



Feeding of the Thousands/Abundance

5th Confirmation Class Lesson

Supplies Needed: Notebooks; Handout; 1 pencil per student; 1 blank 8.5"x11" sheet of paper per student; one deck of playing cards; one rubber band per student;

EXPLAINING OPENING ACTIVITY

- I'm passing out to each of you a blank 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.
- Think of something you like and write it down at the top of the paper – the person next to you is going to see this, so don't write down any secrets.
- Once everyone has something written down, we're going to pass our papers to the person to the right of us.
- Once we've received our neighbor's paper, we're going to fold the very top part of the paper backwards so that the written sentence/idea cannot be seen anymore.
- Then right under the fold, we're going to draw a picture that represents the sentence/idea/thing that is written on the paper.
- Once we're all done drawing [give them about 1 minute, tops], then pass the paper to your neighbor on the right.
- Looking ONLY at the picture, write down a brief description of the picture below the picture.
- Then, fold the paper backwards so that the picture cannot be seen anymore, but your statement still shows.
- Now, pass the paper to the right to your neighbor.
- Look at the words that you can see, and draw a picture then fold the paper back so that only the picture shows.
- Continue this pattern 6 or 8 times.
- Then find your original piece of paper and share with the class, if you so choose.

ASK

- This game could go on forever, couldn't it?
- Would that be a good thing or a bad thing?
- Why? Is there such a thing as too much of a good thing?

OPENING PRAYER

CHALLENGE REVIEW

Weekly Challenge: Think of and identify some things that you believe about God, but that you would like to somehow experience so that you can cement that belief into fact... What were some things that you thought of?

REVIEW OF PAST FEW LESSONS

- We've talked about the groups that surround Jesus. What are the three groups we've talked about? (the disciples, crowd and Pharisees)

- Any disciple during Jesus' time understood that being a disciple meant being like the teacher. You followed as closely as possible what your teacher did (aka Rabbi) and where your teacher went. The idea was that whatever your teacher could do, you could learn to do, too.
- We talked about perspective shaping our beliefs. Perspective is shaped by our location and what we look at/focus on. The disciples, crowd and Pharisees all have a different viewpoint and focus and therefore they all have different understandings of Jesus.
- Another component that determines perspective is experience. In our last class, Peter experiences walking on water/chaos. At one point he may have believed he could do what his teacher, Jesus, could do, but once he walked on water, then he had experienced that he could do what Jesus could do.
- For the next few weeks, we'll be talking about what we experience when we follow Jesus. This week we'll be talking about abundance.
- One note: Jesus sent out the disciples on a two week "internship." They are just returning back at the start of today's story. Because they were sent out, they are referred to as apostles instead of disciples.

READ *Mark 6:30 - 44*

30 The apostles (which means "sent out") returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. 31 And Jesus said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while." For many people were coming and going, and the disciples had no leisure even to eat. 32 And so Jesus and the disciples went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. 33 Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of Jesus and the disciples. 34 So when Jesus went ashore he saw a great throng, but he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. 35 And when it grew late, Jesus' disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the hour is now late; 36 send the people away, to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But Jesus answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy ten thousand dollars worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?" 38 And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." And when the disciples had found out, they said, "Five loaves and two fish." 39 Then Jesus commanded them all to sit in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. 41 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, Jesus blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. 42 And they all ate and were satisfied. 43 And the disciples took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44 And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men plus women and children.

ASK

- What is surprising to you or of interest to you in this story?
- Verse 33 – which group greeted Jesus in the "lonely" place (the crowd)
- Verse 34 – what is Jesus' response to the crowd? (he had compassion on them)
- Verse 36 – how do the disciples respond to the crowd? (they want to send the crowd away)
- End of verse 38: How much food do they start out with? (5 loaves and 2 fish)
- Verse 42: Was it enough? (more than enough)

TELL

- A broad interpretation/perspective of this story is that when you follow Jesus, you will be loved (verse 34) and have enough (verse 42,43).

- But in order to follow Jesus and experience abundance, you have to be willing to let go of some things that you consider valuable: Like the crowd that runs to meet Jesus (they gave up time and energy) or like whoever the person was who gave up the loaves and fish.
- Also, there are some components that Jesus partakes in that are involved in experiencing abundance. Notice the actions of Jesus in verse 41. What things does he do? (Takes, blesses, breaks and gives the food – then divides the bread, though that’s an extension of the giving)
 - To "take" means to take or receive what is offered (Jesus takes the fish and loaves)
 - To "bless" means to invite God into the thing that you have received/taken (Jesus prays)
 - To "break" means to change the thing received with God’s help and direction (Jesus literally breaks the bread)
 - To "give" means to share the new thing that you and God have created together (Jesus has the disciples pass out the “new” bread and fish)
- So abundance doesn’t just happen. There are actions on Jesus’ part (that we would emulate as his students if we wanted to repeat the experience of abundance) that brings the abundance into existence.
- We’ll talk more about take, bless, break, give in a later class.
- Next, though, we’re going to do an exercise that will hopefully help demonstrate how not letting go can create scarcity and how letting go can help create abundance.
- But before we do that...

SNACK

DO Trading Game (instructions & score sheet will be on a handout – cards will be provided)

The rules:

- Regular deck of cards.
- Each player gets 5 cards.
- Face cards are worth 10 points
- Everything else is worth the amount that is on it (an ace = 1, deuce = 2, etc)
- You have 5 trades.
- You don’t have to use all 5 trades. But you cannot go over 5 trades.
- When you initiate a trade, you say “I’m going to trade with you.”
- This counts as 1 trade for you, but not for the other person.
- Use a rubber band around your fingers to remember how many times you’ve traded.
- The other player cannot refuse to trade with you.
- You may not trade with the same player back-to-back.
- You may not reveal what TYPE of cards you *have* OR *want*.
- The only thing you may reveal that you want to trade is the *amount of cards* you want to trade.
- If you initiate the trade, you can give away your whole hand. If you do NOT initiate the trade, you may only give back up to 3 cards.

For example, you come up to someone and say, “I’m going to trade with you.”

Then you say, “I’d like to give you 4 cards. How many will you give back to me?”

The other person must offer something. So they say, “I’ll give you 2 cards for your 3.”

Then you pick from your hand the 3 cards you want to get rid of. And the other person picks the two from their hand that they want to give you and then you trade.

- We'll play a number of rounds.
- Each round will take between 3 to 5 minutes.
- Each round will have a different objective.

- Round 1 objective: Get as few points as possible
- Round 2 objective: Get as many points as possible
- Round 3 objective: Get as many points as possible w/o using facecards – every face card you have at the end of the round counts minus-5 against your score.
- Round 4 objective: Get as close as possible to the number that you are given. (how did we do this last time?)

DO TRADING ACTIVITY

ASK

- Did you play the game differently during each round?
- In round 1 was there an abundance of high numbered cards being traded? Why?
- In round 2 was there an abundance of low numbered cards being traded? Why?
- In round 3 was there an abundance of face cards being traded? Why?
- In round 4 was there an abundance of anything?

TELL

- Whatever it was that the group DID NOT WANT, the group moved those types of cards among itself very easily.
- The things that the group DID want, those cards did not move as easily through the group.
- If we choose to follow Jesus, then we have to let go of some things that we want, and we have to receive what we're offered.
- In so choosing to let go, we trust that we'll continue to experience enough/abundance.
- And if we do let go, then that means we can share what we're letting go of with others.
- For instance, if we have to let go of "my" time in order to follow Jesus, then if I'm being directed to share that time with others, I'll be less covetous of "my" time and will be able to more easily share that time. Same goes with money, materials or food.
- Also, if we think about the take, bless, break, give – often what's offered to us isn't necessarily what we would consider the "right thing." But if we invite God into what we receive, and we seek God's guidance, then like Jesus, we can create a new thing for those around us to share in and experience.

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

- List some things you think you don't have enough of
- List some things you think you do have enough of

CLOSING PRAYER