

Lesson  
**12**

# “I Am the Bread of Life”

*John 5–6; Mark 6:30–44; Matthew 14:22–33*

---

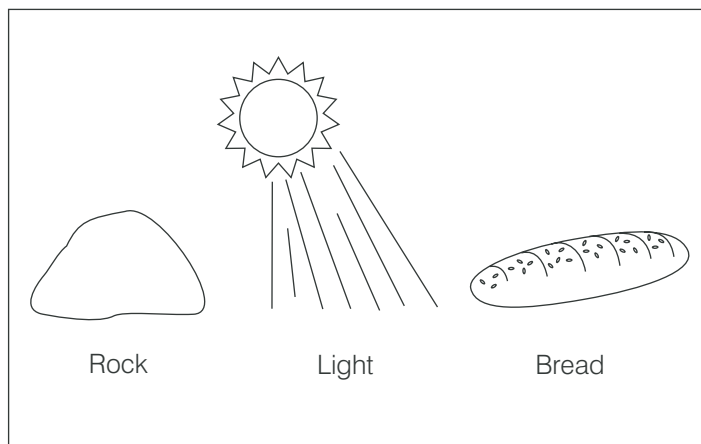
**Purpose** To help class members look to Jesus Christ as “the bread of life,” the source of everlasting life (John 6:47–48).

---

- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. John 5. Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath. The Jewish leaders seek to kill Jesus because of his declaration that he is the Son of God.
    - b. John 6:1–14; Mark 6:30–44. Jesus miraculously feeds more than 5,000 people.
    - c. John 6:15–21; Matthew 14:22–33. Jesus walks on the sea, invites Peter to come to him, and calms the winds.
    - d. John 6:22–71. Jesus declares that he is “the bread of life” and that those who believe in him will have everlasting life. Many reject this teaching, but Peter and the other Apostles remain with Jesus.
  2. Additional reading: Matthew 14:1–21; Mark 6:1–29, 45–52; Luke 9:10–17.
  3. Ask a class member to come to class prepared to share a brief summary of the account of Jesus healing a man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–9).
  4. If the pictures Feeding the Five Thousand (62143) and Christ Walking on the Water (Gospel Art Picture Kit 243) are available, use them during the lesson.
  5. Suggestion for teaching: The Savior often used everyday objects, such as bread or seeds, to teach gospel principles. As you prepare each lesson, consider how you might use objects to gain class members’ attention or illustrate an important point. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 94–95.)
- 

**Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Draw the following illustrations on the chalkboard:



- What do these things have in common?

Allow class members to briefly discuss possible answers to the question. Then have them read Helaman 5:12, in which Helaman refers to Jesus Christ as “the rock,” and John 8:12, in which Jesus declares that he is “the light of the world.” Explain that later in the lesson you will discuss how Jesus is “the bread of life” (John 6:35).

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach this lesson, help class members “search the scriptures” (John 5:39). Encourage them to share experiences that relate to the principles they discuss.

### 1. Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath and declares himself the Son of God.

Discuss John 5. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Invite the assigned class member to summarize the account of Jesus healing a man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–9). What instructions did Jesus give the man when he saw him in the temple later that day? (See John 5:14.) Why are the effects of sin “a worse thing” than physical infirmities?
- Why did the Jewish leaders seek to kill Jesus? (See John 5:16–18.) As Jesus responded to the angry Jews, what did he reveal about his relationship to the Father? (See John 5:19–23, 30.)
- Jesus told the people that he would soon do even “greater works” than healing the sick (John 5:20). What did he say these greater works would be? (See John 5:21–29. He would bring to pass the Resurrection, judge all people, and give everlasting life to the faithful.)
- What witnesses did the Savior say testified of him? (See John 5:32–39, 45–47.) Why is it important to have these witnesses? (See Jacob 4:6.) How can we be witnesses of the Savior?
- Jesus challenged the Jewish leaders to “search the scriptures” (John 5:39). What is the difference between searching the scriptures and reading them? (You may want to use the first additional teaching idea at the end of the lesson as you discuss this question.) How have you made your personal and family scripture study more meaningful? How have you been blessed as you have searched the scriptures?
- According to John 5:39, what would the Jewish leaders have known if they had searched and believed the scriptures? (They would have known that the scriptures testify of Jesus Christ. See also John 5:40, 46–47.) How have the scriptures strengthened your faith in Christ?

### 2. Jesus miraculously feeds more than 5,000 people.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 6:1–14 and Mark 6:30–44. Display the picture of Jesus feeding the multitude.

- Why did Jesus and his disciples go up into a mountain? (See John 6:1–3; note the Joseph Smith Translation of Mark 6:31 in footnote 31*a*, which says that Jesus and his disciples went to a solitary place.) How did Jesus respond when the multitude came to him? (See Mark 6:33–34; Matthew 14:14.) How can we follow his example of compassion?

- How did Jesus feed the multitude? (See John 6:5–13; see also Matthew 14:21.) How can we follow the example of the boy who gave his loaves and fishes to Jesus? How does the Lord bless us when we, like the boy, give whatever we have in His service?

Elder James E. Faust said:

“Many nameless people with gifts equal only to five loaves and two small fishes magnify their callings and serve without attention or recognition, feeding literally thousands. . . . These are the hundreds of thousands of leaders and teachers in all of the auxiliaries and priesthood quorums, the home teachers, the Relief Society visiting teachers. These are the many humble bishops in the Church, some without formal training but greatly magnified, always learning, with a humble desire to serve the Lord and the people of their wards. . . .

“A major reason this church has grown from its humble beginnings to its current strength is the faithfulness and devotion of millions of humble and devoted people who have only five loaves and two small fishes to offer in the service of the Master. They have largely surrendered their own interests and in so doing have found ‘the peace of God, which passeth all understanding’ (Philippians 4:7)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 4–5; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 5–6).

- What are some examples you have seen of people being magnified by the Lord as they have served him?
- How is the miraculous feast from five loaves and two fishes symbolic of the spiritual feast the Savior offers us?

### 3. Jesus walks on the sea, invites Peter to come to him, and calms the winds.

Read and discuss John 6:15–21 and Matthew 14:22–33. Explain that after Jesus fed the multitudes, he instructed his disciples to get into a ship and go to the other side of the sea. He then sent the multitudes away and went up a mountain to pray. As the disciples were crossing the sea, they were caught in strong winds.

- How did the disciples react when they saw Jesus walking toward them on the water? (See Matthew 14:26; John 6:19.) How did Jesus respond to their fears? (See Matthew 14:27; John 6:20.)

Display the picture of Christ walking on the water.

- What did Peter request when he heard the Savior’s voice? (See Matthew 14:28–29.) Why did Peter’s faith falter as he walked on the water? (See Matthew 14:30.) How do we sometimes make similar errors when difficulties arise?
- What did Peter do when he began to sink? (See Matthew 14:30.) What did Jesus do? (See Matthew 14:31–32.) What does this reveal about our relationship with the Lord? How have you felt the Savior strengthen you and calm your fears?

### 4. Jesus declares that he is “the bread of life.”

Read and discuss selected verses from John 6:22–71.

- The day after Jesus’ miracle with the loaves and fishes, the people followed him to Capernaum. Why did they follow him? (See John 6:26.) How did Jesus use

the people's excitement about the previous day's miracle to testify of his mission? (See John 6:27–35. Note that the word *meat* in verse 27 means food.)

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland observed: “During the Savior’s Galilean ministry, He chided those who had heard of Him feeding the 5,000 with only five barley loaves and two fishes, and now flocked to Him expecting a free lunch. That food, important as it was, was incidental to the real nourishment He was trying to give them” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 87; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 65).

- How is “bread of life” an appropriate description of the Savior and the blessings he offers us? (See John 6:35, 47–51.) What does it mean to “never hunger” and “never thirst”? How can we partake of the “bread of life”? (See John 6:47, 51–54; Matthew 26:26–28; Alma 5:33–35; D&C 20:77.)

President Howard W. Hunter counseled: “We must know Christ better than we know him; we must remember him more often than we remember him; we must serve him more valiantly than we serve him. Then we will drink water springing up unto eternal life and will eat the bread of life” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 84; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 64).

Point out that some people did not believe Jesus because they saw him only as “the son of Joseph” (John 6:42). Some who had claimed to be Jesus’ disciples murmured and turned away from him, saying that they did not understand the spiritual meanings of his declaration that he was the bread of life and his teaching about the need to eat his flesh and drink his blood (John 6:51–66).

- When some people rejected Jesus’ sermon, what did Jesus ask the Twelve Apostles? (See John 6:67.) What was Peter’s response? (See John 6:68.) What did Peter and the other Apostles understand about Jesus that those who left did not understand? (See John 6:69.)

---

## Conclusion

Testify that Jesus Christ is “the bread of life” and that he has “the words of eternal life” (John 6:35, 68). Encourage class members to apply his promises from the Sermon on the Bread of Life: “He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. . . . He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John 6:35, 47).

---

## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “Search the scriptures” (John 5:39)

Invite class members to read John 5:20–30 silently while you read it aloud. Read it quickly, without pausing to explain or discuss any of the verses.

Explain that you have just *read* John 5:20–30 but that you will now *search* the passage together. Divide class members into groups of three or four. Assign each group at least one of the following sections from John 5:20–30: verses 20–22, 23–24, 25–27, and 28–30. Give the groups a few minutes to work together. Have them read the assigned verses, choose three of the most important words in the verses, and prepare to talk about why those words are important.

- What did you see when you searched the scriptures that you did not see when we read them quickly? What can we do to search the scriptures on our own?

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith received the vision of the kingdoms of glory after pondering John 5:29. Invite a class member to read Doctrine and Covenants 76:15–20.

- What knowledge have we been blessed with because Joseph Smith searched John 5:29?

## **2. “Look after those who wait by the pool of Bethesda”**

Elder Boyd K. Packer used the account in John 5:1–9 to emphasize that we should help people who have disabilities. He said bodies and minds with disabilities “will be made perfect. In the meantime, we must look after those who wait by the pool of Bethesda” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 9).

- What can we do to help people who have physical or mental disabilities?