



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON OVERVIEW

UNBELIEVABLE
THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

BIG IDEA

Jesus can provide for our needs.

THE BIBLE

Jesus Feeds 5,000 People: Matthew 14:13-21
(Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:26-33)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **ACTIVITY** | Big Foot Races
- **ACTIVITY** | God's Footprint Hunt
- **QUESTION** | What's your favorite food?
- **BIG IDEA** | Jesus can provide for our needs.
- **STORY** | Share about a time you missed a meal.
- **BIBLE STORY** | Matthew 14:13-21
- **ACTIVITY** | Pick Up Fish
- **VIDEO** | SmallFoot Clip
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Expanding Soap
- **SCRIPTURE** | Philippians 4:19
- **ACTIVITY** | Paper Bread
- **ACTIVITY** | Guess the Baby Food
- **MEMORY VERSES** | John 14:6; Jeremiah 29:11

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What did Jesus use to feed all the people?
 - Why did Jesus do this miracle?
 - What can you learn about Jesus from this miracle?
 - How have you seen Jesus provide for you or your family?
 - What is something you need God to provide for you?
 - How can you thank God for the things He has already blessed you with?
- **SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 6:26-33
 - What does it mean to trust in God to provide for you? Is this easy or hard for you to do?
 - What are some things you worry about? How can God help us?
- **ACTIVITY** | Breaking Bread
- **MEMORY VERSES** | John 14:6; Jeremiah 29:11



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

UNBELIEVABLE
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Jesus Feeds 5,000 People: Matthew 14:13-21
(Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:26-33)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

INTRO ACTIVITY | Big Foot Races

- Welcome to church! **This month, we're talking about things that are unbelievable!** We've played with unicorns and dragons, and this week, we're playing games about Big Foot!
- **Has anyone ever heard of Big Foot?**
- Big Foot, sometimes called Sasquatch or Yeti, is a large and hairy mythical creature that is said to wander the earth and hide from humans.
- Some people even go on Big Foot Hunts to try and look for their giant footprints. Sounds pretty unbelievable, right?
- This month, we're talking about a lot of unbelievable things – some that are real (like Jesus' miracles) and some that aren't (like Big Foot), because it's important to be able to tell the difference.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Gather the four biggest pairs of shoes or swimmer flippers you can find, or can make some large feet out of foam by drilling small holes in the foam pieces, and tying rope to them for the kids to hold onto. Set up a starting line and a finish line. Split the kids into two teams and let them race relay-race style wearing the big shoes, flipper, or feet, with the next person in line putting on their pair to get ready for their turn.*
- **FOR PRETEENS:** *Split your preteens into two teams and line them up relay-race style. Give each team two big buckets or sturdy bins that are strong enough for them to turn upside down and stand on. Have them start at one side of the room and race to the other side but tell them they can only*

walk on the buckets. To make it to the other side, they will need to turn one bucket upside down, toss the other bucket on the ground in front of them, then step on it, bend down, pick up the other one, toss it in front of them, and so on. Keep the distance short so your race doesn't take forever. Once one person gets to the end, they will run back and take the buckets to the next one in line. The first team finished wins.

ACTIVITY | God's Footprint Hunt

- Let's play another game about footprints. Footprints are evidence of something that was there before. When you see footprints in the snow, you can tell if an animal or person was there.
- Imagine if you were walking through the forest and you saw a human footprint that was ten times the size of a normal human footprint! **Would you be scared? What would you think?**
- When people are going on a Big Foot hunt, the first clue they look for is footprints. We can look for "footprints" or signs that God is working in our lives.
- Let's go on a footprint hunt together. You'll have one minute to collect as many footprints as you can.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before the service, or when kids aren't looking, hide paper footprints all over the room. If you have a room with no hiding places, you can spread a bunch of footprints on the ground and tell the kids to close their eyes and gather as many as they can. After they find some footprints, give the kids markers and tell them to write on the footprints some things that remind them God cares and is providing for them.
- **Let's think of things we can write down that are reminders of God providing for us and working in our lives.** Here are some examples: the beauty of a sunset, a Bible verse that speaks to you, your family, your home, the church you're in right now, beautiful weather, protection when you're afraid, your pets.

QUESTION | What's your favorite food?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to share their favorites in each food category: Meal, Fast Food Restaurant, Dessert, Breakfast Item, Flavor of Ice Cream.
- We all have favorite foods. Is anyone feeling hungry now, after talking about all those yummy foods?
- **Today, we're talking about a meal that Jesus provided for a big crowd of hungry people. All the food we love comes from God.**
- **FOR PRETEENS:** You can turn this question into an activity for preteens. Sit them in a circle and tell the first one to name their favorite food. The next one will name the first person's favorite food, then their own. The next person will name the first two, and so on. The person at the end will try to name everyone's favorite food.

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus can provide for our needs.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Each week, do a big reveal (and make it fun) when you announce the Big Idea, like:
 - Ask the kids to give you a drum-roll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.
 - Shout the Big Idea, then point to the kids and have them shout it back. (Change it up by using funny voices, different volumes, or inflections.)
 - Have a character (either recurring or rotating) come out every week to reveal the Big Idea.

- Write it on a piece of paper and hide it somewhere in the room. Have the kids go on a “hunt” for it. When it’s found, ask someone to come up and read it.
- This week’s Big Idea: **Jesus can provide for our needs.**

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

STORY | Share about a time you missed a meal.

- Let me tell you about a time when I missed a meal and was so hungry that all I could think about was the next time I could eat.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell a story about a time when you were really hungry.
- **If you had missed breakfast and lunch, what food would you most want to appear before you at dinnertime?**
- Now let’s hear a Bible story about a time when a big crowd of people who were hungry and stuck out in the wilderness with almost no food. Let’s listen and see what happens.

BIBLE STORY | Matthew 14:13-21

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the story in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- This month, we’re learning about some of the unbelievable (but true) miracles of Jesus. Miracles are things that only God can do.
- **What was the miracle in today’s Bible story?** The miracle was that Jesus took a tiny amount of food— five small loaves of bread and two pieces of fish — and made enough food to feed over 5,000 people! In John 6:9, we learn that the loaves of bread and fish belonged to a little boy in the crowd.
- **If you were in a crowd full of people, would you have shared your food? How do you think the little boy felt when Jesus used his food to do a miracle?**
- **What does this miracle tell us about Jesus?** It tells us He cared about the needs of His people, although He could have just sent them away.
- Instead of sending these people away, Jesus decided to take care of them. He taught them and healed them all day long until it was dinnertime and they were hungry.
- Back then, they didn’t have pizza delivery or drive-through restaurants, so they needed food! But they had Jesus.
- Jesus cared about the hungry people in this story and He cares about hungry people today. Just like God provided for this group of people, He cares and provides for us today too.
- **What are some ways God has provided for you?**
- We can thank God for everything we have, because everything we have is a blessing from Him.

NOTE: Keep in mind that some kids in your group may be in need. You may want to be prepared ahead of time to talk privately with kids who indicate they are in need, and be prepared with some community organizations they can go to for help.

ACTIVITY | Pick Up Fish

- What an amazing miracle! **How many baskets of leftovers did the disciples collect after Jesus fed the crowd?** They collected 12 baskets full of leftover food! Let's play a game where we try to fill 12 bowls with fish!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before the game, lay a tarp or plastic tablecloth cover on the ground. Set up two sets of 12 plastic bowls on the opposite side of the stage or the room and spread the goldfish crackers on it. Split the kids into two teams and give each child a Dixie cup. Line each team up, stretching from the tarp with crackers on it to the 12 plastic bowls on the other side of the room. When you say "Go," the child by the tarp will scoop some crackers into their cup and dump it into the cup of the next child in line, who will dump it into the cup of the next child. It will keep going down the line until the last child dumps it into one of the bowls. They can only dump each cup into one bowl. The first team to get some goldfish into all 12 bowls, wins.*
- **Why do you think they gathered up the leftovers in baskets, rather than leaving them out on the ground?**
- **What do you think they did with the leftovers after they gathered them? Why do you think this was included in the Bible story?**
- God could have provided exactly enough to feed the crowd. He knew how much they needed, but He provided extra on purpose. Maybe Jesus made extra to show us that sometimes God blesses us with more than we need so we can use what we have to help others.
- **When you are blessed with more than you need, do you look for ways to bless and help others?**
- **How has God blessed you in ways that are more than you need?**
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Give your kids with special needs each their own bowl, cup, and pile of goldfish crackers. Let them dump the goldfish crackers (or toy fish) onto a paper towel on the floor and scoop them up with the cup and fill their own bowl with fish.

VIDEO | SmallFoot Clip

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show this [video clip](#).*
- In the movie *Smallfoot*, we learn about an entire civilization of yetis who live in the mountains in a community away from all human life . . . that is, until a human shows up and the yeti is surprised to learn that smallfoots – humans – do exist! He decides to go on a hunt to search for the smallfoot.
- People like to have fun looking for Big Foots and unexplainable footprints that will lead them to evidence of their existence, but don't forget we can look at the things God provides us with every day as evidence of His existence! Everything He gives us is evidence that He is real and that He cares about us.
- **Have you ever had something unbelievably good happen to you?**
- If you are at church right now, that's a blessing from God. You have a church that cares about helping kids know God and you have the freedom to come to church. If you have a place to stay and food to eat, those are blessings from God too. All the good things we have in our lives are evidence that He cares about us.

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

OBJECT LESSON | Expanding Soap

- I love this story. I'm not Jesus, so I can't make a bunch of food multiply, but I'll show you something I can do. Let's try an experiment to see something unexpectedly expand.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Cut up the ivory bar soap into six smaller pieces and put them on a microwavable plate. Heat the plate of soap in the microwave for 80 seconds. Open the microwave and see what happens.*
- **Did you expect the soap to expand like it did?**
- **Do you think the people in the Bible story expected the 5 loaves of bread and two pieces of fish to feed as many people as it did?**
- **How do you think the people felt when they saw this miracle?**

SCRIPTURE | Philippians 4:19

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!*
- **Do you think God always gives us every single thing we want?**
- **What is the difference between something we want and something we need?**
- **The most important thing we need from Jesus is God's gift of salvation.** We can thank Him that He forgives our sins and wants to have a relationship with us.

ACTIVITY | Paper Bread

- Jesus did an unbelievable miracle when He took the little boy's lunch and fed over a 5,000 people with just five loaves of bread and two fish.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Hold up a piece of paper for the group to see. As you teach, cut off a corner diagonally and give the pieces you cut to kids in the room. Continue to cut off the corners a few more times and have the kids count the corners as they multiply.*
- **How many corners do you see on this paper?** (Four)
- What if I wanted to give someone a piece of my paper and cut off a corner . . .
- **How many corners are there now?** (Five)
- How did that happen? The more I give away to others, the more corners there are! The same thing happened with Jesus — the more He gave away to feed people, the more there was to give away to even more people!
- **How do you think the crowd felt when Jesus passed out the food and more and more kept appearing?**
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *Instead of paper, give your kids with special needs a piece of Play-Doh and let them shape it into bread or fish, then tell them to split it in half. Tell them to split it into smaller and smaller pieces and see how small they can get it.*

ACTIVITY | Guess the Baby Food

- **Since we're talking about Jesus providing food, let's play a game about food.**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Use masking tape to cover up the label on the baby food, so the kids can't see what flavor it is. Have the kids sit in a circle and pass the baby food around until you say "Stop" or*

turn the music off. Whoever is holding the food can choose to take a new spoon and take a bite and guess what food it is. If they choose not to try the food, they will be out. If they guess right, they get to stay in. The last person in the game can win something good to eat—some candy or a treat.

- **FOR PRETEENS:** Take this one up a notch for preteens by adding in some anchovies (hey, it's fish!) and seeing if anyone wants to try some. You could have them pass the can of anchovies around instead of baby food, and whoever is holding it when the music stops can choose to be out or take a bite.
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Instead of eating baby food, try giving your kids with special needs some play food and letting them close their eyes and feel it (you could also use real pieces of fruit or vegetables) and guess what each item is just by feeling it.
- **Did anyone think it was easy to guess the baby food? You're probably not used to seeing turkey and gravy or bananas look like that.**
- Today, we've been talking about Jesus providing food for a big group of people. The way He provided might have been different from what the people were expecting, but we can trust God to provide for our needs, even if it looks different than we expect.
- Sometimes we want Him to give us everything just how we want it, but God might choose to give us different things.
- When God doesn't answer our prayers exactly the way we want Him to answer them, it's a chance for us to lean on Him and learn to be content with what we have.

MEMORY VERSES | John 14:6; Jeremiah 29:11

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give every kid memory verse magnets or stickers. Then work on the memory verse together. For ideas on how to do this well, check out the Memory Verse Guide in your Programming Folder and give them to your small group leaders, if you'd like.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What did Jesus use to feed all the people?** (Five loaves of bread and two fish.)
- **Why did Jesus do this miracle?** (He had compassion for the hungry people.)
- **What can we learn about Jesus from this miracle?** (He is powerful and He can meet our needs.)
- **How have you seen Jesus provide for you or your family?**
- **What is something you need God to provide for you?**
- **How can you thank God for the things He has already blessed you with?**

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 6:26-33

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- **What does it mean to trust in God to provide for you? Is this easy or hard for you to do?**
- **What are some things you worry about? How can God help us?**

ACTIVITY | Breaking Bread

- **Since we're talking about Jesus providing food, let's play a game about food!**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have your small group sit in a circle and give them a loaf of bread (or a piece of paper with bread and fish drawn on it). Give them one minute to pass it around the circle, with each person breaking off a piece and putting it in a bowl in the middle. See how many pieces your group can get in one minute.*
- **How many people do you think our five loaves of bread could feed with the pieces we broke it into?**
- **What do you think the people were thinking when they saw Jesus holding 5 loaves of bread, and they saw a crowd of more than 5,000 hungry people?**
- **What did Jesus do before He multiplied the bread and handed it out?** *(He gave thanks for it.)*
Why do you think this is an important part of the Bible story?
- **Do you think it is important to give God thanks for the things He gives us?**
- **What are some examples of giving God thanks?** *(Praying and thanking Him for your food, worshiping Him and praising Him at church, thanking Him when something good happens to you.)*

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