

Connecting the Old and the New

Let's Eat!

If you had to feed a crowd, what would you do? How would you prepare? Have you ever run out of food before at a meal? This week we are going to studying two different passages where crowds were fed.

Elisha is a prophet who followed Elijah. His name means "my God saves" and he spent nearly 60 years in Israel performing miracles and teaching students. We will look at one of those miracles today.

Read 2 Kings 4:42-44.

- What resources were at Elisha's disposal when he fed a hundred men?
- In what different ways did Elisha show compassion in this event?
- Why do you think God works through the resources we have rather than always doing miracles?
- What was Elisha's attitude when people came to him with perplexing problems?
- When have you hesitated to ask someone to pray for you because you felt self-conscious?
- What "insignificant" thing do you have that you can ask God to make sufficient for a practical need you are facing right now?

Let's Look at the time when Jesus Fed 5,000 men. When you added the women and children, there were probably closer to 20,000. (John 6:10-11) It would have been easy to simply walk away or do what the disciples originally suggested, but we know that Jesus had other ideas. (Note: This is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14

Read Luke 9:10-17.

- What did the apostles want to do with the crowd?
- What did Jesus propose to do with the crowd?
- What were the choices for feeding the crowds?
- In what order of events did Jesus go about feeding the people?
- What were the results of Jesus' miracle?
- If you had been an apostle, how would you have reacted to the crowd's overwhelming need?
- What is surprising (and not surprising) to you about Jesus' response to the people's hunger?
- What can we learn about the abundance of God's provision from this passage?
- What can we assume about the apostles' attitudes at the end of the story?

Let's look at how Jesus feeding the crowd is similar to The Last Supper.

Read Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22 and Luke 22:19.

- Discuss the similarities.
- What is the significance of this?

Putting it all Together

Both Elisha and Jesus knew that feeding people was not only going to feed them physically, but they would be fed spiritually as well.

- What would it take for us to recognize or see miracles today? Do they still happen?
- What can you do to increase your faith in God's miraculous powers?
- What people in need living in your community can you take steps to help?