

Getting Started

Scripture: Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17;
John 6:1–15 (Feeding of the 5,000)

Main Point: Jesus gives me more than enough.

This resource is designed to allow your family to have time in God's Word *before your children attend the weekend service*. Because God's plan is for parents to be the spiritual nurturers of their children's faith, we know that as you grow spiritually, your children will grow spiritually as well. In HomeFront, the Inspire and Equip sections are for *you!* The Support section is for you to interact with your children by reading the Bible passage in a curiosity-inspired setting. So set aside a few minutes, find a quiet place, and get ready to grow spiritually together with your children!

Inspire (for parents)

Growing up in the home of a poor carpenter, I learned at an early age about depending on God's provision. One especially harsh winter in Ohio, there was no work for my father. We ate a lot of soup for supper and depended on the hand-me-downs of "richer" cousins for winter clothing. Our Christmas tree was the top off a 20-foot evergreen that needed pruning at my grandmother's house. God cared for all our needs, but I remember feeling like it wasn't enough compared to what others had.

The gospels' account of Jesus feeding the 5,000 really struck home. It made me confront again my attitudes and understanding about how God provides. The question I have to wrestle with is: Why is it easier for me to trust that God will supply my *needs* than to believe that He will do it *abundantly*? Do I really believe that God is stingy? Or, are my feelings of not having enough the result of falling into the comparison trap—measuring what I have against what others have.

This is what is real: There will always be someone wealthier than me. And in comparison to some, I still don't have a lot. But those thoughts have me focusing in the wrong direction. There are so many people who are without and truly poor and in need. I am neither poor, nor in need. I do not completely understand why some have so much and others so little. However, I do know that the abundance in my life is not monetary. The abundance I experience is that of riches in Christ Jesus—abundance in the things that really matter: grace, love, peace, joy. All of these are how I am choosing to focus my attention. Enough? Are you kidding? I have more than enough.

—Janet Lee

Equip (for parents)

Prior to feeding the 5,000, Jesus gathered the disciples in a boat to get away from the crowds to eat and rest for awhile. But Jesus could see a crowd of people following them along the shore. "When He

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Prior to feeding the 5,000, Jesus gathered the disciples in a boat to get away from the crowds to eat and rest for awhile. But Jesus could see a crowd of people following them along the shore. "When He

went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick" (Matthew 14:14 NASB).

The compassion Jesus feels is followed by action. Scripture tells us that Jesus continued to teach the people and heal their sick until late in the day. The disciples came to Jesus and asked what they should do. The people were getting hungry and there was not much food. He took the five loaves of bread and the two fish the disciples brought to Him, and He blessed the food. Breaking the bread, Jesus told the disciples to pass the baskets to the people as He continued to fill them with food. Everyone was able to eat until they were satisfied. Five thousand men, plus women and children, were fed that evening.

Our God is the same yesterday, today, and forever—He has compassion for us and gives to us abundantly. In a society that continually tells our children that what they have is not big enough, cool enough, or new enough, we have to fight especially hard to remind them that God truly has given them enough. In those moments of wanting more, they'll likely come asking us, their parents, to provide that cool new thing they think they need. Instead of just telling them no, we can truly take advantage of these moments and explain to them why we're saying no. God has fulfilled our needs—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. As His followers, we need to be satisfied with the abundance He has given us and not constantly be striving to acquire more.

Support (for parents & kids)

Before this weekend, read through the biblical account of Jesus feeding the 5,000 in Mark 6:34–43. At the end of the section, think of a question that reflects on what you just read such as, "What happened when the disciples thought there wasn't enough food?"

Before you begin to read the account, pray together as a family and thank God for the abundant blessings He has given to your family. Next, create a setting for your children that will help them engage with the passage they're about to hear.

Just for fun, try reading this passage to your children at dinner or snack time. As you sit down to eat, read the passage. After you've finished reading, talk to them about how much abundance they have, even right in front of them. Remind them how amazing it is that God has provided a meal for them to eat, and a home to sleep in at night. Ask them to think of some of the other blessings that God has provided for your family.

When you're finished, share with your children that what they just heard is a part of The Big God Story in the Bible, and that they'll hear it in church this weekend. Ask your children to share with you their thoughts and questions about what they just heard. Close your time by praying and thanking Jesus for some of the specific ways that He has provided for you.

—the Tru team



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