

# "That You May Believe"

## Gospel of John

### Week 12

**Main Idea – Every human needs God's provision. Jesus provides for every human need.**

The goal of this week's lesson is to help the children understand that every human needs God's provision. Life is not possible without God actively sustaining us through our daily needs. This is seen in the Old Testament when God provided food for His people in the midst of a terrible famine. This week's lesson culminates in the Person of the Lord Jesus, who is able to provide for every human need and more! While we need to recognize the importance of receiving physical provision from God, it is even more important to recognize the importance of receiving spiritual provision from God. Without spiritual provision, we are dead even though we live. Therefore, every person must come to the Lord Jesus, who is the means through which God pours out His physical and spiritual blessings to those who seek Him.

## Sunday School — 2 Kings 4:38-44, Psalm 145:15-16

### Preparation

Materials:

- What does it need? (SS)
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize the main point
- God provides coloring page

Set-up:

- Print out the "What does it need?" (SS) images or display them on your computer for the students.
- Print out other materials.

### Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

1 John 5:11-12, John 14:6 (ESV) – "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever

does not have the Son of God does not have life...Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing "The Life" (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Start the Bible Verse section at the beginning without waiting for students who may arrive late. This will preserve the allotted times for other sections.

## Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – Every human needs God's provision.

Pray

### Introduction (5 minutes)

Opening activity — What does it need? Today we will consider a common plant, and ask the question, "What does it need?" (In order to build suspense, I would start with all of the pieces of paper face down on the white board and reveal them as the students guess each element that the plant needs.) Raise your hand to provide an answer to this question.

To survive, a common plant needs:

- Light — Plants need light to live. They use a process called photosynthesis to take light energy (sunlight or artificial light) from the sun and turn it into cellular energy.
- Air — Plants need air to live. They use gases in the air, like carbon dioxide and oxygen gas to create glucose, which it uses for energy.
- Water — Plants need water to live. They use water for photosynthesis and moving nutrients from the soil.
- Good soil — Plants need good soil to live. Good soil will have the nutrients the plant needs to grow and stay healthy.
- Space — Plants need space to live. If a plant does not have sufficient space, it cannot spread its roots out to get water and nutrients that it needs to grow and stay healthy.

Now, God created plants to be dependent objects. Plants are not self-sufficient, they do not have life in themselves. They have needs that must be met if they are going to stay alive. In the same way, God created humans to be dependent creatures. We do not have life in ourselves. If we don't get the things we need to live, like oxygen, food, protection from the elements of nature, we will die! Today we are going to look at a time when God's chosen people — Israel — needed God's provision to survive.

### Body (15 minutes)

Main Point — Every human needs God’s provision. As we noted, human beings are dependent creatures. They need certain things in order to live, and someone has to *provide* those things. When it comes to the things humans need to live, they are dependent upon God to provide those things.

One thing humans need to survive is food! **What do you typically do when you are hungry?** Ask your parents for food, go to the pantry, go to the store, go to a restaurant. We’re blessed to have easy access to food in America. But sometimes people in the world don’t have access to food.

**The Famine** — Read 2 Kings 4:38a: “Elisha now returned to Gilgal, and there was a famine in the land...” (NLT). **What is life like during a famine?** There is little access to food. People starve to death. People are willing to kill people over food. Because humans need food to live, when food is in short supply, they will do almost anything — good or bad — to survive.

Now, Gilgal was in Israel. So in the promised land that God gave to His people, they ran out of food! How were they going to survive? They needed someone to provide for their needs so that they could survive. It is in this desperate situation that God graciously stepped in to provide food and preserve the life of some of His people in Israel.

**The Food** — Through the prophet Elisha, God provided food for His people two times.

*Note to teacher* — You are welcome to add creative ideas here to help with the lesson. For example, you could bring real food as an illustration. You could also have the students act out the story, just make sure that you preserve gender boundaries.

First, Elisha cured a poisoned stew — Read 2 Kings 4:38-41

**How did the stew get poisoned?** Poisonous gourds! Now, a gourd is a hard-shelled fruit. Some of them are very decorative, almost like pumpkins! (You can show a picture to help). The man thought they looked good, and put them in the stew, only to find out that they were poisonous! That would have ruined their meal. But Elisha, by the power of God, cures the poison so that they could eat and not be harmed.

Second, and even more incredibly, Elisha multiplied bread! — Read 2 Kings 4:42-44

How many loaves of bread did the man from Baal-shalishah have? Twenty loaves.

Is twenty loaves of bread enough to feed almost 100 people? From the man’s reaction, it doesn’t seem like feeding all the people that Elisha asked him to feed was possible.

This is where God steps in directly to provide — God says through the prophet, “Everyone will eat, and there will even be some left over!” This is incredible! So the man obeyed, and everything that the Lord said came true. This is an incredible miracle. The man or woman who believes in God trusts that He will provide for all of their needs, even in a famine. Listen to how the Psalmist described God’s great ability to provide: “The eyes of all look to you in hope; you give them their food as they need it. When you open your hand, you satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing” (Psalm 145:15-16).

**Conclusion (5 minutes)**

Every human needs God’s provision. Every human life is dependent upon the air, food, water, and protection from nature that God provides. That means that every human needs God when there is a famine, and when there isn’t a famine. When life is bad and when life is good.

But even more important that air, food, water, and protection from nature is a human’s need for forgiveness. As long as our sins remain unforgiven, we are dead even while we live on this earth. Thankfully, by God’s grace, He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for sins so that every human’s greatest need — forgiveness from sin — could be offered as a free gift to those who believe.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only one who is able to provide for every human need so that they might experience true life in Him.

Pray

## **Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)**

Secret word — Famine

# **Children’s Church — John 6:1-15**

## **Preparation**

Materials:

- What does it need? (CC)
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize the main point
- Main Point Worksheet (instead of coloring sheet)

Set-up:

- Print out the “What does it need?” (SS) images or display them on your computer for the students.
- Print out other materials

## **Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)**

1 John 5:11-12, John 14:6 (ESV) – “And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life...Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing “The Life” (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Starting with the Bible verse in Children’s Church will help the children get some movement in before the lesson starts.

# Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – Jesus **provides** for every human **need**.

Pray

## Introduction (5 minutes)

Opening activity — What does it need? Today we will consider a pet dog, and ask the question, “What does it need?” (In order to build suspense, I would start with all of the pieces of paper face down on the white board and reveal them as the students guess each element that the dog needs.) Raise your hand to provide an answer to this question.

To survive, a pet dog needs:

- Food — Dogs need food to survive. Without food and nutrients, they will starve to death.
- Air — Dogs need air to survive. Without air, they will not be able to breathe.
- Water — Dogs need water to survive. Without water, they will die of thirst.
- Sleep — Dogs need sleep to survive. Without sleep, they would have no energy to sustain their life.
- Shelter — Dogs need protection from nature to survive. The elements of nature can pose a serious threat to life, and dogs can die if they don’t have sufficient shelter.
- Physical Care — Dogs need things like exercise, place to go to the bathroom, nails trimmed, tics removed, etc. to continue to be healthy.

This morning we did this same activity with plants. Plants are different than dogs. But plants, dogs, AND even humans all have something in common. They were created by God to be dependent. They do not have life within themselves, they depend upon God to provide for their needs so that their life will be sustained.

This morning in Sunday school, we learned that “every human needs God’s provision.” This was especially true during the days of Elisha, when there was a famine in Israel, and people were struggling to survive without food. Twice in our passage, we saw God use Elisha to provide food for needy Israelites so that they could continue to survive during the famine. Because God is gracious, and the Creator, He is able to provide for humans in any circumstance.

Today, we will look at a miracle that Jesus did during His public ministry that teaches us something extremely important about Jesus.

## Body (15 minutes)

Main Point — Jesus provides for every human need. In this passage, John attempts to show us what it means that Jesus provides and what it doesn’t mean that Jesus provides. Let’s work through the passage.

*Note* — If the older students (3-5) would like to try reading these sections from the Bible, you can do so.

The people — Read John 6:1-6

**Why are these people coming to Jesus?** They have needs! Some people are sick and need to be healed. Some people are lost and need a leader. And some people are bored and they need entertainment! They're only there to see Jesus perform miracles. Even though some needs are better than others, the truth is that every person needs Jesus.

But there is a need that Jesus notices as the crowds come to Him — they need food. They've been following Jesus and they need to eat. So Jesus asks a question to test one of His disciples named Philip, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" Jesus knew how He would feed the people, but He wanted to see how Philip would respond if He asked. That brings us to the next point.

The problem — Read John 6:7

**How does Philip respond to Jesus' question?** He freaks out! This is impossible!

Even though Philip does not pass the test, He was on the right track! Philip understood that the disciples cannot provide for these needy people. Even if they worked for months in their own strength, they couldn't do it! That's where Philip needed the faith that even though they couldn't provide for these needy people, that Jesus could. That brings us to our next point.

The portion — Read John 6:8-9

Andrew too does not pass the test though he is on the right track. Upon seeing the boy's portion, five loaves and two fish, he understands that is not enough food to meet the needs of such a large crowd. That's where Andrew needed faith that even though they didn't have enough food, Jesus could provide enough food. After all, as we learned this morning, God had multiplied food for His people before! That brings us to Jesus' response.

The provision — Read John 6:10-13

Here, where the need is incredibly great, Jesus is able to provide. He provides enough food from the boy's small portion to feed 5,000 men, which means there could have been over 10,000 people there! But Jesus doesn't just have the ability to provide **only** what they needed. He was able to provide **more** than they needed! And to teach His disciples that He can provide in abundance, He instructed His twelve apostles to pick-up the leftovers. At the end of the meal, twelve baskets were picked up — one for each disciple. That brings us to our final point.

The popularity — Read John 6:14-15

The people go crazy with excitement when they see Jesus create food out of thin air. In fact they were so excited that they tried to make Jesus king! They probably thought, "with a King like Jesus, we'll get all the free food we can eat!"

**But does Jesus let the crowd take Him by force to be King?** No. We know that Jesus is the true King of Israel, but this is very important. He will not let the people make Him king because He does not want them to think that provision for their physical need is the most important need that they have. What is the most important need that the people have? Spiritual needs!

Whether the people understand it or not, their most important need is for forgiveness of sin so that their relationship to God can be restored. That cannot happen if Jesus allows them to make Him king before He goes to the cross to die for their sins.

## **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

Jesus provides for every human need. He graciously provides for every physical need that we have while on earth. But more importantly, Jesus is God's only provision for every spiritual need that we have as we face eternity. In order to avoid an eternity of suffering, scarcity, and spiritual darkness, we must believe in Jesus — the One who is able to provide us with full forgiveness of sin and reconcile us to God. And here is the promise of Scripture for those who come to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith — they receive every spiritual blessing in Him (Ephesians 1:3). Believe in Jesus — let Him provide for your every need, physical and spiritual, and you will be satisfied.

Pray

## **Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)**

Secret Word — King

*Note* — Another great activity to try is the *Main Point worksheet*. Students will write the main point and then draw the things that Jesus provides for them.