

MY ABILITIES

Introduction

Can one person make a difference in this world? A lot of us would say “no.” In this Bible study, you will have a chance to see what Jesus did with a little ... from a few people ... to make a difference. And you will have a chance to discuss where your own gifts and abilities could make a difference.

Keep in mind that this story occurred when the disciples were on a vacation with Jesus. They had just returned from an exhausting job and Jesus invited them to take a break. As you listen to the story, try to put yourself in their situation. Then, move into groups of 4 and discuss the questionnaire.

1. “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” If you were one of the disciples, what would you expect?

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a quiet little vacation | <input type="checkbox"/> time to be with Jesus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fun and recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> anything but people |
2. Surprise! There are 5,000 men, plus women and children, waiting on the shore. Now how do you feel?

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> delighted | <input type="checkbox"/> angry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> overwhelmed | <input type="checkbox"/> whipped |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> frustrated |
3. What is guaranteed to ruin a vacation for you?

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> standing in long lines | <input type="checkbox"/> car trouble |
| <input type="checkbox"/> losing my suitcase | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mosquitoes / jellyfish / ants | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seven straight days of rain | |

JESUS FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. ³¹Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

³²So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

³³But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

³⁵By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late.

³⁶Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

³⁷But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”

They said to him, “That would take eight months of a man’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

³⁸“How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.”

When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.”

³⁹Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴²They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

Mark 6:30–44

4. "You give them something to eat." Had you been with Jesus during this story, and he asked you to do work after he promised you rest, what would have been your reaction?

- "Okay, but you owe me one!"
- "Hey, I'm outta here!"
- "Whatever you say, Lord!"
- "But you PROMISED!"

5. How much of your potential are you giving to God right now?

- sorry you asked
- I would say 50%.
- maybe 5%
- I'm giving it all I've got.

6. If you could put your gifts to work in something that you are good at, what would you like to do? (Choose two or three from the list below.)

- working with children
- listening / caring
- helping behind the scenes
- playing an instrument
- working with older people
- peacemaking / reconciling
- organizing / administering
- being sensitive to others
- sharing my faith
- motivating / leading
- crusading for a cause
- cooking / homemaking
- teaching the Bible
- writing
- getting others involved
- coaching / teaching
- raising money
- making people laugh
- acting / singing
- cheering others on
- problem solving
- other: _____

7. If you knew you could not fail, what would be one thing you would like to do with your life in the near future?

- go on a service or mission trip
- do something for the homeless
- reach out to some "problem" kids in my school or community
- get involved in an inner-city church or ministry
- lead a support or recovery group
- tutor disadvantaged kids
- help out at a hospital or nursing home
- other: _____



8. What is keeping you from doing this?

- money
- feeling inadequate
- time
- I don't know enough.
- I'm really not that committed.

9. How could this group help you get started?

- Don't push me—I was only dreaming!
- Help me think it through.
- Join me.
- Encourage me.
- Pray for me.

10. If Jesus had you sit down right where you are while he miraculously met your most immediate need, what would he do for you?