel free to use the prayer below) and reading through this Leader's Guide.
- ☐ If you haven't already, plan your Grow Group Pair-Up by connecting with the leaders of your paired group.
- ☐ Take attendance in Planning Center, including guests/new members (please include their names and contact info in the meeting notes section). Help new members register for your group using the QR code in your room or at [vrbc.net/grow](http://vrbc.net/grow).

#### PREPARING THROUGH PRAYER:

*Lord Jesus, thank you for being more than enough. In moments when we feel inadequate, weak, or lacking, remind us that you are our true source of strength and provision. Help us to trust that what seems small in our hands becomes abundant in yours. When we focus on what we don't have, turn our eyes to you, the one who multiplies, sustains, and satisfies completely. Teach us to surrender our doubts, our fears, and our insufficiencies, knowing that you are always working beyond what we can see. Fill us with faith to step forward in obedience, even when we don't feel ready. Let our hearts rest in the truth that you are all we need, and in you, we will never lack. In your powerful name, we pray, Amen.*

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*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25*

## CONNECT & COORDINATE

We will maintain the same rhythm each week this semester:

1. Welcome your group. Repeat introductions if there are any new people.
2. Coordinate any logistics (group socials, snacks, Grow Group Pair-Up, etc).
3. Check in with your group and gather prayer requests. Consider using the following questions:
  - Where did you see God at work this week?
  - Where do you need God in the week ahead?
4. Pray for the requests shared and for God to lead your time together today.

**Leader's Note:** *The prayer time at the end of this guide is a bit more structured and may take a little longer than usual. We encourage you to plan for at least 10-15 minutes to allow for meaningful reflection and participation.*

*This passage in John 6 highlights how even the smallest offering, when placed in Jesus' hands, becomes more than enough. No matter how little we have whether it's our resources, abilities, strength, or faith, when we surrender it to him, he transforms what seems inadequate into abundance. Just like all the other signs we are studying in this series, John presents this miracle as a sign that points to who Jesus is as the true Messiah. His provision is not just about meeting our physical needs but pointing us to a deeper spiritual truth that he alone fully satisfies. This truth challenges us to trust in his sufficiency, not just in times of scarcity but in every aspect of our lives.*

*This means that when we feel inadequate, empty, or overwhelmed, we can trust that Jesus is enough to sustain us. He takes what seems small or lacking and multiplies it beyond what we can imagine. Let this study be a reminder that our greatest fulfillment comes not from what Jesus provides, but from Jesus Himself.*

## DISCUSS

- What are some reasons that we might shy away from what Jesus asks us to do?

**Leader's Note:** *There are several reasons why we might shy away from what Jesus asks us to do: fear of inadequacy, fear of failure, desire for comfort and security, distracted by other priorities, etc. We may feel like we don't have enough skill, knowledge, or resources to do what Jesus is calling us to. We forget that obedience is more important than results. Jesus asks us to trust him, not to have everything figured out. We may resist because his calling feels risky or requires sacrifice. We worry that we won't succeed or that we'll disappoint others (or God). We may hesitate because we're afraid of what others will think. We may struggle to fully trust that Jesus will provide or that he knows best. We may get caught up in daily responsibilities, ambitions, or material concerns. And so, we limit what God can do in us by limiting what we think is or is not possible.*

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**Read John 6:1-9.**

- In verse 2 we see that, like many times in Jesus' ministry, a crowd has gathered. Why do you think the crowds followed Jesus? What motivates you to seek Jesus?

**Leader's Note:** *We can imagine that there were many reasons people followed Jesus around during his ministry: curiosity, desperation, their own expectation of who he was, genuine belief.*

*It says in John 6:2 that the large crowd followed Jesus "because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick." Many had heard of his miracles and wanted to see for themselves. This verse suggests that many people were drawn to Jesus for what he could do for them: his miracles, healings, and provision. Throughout his ministry, some followed out of genuine faith, while others were more interested in his power and the benefits he provided rather than who he truly was.*

*This question challenges us to reflect on our own hearts. Do we seek Jesus only when we need something? Or do we pursue him because we truly desire a deeper relationship with him? While Jesus graciously meets our needs, he wants us to seek him not just for what he can do, but for who he is. When our motivation is simply to know him more, we experience the fullness of his presence and provision.*

- Why do you think Jesus asked Philip where to buy bread (v. 5-6), even though he already knew what he was going to do?

**Leader's Note:** *The passage explicitly says that Jesus asked this "only to test him" (v. 6). Jesus wanted to see how Philip would respond. Would he look at the problem through human limitations, or would he trust in Jesus' power? Jesus also wanted to demonstrate his sufficiency. By asking this question, he highlighted the impossibility of the situation so that when he performed the miracle, it would be clear that the provision came from him, not human effort. Jesus also used real-life situations to grow his disciples' faith. This moment wasn't just about feeding a crowd; it was about showing the disciples that Jesus is more than enough to meet any need.*

- How does the response of Philip (v. 7) and Andrew (v. 9) reflect a limited perspective on Jesus' ability to provide? How might we fall into the same limited perspective?

**Leader's Notes:** *Both Philip and Andrew focus on the insufficiency of resources rather than recognizing the infinite power of Jesus. Philip calculates the cost of feeding the crowd, concluding it's impossible with their available funds. Andrew, while noticing a small offering (the boy's lunch), still wonders how such a small amount could meet the need. Their response reflects that they, like many of us, often have a limited view of what Jesus can do with what seems insufficient and seem to be focused on what they lack rather than on God's ability to provide.*

*As Pastor John shared in his sermon, Philip saw the need as too big for them to handle, and Andrew saw the resources they did have as too small to help. In their own hearts, they were limiting what Jesus could do in that moment because they were limited in their understanding of Jesus.*

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*Both responses reflect a common human tendency to rely on what we can see or understand. When faced with a challenge or need, we often focus on the lack of resources or the impossibility of the situation, just as Philip and Andrew did. This limited perspective causes us to forget that Jesus, the creator of the universe, is not bound by our human limitations and can provide abundantly, even when the situation seems impossible.*

*Like Philip and Andrew, we can easily fall into the trap of focusing on what we don't have or how impossible something seems. But this passage invites us to shift our perspective and remember that Jesus is more than enough to meet our needs and accomplish His purposes.*

*Instead of thinking, "I don't have enough," we can remember, "Jesus is more than enough." Step out in faith and trust that God can work beyond what we understand and provide in ways we can't see. We need to surrender our resources, no matter how small, knowing that Jesus can multiply them for his purposes. It is such a beneficial shift when we can recognize that Jesus is not limited by our circumstances. He works in and through our obedience, even when we feel inadequate.*

**Read John 6:10-13.**

- In verse 11 we see Jesus give thanks before distributing the loaves and the fish. Why is this significant? How does this differ from Peter's and Andrew's responses? How can gratitude impact your perspective on God's provision?

**Leader's Note:** *This shift in perspective is crucial if we are to truly recognize the sufficiency of Christ. Jesus' act of giving thanks before the miracle reveals his deep trust in the Father's provision, even when circumstances seemed inadequate. Rather than focusing on the apparent lack, just five loaves and two fish against the overwhelming needs of the crowd, Jesus acknowledges what has already been given and offers gratitude.*

*Do you see the difference in perspective? While the disciples were overwhelmed by the seeming impossibility of feeding so many, Jesus trusted in God's abundant provision. His gratitude wasn't based on visible sufficiency but on his unwavering faith in the Father's power to multiply and provide beyond human limits.*

*When God calls us into God-sized situations, it's crucial to remember that we'll need God-sized resources to accomplish his plan. This is an important truth to hold onto, because when we forget it, our tendency is to measure situations by our own limited abilities and resources, instead of recognizing that with God, the impossible becomes possible.*

*Before God can use us in the ways he intends, we first need to be in a place where we can truly hear what he is asking of us. This involves being open, listening attentively, and trusting that God has already provided the resources we need to follow his call. When we look at Peter and Andrew in the Gospel, we see that they weren't initially in a place where they could fully hear or understand what Jesus was asking. Instead, they were focused on what they lacked (money, food, and resources) and couldn't see the possibility of God working in a miraculous way.*

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*When we give thanks, even in times of uncertainty, we shift our focus from what we lack to the One who provides; from what we lack to the abundance of what he has already given. It moves us from a mindset of scarcity to one of sufficiency. When we choose to give thanks, even in times of uncertainty, we cultivate faith, contentment, and a deeper awareness of his presence. Gratitude keeps us from dwelling on uncertainty and instead leads us to trust in the One who holds all things in his hands.*

*Rather than being consumed by worry over what we do not have, gratitude refocuses our hearts. It helps us see beyond our immediate needs and recognize that God is always at work, often in ways we do not yet understand. Just as Jesus gave thanks before multiplying the loaves and fish, we too can express confidence in God's ability to provide for our needs. His provision is never lacking, and as we learn to trust him, we experience the depth of his sufficiency in our lives.*

- What would happen if we had confidence that whatever we have, in Jesus' hands, is enough?

**Leader's Note:** *Consider sharing a personal example (in your life or someone else's) of God using something you may have considered small or insignificant to do amazing things. By doing so, you can help others recognize how God has worked, or could work, in similar ways in their lives.*

*Help your group to think about times when you've felt like you didn't have much to give, maybe financially, emotionally, or even in terms of energy, but when you surrendered it to God, he used it beyond what you expected. Have you ever given your last bit of encouragement to someone else when you were struggling yourself, only to find that God refreshed you in return? Or maybe you've served in a way that felt insignificant, yet God used it to make a lasting impact on someone's life. When placed in God's hands, even the smallest offering can be multiplied to bless others in ways we never imagined.*

*For us, the challenge is to shift our focus away from our limitations and onto God's limitless provision. When God calls us to something that feels too big or beyond our capacity, we must remember that it's not about what we have or don't have, it's about what he can do with our faith and obedience. We may not always see the full picture at first, but trusting that God will equip us with what we need, just as he did with the disciples, is key to stepping into the God-sized opportunities he has for us.*

*In essence, God-sized tasks require God-sized faith, and that faith is nurtured by understanding that when he calls us, he will also provide. We just need to be confident and ready to hear his voice, trust in his provision, and step out in obedience, no matter how impossible the situation may seem.*

*If we truly had confidence that whatever we have, when placed in Jesus' hands, is enough, it would profoundly change the way we live and face challenges. We would no longer be trapped constantly focused on what we lack or comparing ourselves to others. Instead, this confidence would free us from anxiety and fear about the future. We would rest in the truth that God is the provider, not our own abilities, resources, or circumstances. Challenges that once seemed daunting would be met with peace, knowing that if we are faithful with what we've been given, God will take care of the rest. This trust in his provision would allow us to approach life with a sense of security and hope, no matter what lies ahead.*

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*Ultimately, when we believe that what we have is more than enough in Jesus' hands, it deepens our relationship with him. It encourages us to step out in faith and to trust that he is more than capable of using us to accomplish his work. We would experience joy in offering what we have, knowing that God will use it for his glory and his kingdom. With this kind of trust, we wouldn't hold back or hesitate, but would offer everything we have, confident that in his hands, it's more than enough to meet every need.*

## PRAY

**Leader's Note:** During this time of prayer, we are going to take a slightly different approach. We want to create space for each person to intentionally reflect on how God may be moving in their lives. This is an opportunity to wrestle with areas where we may be struggling to trust in his provision and to consider the God-sized tasks he might be calling us as individuals, our grow groups, or VRBC as a whole to step into. To help us focus, we will divide this time into two sections: Listen/Individual Prayer and Collective Prayer/Encouragement.

*Listening & Individual Prayer - Listening is a vital part of prayer, yet it's often overlooked. Many times, we treat prayer as a one-way conversation, us talking to God, but a healthy relationship requires good communication, and good communication is a two-way street. That means we need to spend time listening for God just as much as we spend time talking to him. For some, this may feel unfamiliar or even a little uncomfortable at first, but we encourage everyone to embrace the silence. Sit still, clear your mind, and simply listen. After a few minutes of listening, whenever each person feels ready, begin praying silently about the things God has placed on their heart. We will spend about five minutes in this time of listening and individual prayer before moving into the next portion.*

*Collective Prayer & Encouragement - After our time of personal reflection and prayer, we will shift into a time of collective prayer and encouragement. This is an opportunity to share what God has placed on your heart (if you feel led) and to pray for one another. Take time to encourage those around you, whether it's affirming what they've shared, speaking words of truth over them, or lifting up prayers on their behalf. This is a time to strengthen one another in faith, trusting that God is moving in our lives and in our community.*

**Have your group walk through these steps during your prayer time together.**

- Listen:
  - Say to the Lord, "Lord, show me what to pray for. Show me where I am not trusting in your provision. Show me what God sized task you desire for me, our Grow Group, or VRBC to participate in."
  - Spend some time in silence with God. Pay attention for God to move your thoughts and heart in a direction. As things come to mind do not move directly to start praying for them, write them down (on some paper or on your phone) and continue to sit in silence and listen.
- Individual Prayer: After a few minutes of listening, now is the time to pray for the things.
- Collective Prayer/Encouragement: Depending on the size of your group you can either do this all together or break up into groups of 3 or 4. Allow for people to share some of the things God brought to their attention. Encourage each other in the ways God is moving in your lives.

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