

Icebreaker:

Do you prefer to eat at large dinner parties, have a dinner for four, or a quiet dinner at home? Why?

Read this week's scripture and discuss:

1. In verse 5-6, Jesus asks Philip where to buy bread for the people. John says Jesus asks this to test Philip. Why would Jesus test one of his disciples? Would Jesus ask things of us to test us today?
2. Jesus used five barley loaves and two small fish. When have you seen something that seems small and insignificant be used in remarkable ways by God?
3. Jesus saw that the people were hungry and had compassion for their need. He provided for them. Is this something we should do today? Are there other things to consider when we help those who are in need or does God just call us to give or help regardless of the circumstances?
4. The crowds seem to want to use Jesus for their own purposes and beyond what he wanted. In what ways do you find yourself using God for your own purpose or desire?
5. Why do you think the people wanted to make Jesus king? How did they approach him and why did he withdraw?

Question and Spiritual Practice:

As Jesus provided food, what is one thing you can provide (possibly food) this week that is nourishing (physically, emotionally, or spiritually)? Take 2-3 minutes to think through a response, then share with your group. Then try to accomplish that this week, and report back to your group next week.

prayer requests

- > Prayers of comfort for Greg and Sally Mann and family in the death of Greg's mother.
- > Prayers of healing for Theresa Beardsley, Randy Laffoon, Carver McGriff, Joe Mundil, and Robert Neal.

In John 6, Jesus' story gets more exciting. Crowds are following him because he has healed the sick. The people want to force him to become king after he feeds the 5,000. In the midst of the excitement, Jesus is still working through people. He uses five barley loaves and two small fish that a boy brings, and uses the disciples to distribute the food and gathered what remains. Jesus can use ordinary people (like the boy and the disciples) and what they can offer to do miraculous things. Are we ready to offer what we have to see what Jesus can accomplish in us and through us?

1. The Bible tells us that Philip is from Bethsaida, just several miles away. Philip may have known where to get bread, and also would know he couldn't get enough. Jesus is perhaps testing Philip to see if he will ask Jesus for help and trust in him to provide. Jesus may often let us see situations where we are called on to trust in him to provide today as well.
2. While Philip thought nothing could be done, Andrew at least saw that the boy had 5 loaves and 2 fish. God can use something small to accomplish something big. Encourage your group to share a story where they have seen this.
3. We see people in need of help and in need of food even today, whether it's on a street corner, at a church ministry or out in our communities. We might consider: Why are they in need? How long will I have to help them? What if I'm not able to help them? How can I best help them? Or if you see someone in need, do you just help them? Don't look for an exact right answer here, but discuss with your group how we make those decisions and how we can help.
4. The people assumed Jesus was "the Prophet", maybe the prophet Moses spoke of in Deuteronomy 18:15. They wanted to make him king. They wanted to use Jesus. Today, we might want to use Jesus to prove a point, or as someone who will make things right, or to give us what we want. What are other ways we might use Jesus? Some days, we might truly desire to see God's will done through Jesus in our lives or in our world.
5. The people may have wanted for Jesus to be king politically or militarily - to lead them in rebellion against the Roman occupiers. Jesus wanted to do things differently, reaching people spiritually, often in small ways like using loaves and fish. He was not called to be king but to give his life; and his time had not yet come as he had more work to do - so he withdrew. He often withdrew to pray to his Father.

Spiritual Practice: Take some time with this question and practice. Let people think through how they might actually give away food, or to provide for someone in a different way. Then name the ideas. Encourage your group to accomplish their ideas this week. Ask next week, "How'd it go?" Thank you for leading this week.