Unlimited

The Bible Lesson at a Glance
When the disciples tell Jesus that the people listening to Him are hungry and will soon need something to eat, then He miraculously provides food to meet their need. The disciples grumble when Jesus tells them to feed the people. This is a natural reaction to what seems to be an impossible situation. Jesus wants them to put on their spiritual eyeglasses. He wants them to see the miracle potential of the situation, and move out in faith believing that He can and will supply the power they need.

This is a lesson about service.
The impossibility of the situation reminds us that we cannot save ourselves any more than we can feed 5,000 people from one lunch. Only Jesus can provide everything we need. Whatever situation we find ourselves in, no matter how difficult, Jesus is able to meet our needs and provide a solution. Where we see problems, God sees opportunities to help our faith grow. Only when we understand our limitations can we begin to see God’s limitlessness.

Teacher Enrichment
“When we are brought into strait places, we are to depend on God. . . . If we plan according to our own ideas, the Lord will leave us to our own mistakes. But when, after following His directions, we are brought into strait places, He will deliver us. We are not to give up in discouragement, but in every emergency we are to seek help from Him who has infinite resources at His command. Often we will be surrounded with trying circumstances, and then, in the fullest confidence, we must depend upon God. He will keep every soul that is brought into perplexity through trying to keep the way of the Lord” (The Desire of Ages, p. 369).

What am I now struggling with that I could be leaving to God’s expertise? Which of my choices reveal that I am resting in His ability to meet all my needs? What is the center of my life, my needs or God’s ability?
Welcome
Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and debrief students on the previous lesson to help them see the chronological continuity of the Bible stories from one week to another. Then ask students to share a few things they learned from their study of the current lesson.
Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find most helpful?**
Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week.

*Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.*

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LESSON 7

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

Pita Party
Divide students into groups of four. Give each group a pita bread. Allow them 60 seconds to see how many pieces they can break the bread into. After the 60 seconds, tell each group to count the number of pieces they have and figure out how many pitas it would take to give one little piece to each of 5,000 people. For instance, if they get 20 pieces, they divide 5,000 by 20; they would need 250 pitas instead of the five Jesus had—just to give everyone a taste.

Next, have everyone eat one tiny piece and then estimate how many pieces they would eat before feeling satisfied. If each person needed a whole pita bread, it would take 5,000 pitas; if half of them needed two, it would take 7,500. Next estimate how many pitas a bushel basket would hold (probably about 100). The numbers do not matter except to help the students realize that it would take 50-100 bushels of food to feed 5,000.

Debriefing
Say: Imagine being faced with 5,000 hungry people and being told to provide food for them. Let’s read how the disciples reacted to a similar situation. Ask a volunteer to read Mark 6:37 aloud. Though the disciples were worried, Jesus knew how he would meet the need.

Allow students who know the power text to say it either individually or in group:

“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation” (Isaiah 12:2).

Have the entire class repeat the power text together. Allow visitors and students who don’t know it yet to read along. Affirm them for their effort. However, do not single out students by forcing everyone to say it, nor reprimand those who don’t know it. Sabbath School is a place where students need to feel comfortable and accepted as they grow in God’s grace.

Our power point this week is:

We serve a God who supplies all our needs.

B

News Hunt
You need local newspapers, markers, paper, and pencils for each group of four to six students. Divide the students into groups and give out supplies. Explain that the people in our neighborhoods have many needs, just as people in Bible times. In the next five minutes they are to:

1. Search the newspapers and see how many real needs they can discover.
2. Circle the news story with a marker so they can find it again when they make their report.
3. Make a list by writing each need in one or two words on their paper. Warn them to be looking for real needs—basics of life.

Allow students to report their findings and show the news story the items come from. As needs are mentioned, list them where all can see. Keep the list for future use during the lesson.

Debriefing
Ask: What did we discover here this morning? (that there are a lot of needs in our neighborhoods) How would you feel if all those people expected you to supply all these needs? (scared, tired, like giving up, etc.) What if one of those persons was on our doorstep right now? What would you do to help? (Encourage as many students as possible to respond.

If you have not done Readiness Activity A, review now with the students the power text as outlined in the previous activity.

“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation” (Isaiah 12:2).

Say: This verse would be a good one to remember when 5,000 people all need your help at once. It reminds us that we can’t solve the problems ourselves. But remember:

We serve a God who supplies all our needs.

Accommodations for students with special needs
Allow students with special needs who experience difficulty with this activity to work with a partner who can assist them.
Fellowship
Allow students to report things that they are pleased or troubled about. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors. Get contact information from the adult who brought them to church. Early in the following week, send a postcard or e-mail letting the visitors know how much you enjoyed having them in your class and that you would like to see them again.

Suggested Songs
“Shepherd of My Soul” (He Is Our Song, no. 99)
“Behold What Manner of Love” (He Is Our Song, no. 42)
“Oh, Fill It Up” (He Is Our Song, no. 135)
(Add another verse: “Oh, Jesus fed [Jesus fed a hungry multitude], Jesus fed them all with love.”)

Mission
Use Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering
Say: Last week in our lesson we learned how Jesus used a small lunch to feed more than 5,000 people. Though our offering may seem small, Jesus blesses what we give and multiplies it to meet the needs of those around us. And, Jesus uses all kinds of people and offerings to supply our needs.

Prayer
Allow one minute for silent prayer. Tell the students to use this time to thank God for the ways He gives us what we need each day. If your group is uncomfortable or unfamiliar with silence, you may want to guide their thoughts by naming some of God’s wonderful gifts and pausing for a moment after each gift. Close by asking God for the power to live a victorious life. Pray also for the students’ joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

Alternative: Prepare in advance a wrapped gift box with a removable lid. In the box place words or pictures of the wonderful gifts that we receive from God each day. Invite each student to select one of the pictures or words. Make a prayer circle, with each student saying a sentence prayer to thank God for the gift they have selected. (Gift ideas: food, water, sunshine, friends, homes, churches, family, Bible, breathing, walking, talking, seeing, hearing, etc.)
Introducing the Bible Story
If you did not already do Readiness Activity A, divide the students into pairs and give each a paper fish and a paper loaf. Instruct them to see how many pieces they can divide the fish and loaf into. Allow a maximum of two minutes. Ask each team to count how many pieces they have.

Ask: How many paper fish and loaves would we need to give each of 5,000 people a tiny piece? Listen and see how Jesus solved the problem.

Experiencing the Story
In advance, ask one of the students (or an older youth) to dress in a Bible costume and tell the others the story from the perspective of the young man—how he felt when Andrew brought him to Jesus, how he felt when Jesus fed all the people with his five loaves and two fishes. To add a touch of realism, you may want to have a small basket with five small rolls and a tin of sardines or other fish that will smell when the “young man” opens his basket. (The “young man” can use the student story as a guide for his monologue.)

After the “young man’s” presentation, explain the concept of grace as expressed in Jesus’ feeding of the 5,000. (The people had a need, and Jesus met their need—no questions asked.)

Now give everyone an index card or piece of paper and a marker or crayon. Ask each member to search the Bible for their favorite text that demonstrates the goodness of God’s grace in dealing with them. While they are waiting for all to finish, some might want to decorate the card to use as a bookmark. Take time to hear the students read aloud the texts they chose.

Debriefing
Ask: What needs do these texts promise God will supply? What do they tell us about the way He cares for us?
APPLYING THE LESSON

Exploring the Bible
Point to the list of needs from Readiness Activity B on the board. Read Mark 6:37 aloud. Say: Jesus was telling the disciples that He expects them—and us—to help supply the need. So I would like you, working with a partner or two, to do the following:

1. Choose one need on the board that you wish you could supply. Look at me when you have made your choice. (Walk around to check that everyone is on task.)

2. Now decide what it would take to supply the need of that person or family. You might write this answer in steps. For instance, a person in a car accident might need surgery. You could phone a specialist and pray for healing from God; you could call a tow truck and get a list of local car mechanics. (Allow time.)

3. Now, in your group, star the items that God supplies. Pray for the person or persons involved. Believe that God will care for the needs you starred if you bring them to Him. (Allow quiet time for prayer.)

4. Finally, look again at the solution you outlined. What part could we help with? Be specific; if we could give, say what we could give and to whom.

Debriefing
Ask: What can we learn from this activity? (Accept responses.) How do you feel about this activity? (OK, good, don’t agree with something.) Give the students who don’t agree a chance to raise their questions. Whom did you pray for and what did you ask for? (Listen to responses.) What did you decide we could do about the needs? (Listen to responses.) What part did the disciples play in feeding the 5,000? (They went to see what they had, they brought the five loaves and two fish to Jesus, they organized the people to sit in groups, they served the food, and they all picked up the pieces afterward. Jesus multiplied the bread to fill the need.) Say: God lets us help Him, but let’s repeat our power point together:

We serve a God who supplies all our needs.

Doing the Needful
Read the following scenarios to your students. Encourage discussion after each one. Focus the students on deciding what part of the need God would fill:

1. Your friend Amy complains about teachers who keep comparing her to her older brother and sister who went to the same school she does. They made straight A’s. Amy only occasionally earns an A. What might be Amy’s need? What would you tell her?

2. Mitchell’s family is not Christian; they don’t offer him much support. Mitchell’s grandmother is their connection to church. Mitchell envies you because you have a Christian family; he particularly wishes he had a dad like yours. What is Mitchell’s biggest need, in your opinion?

3. Brittany’s dad just lost his job; he’s angry at the company he used to work for. Brittany is afraid that the family might lose the car and the house they live in. What else might Brittany be afraid of? What need might you have as you try to help?

Ask: What was our power point for today? Say it with me:

We serve a God who supplies all our needs.

Accommodations for students with special needs
Have students who experience difficulty with this activity work with partners who can assist them.
LESSON 7

SHARING THE LESSON

The Solution
Have students share their experiences if they had the opportunity during the past week to share a meal with someone and talk about what Jesus has done in their lives.

Place a Bible and a picture of Jesus (one for each student if possible—reproducible pictures on page 147) in a box. Wrap the box in layers of paper—one layer for each student in your class. On each layer, write a label that reads: To the student who admits to needing . . . (Write a different need on each layer such as: forgiveness, patience, a desire for salvation, a Savior, courage, humility, help to be faithful, a clean record, etc.)

Say: We have the solution to all our needs in this box. But before we open it, let’s see what some of our needs are. Read the label on the first layer aloud and hand the package to one person who admits that need. The person removes the layer of wrapping and reads the label on the next layer aloud. When someone admits that need, the box goes to that person and the procedure continues until the last label has been read and the last layer of wrapping removed. The box is then opened and the contents displayed. If you have enough pictures of Jesus for each student to have one, pass them around at this point.

Debriefing
Say: We all have needs, some we may have mentioned, some we may want to keep hidden. No matter what our needs are, Jesus has the solution. Challenge the students to share with someone how God has met their needs. Help them to decide on a specific person with whom they are going to share. Say: Remember:

We serve a God who supplies all our needs.

Closing
Say: When Jesus asked the disciples how to feed all the people, He was challenging them to recognize their own needs. We will meet situations that seem to be impossible. When we do, let’s look at them as needs that God’s grace can supply and trust Jesus to show His power. Pray that each student will see and know that Jesus has the answer to every situation in which they find themselves.

Prayer and comments:
Pray that God will reveal His love to each of your students, and that they will share that love by loving their neighbor in need.

Reminder to parents:
Say: Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents’ Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.

Coming up next week:
Say: Jesus tells the parable of talents. God wants us to use our talents in service to others.

YOU NEED:
- Bible
- box
- picture or pictures of Jesus (see p. 147)
- wrapping paper
- labels (optional)
Have you ever been so caught up in something that you forgot all about the time? You were so engrossed that you forgot to eat anything, and suddenly you realized how hungry you were. That is just what happened to a crowd of people one day as they were listening to Jesus. Imagine being part of that crowd.

I knew I should have headed for home right away. But it was a beautiful spring day, and instead I followed the crowd to the shore, listening to their conversations.

“We saw Him a little while ago,” said a man who smelled like the sea. “My brother followed Him in our boat. I walked this way hoping to meet Him.”

“Where could He be?” asked a man in fine traveling clothes. “I have to see Him before I go to Jerusalem for Passover.”

“I want Him to bless my children,” said a woman with three small children clinging to her robe. “They have no father, and I want to raise them in the fear and admonition of the Lord.”

“Jesus, Son of man, where are You?” the fisherman shouted.

“I don’t know how long we stood there listening to Him. He gave us so much hope—unlike the priests and rulers. Even the little children didn’t fuss. Suddenly I noticed that the sun was sinking in the west. My stomach started to growl. I heard the disciples telling Jesus that we needed to leave so we could eat. Jesus said the strangest thing to them, “You give them something to eat.”

The one called Philip looked at Him in disbelief and asked, “That would take more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” (Mark 6:37).

I wondered that too. The nearest village was miles away, and there were far more people here than in most villages!

“How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked. “Go and see” (verse 38).

His followers started to fan out and look. I looked down. I had been so busy listening to Jesus, I had forgotten about my net bag with bread and fish! At that same moment the follower who was called Andrew looked at it too.

“That boy over there seems to have something,” he said.

Andrew and I stepped toward each other. “That boy over there seems to have something,” he said.

As the followers distributed bread for us to take home, I thought about how Jesus had fed us from His own hands. Yes, I had brought the lunch, but He had created the fish. He gave sunshine and rain and soil to grow the grain to make the bread. Most important, this experience helped me understand what Jesus would later teach about Himself: “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty” (John 6:35).
**Sabbath**
- **Do** the activity on page 60.
- **Learn** Begin learning the power text.

**Sunday**
- **Read** Read Mark 6:30 and this week’s story, “Unlimited.”
- **Review** Review the power text.
- **Share** Share a sandwich and tell someone how Jesus fed 5,000 people with just a little bread and fish.
- **Pray** Thank God for His gifts.

**Monday**
- **Read** Read Mark 6:31.
- **Imagine** Imagine you are a journalist. What would you ask the boy who gave Jesus his food?
- **Write** In your Bible study journal, write why you think Jesus called His disciples apart to a quiet place? When do you need quiet times?
- **Review** Review the power text.
- **Pray** Thank God for caring for everyone.

**Tuesday**
- **Read** Read Mark 6:32–36.
- **Think** Jesus was planning to have some quiet time with His disciples. How do you think they felt when they saw the people had followed them?
- **Respond** How was Jesus’ response different from that of the disciples? How would you have responded?
- **Review** Review the power text.
- **Pray** Ask God to help you love people the way He loves you.

**Wednesday**
- **Read** Read Mark 6:37-44.
- **Write** In your Bible study journal, write about some impossible situations in your life.
- **Review** Review the power text.
- **Pray** Ask Jesus to help you see the impossible situations in your life through His eyes.

**Thursday**
- **Read** Read John 6:35 and Psalm 103:3.
- **Think** In these verses, what has Jesus promised to supply?
- **Share** Plan to share with someone today what Jesus has done in your life.
- **Review** Review the power text.
- **Pray** Ask God to use you to show His love to others.

**Friday**
- **Read** Read Romans 6:23.
- **Find** What is the free gift that God gives us? Find the meaning of the word “salvation” in a dictionary.
- **Write** Write your power text in your Bible study journal, substituting words from the dictionary definition for the word “salvation.”
- **Say** Repeat the power text from memory.
- **Pray** Thank God for the gift of eternal life.