

Small Group Discussion Guide
"That Seems Random: The Feeding of the 5,000"
John 6:1-15

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Begin by asking God to speak through His Word and help your group move beyond just hearing about what Jesus did to experiencing who He is today.

Icebreaker

****Question:**** When have you witnessed God do something that seemed "random" or unexpected in your life or someone else's? How did it impact your faith?

Scripture Reading

Have someone read John 6:1-15 aloud. Encourage the group to listen for what stands out to them.

Discussion Questions

1. Following Jesus for the Right Reasons (10 minutes)

"They followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick." (v. 2)*

- The sermon pointed out that the crowd followed Jesus primarily for the miracles. What are some "wrong" reasons people might follow Jesus today?
- Have you ever caught yourself following Jesus more for what He can do for you than for who He is? What does that look like?
- How can we shift from being "miracle chasers" to being "God chasers"?

2. The Test Question

"Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" (v. 5)

- Jesus asked Philip a question to test him. Why do you think God sometimes presents us with problems that seem bigger than our capacity?
- The sermon emphasized that the test wasn't about knowing what to do, but about ****knowing where to go****. Where do you typically go first when facing a problem you can't solve?
- What would it look like practically to bring your problems to Jesus before trying to solve them yourself?

3. Bringing Your "Barley"

****Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?*** (v. 9)

- The unnamed boy brought what seemed small and insignificant. What "small" thing might God be asking you to offer Him right now?
- Philip focused on calculations and limitations. Andrew brought what was available but questioned its usefulness. Which response do you relate to more, and why?
- The sermon said: "If you bring Jesus your basic, he can break it and bless it, multiply it and use it for his glory." What keeps you from bringing your "basic" to Jesus?

4. Faith Before Results

"Have the people sit down." (v. 10)

- Jesus told the disciples to seat the people before there was any bread. What does this teach us about faith and obedience?
- Share about a time when God asked you to obey before you could see the outcome. What happened?
- Where in your life right now might God be asking you to "seat the people" before you see the provision?

5. Making Jesus Who We Want Him to Be

"Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew..." (v. 15)

- The crowd wanted to make Jesus into their version of a king. How are we tempted to remake Jesus into who we want Him to be rather than accepting who He truly is?
- The sermon stated: "Following Jesus is not about you inventing a Jesus to follow that you like." What are some cultural or personal versions of Jesus that don't align with Scripture?

6. The Bread of Life

"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry..." (John 6:35)

- Jesus said He is the bread that sustains us beyond lunch, beyond the temporary. What are some "breads" (things, people, achievements) that we try to use to sustain ourselves?
- How have you experienced Jesus as the bread of life—the one who truly satisfies?
- What's the difference between following Jesus for what He gives versus following Him for who He is?

Application

Personal Reflection:

- What is one "small" thing God is asking you to bring to Him this week?
- What problem are you facing where you need to ask Jesus, "Where should I go?" instead of trying to figure it out yourself?
- Is there an area where you've been following Jesus primarily for what He can do for you rather than for who He is?

Group Challenge:

This week, practice bringing your "barley" to Jesus—something that feels small, basic, or insufficient—and watch what He does with it.

Closing Prayer

Pray together:

- Thank Jesus for being the Bread of Life who sustains us
- Ask for faith to bring our "small" offerings to Him
- Pray for the courage to follow Jesus for who He is, not just what He can do
- Ask God to help us know where to go when we face problems bigger than ourselves

For Further Study

- Read the rest of John 6 (especially verses 25-40) to see how Jesus explains that He is the Bread of Life
- Study the Passover and manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16) to understand the background of this miracle
- Reflect on other "I AM" statements of Jesus in John's Gospel

"We don't chase miracles. We follow the Messiah."