



For the Week of April 15, 2012

Good Questions, Straight Answers:  
hard truths

Life Notes for Families

## Introductions

We hope you're having a great time learning about Jesus together as a family. Whether you have lots of family members or just a few spending time together, we pray you're having fun and noticing the difference that living with Jesus - *together* - can make. We all have our own relationships with God, but we also share a relationship with those we love. Thanks for helping grow this important relationship!

## John 6:1-14

Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Feast was near.

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he spoke to Philip.

Jesus: *"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: *"Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"*

Andrew: *"Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"*

Jesus: *"Have the people sit down."*

There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

When they had all had enough to eat, Jesus spoke to his disciples.

Jesus: *"Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted."*

So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to speak.

People: *"Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."*

## Jesus: bread of life

This week, as a family, let's try something new. Set an extra plate at the table, at least one meal each day. Maybe trade out the place-setting duties so that everyone in the family gets at least one chance. Here's what we're doing.

The place setting is for Jesus. But not just Jesus as an historical person who lived here and walked among us, died and rose again for you and for me - but Jesus who lives with us every moment of every day - Jesus, bread of life.

On the first day, read the story in John and ask everyone at the table to discuss how they'd feel if they'd been the little boy with the lunch to share or a disciple or a child in a family that was fed that day or anyone they imagine in the story.

Now talk about the difference between God meeting our physical needs and God meeting our spiritual needs. He does meet our physical needs - he meets all our needs. But the physical is the easy part. It's the spiritual needs he meets that are lifelong and life-changing. Many of the people in Jesus' time didn't understand the distinction, so they followed him for physical bread. Jesus wants us to follow him for heart-bread.

*"Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.'" (John 6:35)*

As a family, talk about what we want from Jesus and what he wants to give us - both sides of the relationship. Talk about what we want physically versus what we need spiritually. Talk about food that satisfies for a few minutes versus food that satisfies forever. Talk about meeting a hunger need or a "wish" for new shoes versus meeting a relational need that strengthens and deepens love. (The discussion will vary with the ages of those involved.)

The rest of the week, either at the beginning or the end of your meal, ask everyone to share the food that they needed from Jesus that day...or the food they received from Jesus that day (depending on if it's breakfast or dinner, you'll be expressing what you need that day or celebrating what he provided). Ask all family members to discuss what difference Jesus' food made in their lives that day or whether they were disappointed or frustrated because something didn't seem to go as they wanted. Let this simply be a week for discovering what Jesus offers, what we want and how to differentiate between the two.