



# PRAY

Photo: Mwangi Kirubi

## Sermon/Meditation Starter

### FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND (JOHN 6)

Read and reflect on the account of the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6 and Jesus' following teaching on being the bread of life. There's something about everything that Jesus said and did that needs to be seen as part of a greater whole. The disciples were constantly being stretched to see beyond the obvious (Jesus providing lunch), to catch a glimpse of the bigger picture.

Take a look at three different 'scenes' from John 6, considering various questions:

#### Scene 1

"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

In a world where might is right, Jesus reminds us that the values of the kingdom are the exact opposite. God's way is for David to defeat Goliath, for faith the size of a mustard seed being enough, of his kingdom acting like yeast in the dough, of the least of this world having God's favour.

What situations overwhelm or paralyze you because the issue seems so big and your input so small? When has a small act of kindness or generosity made a difference to you? What have you done for others lately? What could you do this week?

Catherine of Sienna wrote, "Become the person you were created to be and set the world on fire." We don't have to be like anyone else, not powerful, not well-known—we just have to be authentically who we were intended to be. How can you fulfill this calling and make a difference to others?

## Scene 2

“Now gather the leftovers,’ Jesus told his disciples, ‘so that nothing is wasted.’” —John 6:12

God is a generous God. He doesn't keep a tally of what we deserve, he wants to do so much more than we can ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3) and just as his word never returns to him empty (Isaiah 55), nothing goes to waste in our lives.

But just like in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), God asks us to make good use of what we have been given. Whether it is opportunities, abilities, or wealth, God calls us to live with faithful generosity, looking beyond our own needs to the needs of others.

What opportunities, abilities or resources have you been given? How are you using what you have been given to further the kingdom of God?

## Scene 3

“The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” —John 6:33

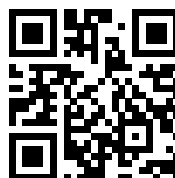
Bread broken and given to others is so much more than a matter of lunch! Jesus makes the link at last with sacrifice—his own—for the sake of the world. Jesus fed a crowd and was nailed to a cross. It's all about giving. In him alone can we find true fulfillment and in following him we also must take up the cross and deny self—we become the bread broken and shared for others.

Rob Bell, former pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church, said, “We need to ask, ‘What is God doing and how can I be part of it?’”

When we pray for those who are needy or struggling, we have to believe that God wants to be at work in their lives, to bring something good out of it—to offer bread....

What might it mean for you to break bread for others?

*Meditation adapted from a meditation on John 6 from the Third Space blog, Can You Tell What It Is Yet?*



A short video sermon is available at [UntilAllAreFed.ca](http://UntilAllAreFed.ca)