

LESSON 1

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Gives Us Life

**SCRIPTURE:** John 6

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** After feeding a large crowd with five loaves and two fish, Jesus tells the people that He is the bread of life, promising eternal life to all who trust in Him.

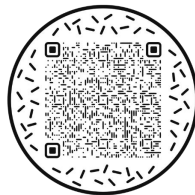
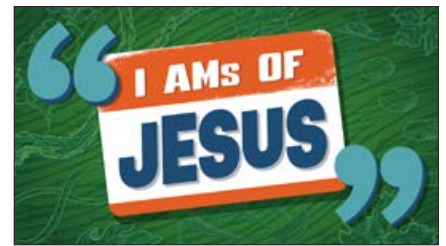
**WORD OF WONDER:** Jesus is the light of the world. —from John 8:12

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Play Stations:
  - Bread Making
  - Food Matching
  - I Am the Bread of Life Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Bread Hunt
- God's Big Story /Snack
- Word of Wonder: From John 8:12
- Circle Time: Pass the Bread
- Craft: Bread Stamping
- Game: Bread Toss
- Responding in Worship: Taste and See
- Closing Game: Grab the Bread



I Ams of Jesus Preschool Spotify playlist



## LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Gives Us Life

**SCRIPTURE:** John 6

**WORD OF WONDER:** From John 8:12

There we were—out of water and feeling famished. We were above the tree line and could see the summit of Pikes Peak. All we could talk about was guzzling gallons of water and eating a dozen of the doughnuts they sell at the Summit House.

When we reached the top of Pikes Peak, we did get bottles of water and a dozen doughnuts. I wish I could say they were as satisfying as we had envisioned, but they were not. In fact, they made the car trip down the mountain very uncomfortable. My hunger wasn't satisfied. Instead, I felt sick.

Read John 6:10–14, 25–35. John 6 tells us that Jesus has come to satisfy hunger—the deepest pangs of hunger within us all. Those pangs that go beyond something that bread can satisfy—emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual pangs.

What's more, Jesus also tells the crowd they are looking in the wrong places to satisfy their hunger—much like eating doughnuts after climbing a 14,000+ foot mountain. It's something we all do. In verse 27, Jesus calls this “food that spoils” (NIV).

What are your deepest places of hunger, desire, or need? When have you tried to satisfy that hunger or desire by looking in the wrong places?

Jesus is health. He is life. He is the very bread of life.

—Jeff Stone

Associate Pastor and Professional Counselor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

The crowd was composed of people who were following Jesus around because of His signs—especially healing of the sick. Based on their dialogue with Jesus, the crowd was predominantly or entirely Jewish. They are distinct from Jesus' disciples, who were His students and traveling companions.

**WHAT?**

After miraculously feeding a large crowd, Jesus is followed to Capernaum by people expecting Him to provide more manna—bread from heaven—as a new Moses. Jesus explains that He Himself is the living bread who gives life to the world. Those who believe will live forever.

**WHERE?**

Jesus fed the crowd somewhere in the mountainous area known today as the Golan Heights, along the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus then crossed to Capernaum, which is on the northwestern part of the Sea of Galilee.

**WHEN?**

According to John 6:4, this story takes place near the time of the Jewish Passover Feast, when the people remembered how God delivered their ancestors from Egypt. This may have resulted in a heightened expectation among the crowd for God to provide a new deliverer.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

God provided manna in the wilderness to meet the Israelites' immediate physical needs. Yet they eventually died. Jesus, the bread of life, is a greater provision. He defeated death on the cross and will raise His people to imperishable life on the last day.



LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Gives Us Life
SCRIPTURE: John 6
WORD OF WONDER: From John 8:12

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: modeling dough, rolling pins (several), scissors (prep only), coloring utensils, muffin tins (optional)

RESOURCES: Food Matching Sheet (2 copies), I Am the Bread of Life Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

"Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?"

Play Station: Bread Making

Set-up: Set out modeling dough, rolling pins, and muffin tins (if desired) on a table.

Play: Encourage kids to knead their modeling dough as if they were kneading bread dough. Tell them it reminds you of how bread is made. Demonstrate how to shape the dough into a loaf of bread and challenge kids to create loaves of bread. You can help the kids create dough muffins in a muffin tin. Tell kids they will hear about bread in the story today!

Play Station: Food Matching

Set-up: Print two copies of the Food Matching Sheet. Cut apart the pictures, mix them up, and place them face down on the table.

Play: Tell kids to take turns flipping over two pictures at a time. If a kid turns over two pictures that match, she can keep the match and the next kid takes a turn. If the pictures do not match, she can turn them back over and another kid can try. Continue until all the matches have been found. While they're playing and matching food pictures, talk with kids about their favorite kind of bread or other baked items.



Play Station: I Am the Bread of Life Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the I Am the Bread of Life Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw their favorite food.

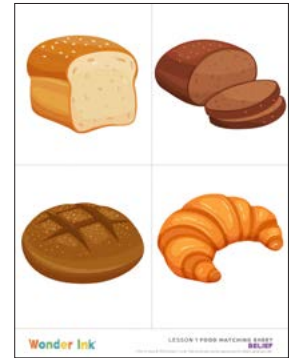
## Curiosity Activity: Bread Hunt

**SUPPLIES:** scissors (prep only), pen (optional)

**RESOURCES:** Bread Sheet (3 copies)

Before the activity begins, print three copies of the Bread Sheet and cut apart the pictures. Hide the bread pictures around the room. Kids will search for the bread pictures. You can also cut apart strips of paper and write the Wonder Truth on them (or one word of the Wonder Truth on each piece) and roll them up, then stick the rolled-up papers inside the dinner rolls and let the kids find them.

**"Today we're starting an exciting new series called the I AMs of Jesus. Jesus described Himself in many ways to help us know and understand Him better. To help us learn about today's "I am" statement, we're going on a bread hunt!**



**There seems to be a lot of bread spread around the room. Can you help me find the bread? After you find some bread, bring it back to the middle of the room.** If you have 12 or more kids, tell kids to only find one piece of bread so other kids can have the opportunity to find bread as well. **Ready, set, go!** Give kids time to locate all the pieces of bread around the room. Encourage kids to return to the middle of the room and have a seat.

**Wow! We found all the bread! I wonder what today's "I am" statement will be. Any ideas?** Allow kids to respond. **Today we're going to learn about what Jesus meant when He said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). This doesn't mean that Jesus was a piece of bread like what we just found. Instead, it means that JESUS GIVES US LIFE."**

## Word of Wonder

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

**WORD OF WONDER**  
Jesus is the light of the world.

—from John 8:12

**"Our Word of Wonder today describes Jesus in another way. We've been learning that Jesus is the bread of life and that He gives us life. The Bible also tells us that Jesus is the Light of the World. Let's say our Word of Wonder together."**

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **JESUS IS**—Open arms out to sides, one at a time.
- **THE LIGHT**—Point to the light in your room.
- **OF THE WORLD.**—Draw a large circle in the air.
- **FROM JOHN 8:12**—Hold your hands together in front, palms together, as if opening a book.

**Jesus said He is the Light of the World. He brings light into our lives when He forgives our sins and makes us new. Sin is anything we do that is not what God wants. Jesus gives us life and helps us not sin.**

Divide kids into four small groups spaced out around the room. Give each group a phrase of the verse, as listed above with the motions.

**Each group will have a turn to say their part of the verse. The first time we do this, say your part of the verse in a normal voice.** Guide each group to say their part of the verse.

**Now, let's say the verse in a loud voice.** Guide each group to say their part of the verse in a loud voice. Repeat, saying the verse in a quiet, then silly voice.

**Great job! Let's say our verse aloud with our motions one more time!**

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **Why do you think Jesus refers to Himself as the Light of the World?**
- **How can we have the light of Jesus in us?**

## **God's Big Story / Snack**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of John in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

### **Bible Time Rhyme**

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (*Point to yourself.*)

**"Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of John in the Bible."**

**Read pages 310– 315 in the My First Hands On Bible.**

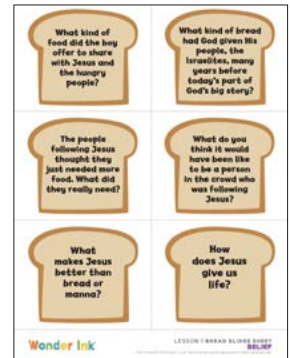
## Circle Time: Pass the Bread

**SUPPLIES:** scissors (prep only), basket

**RESOURCES:** [Bread Questions Sheet \(1/SG\)](#), songs from the [I AMs of Jesus Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#)

Before the activity begins, print the Bread Questions Sheet and cut apart the questions. Put the pictures of slices of bread in a basket. Cue a song to play from the Spotify playlist. Gather the kids to sit in a circle.

**"We're going to review what we have been learning today by passing this basket of bread. I will play a song, and while the music is playing, you will pass the basket around the circle. When the song stops, whoever is holding the basket will choose one picture of bread. I will read the question and you'll answer it."**



Begin passing the basket of bread while the music plays. Stop the music intermittently and allow kids to answer the questions from the list below when they get a piece of bread.

**Leader Tip:** Some kids may not feel comfortable answering the question they selected. Let them ask a friend for help if you sense they are uncomfortable and want some extra help!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **What kind of food did the boy offer to share with Jesus and the hungry people?** (*five small loaves of bread and two fish*)
- **What kind of bread had God given His people, the Israelites, many years before today's part of God's big story?** (*manna*)
- **The people following Jesus thought they just needed more food. What did they really need?** (*Jesus*)
- **What do you think it would have been like to be a person in the crowd who was following Jesus?**
- **What makes Jesus better than bread or manna?**
- **How does Jesus give us life?**

**When Jesus said He is the bread of life, He wanted everyone to know that He is the One who gives life to the whole world. He is greater and better than any bread or other kind of food because He came to beat death and provide a way for us to have life! Let's talk to God now in prayer!"**

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and to thank God for giving us life through Jesus' death and resurrection.

## Head to Large Group!

Return and finish the rest of this guide before parents arrive.

### Responding in Worship: Taste and See

**SUPPLIES:** cheerios or rice chex, small disposable cups (1 per kid)

**Allergy Caution:** Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

Before the activity begins, place a small amount of cheerios or rice chex into a small disposable cup for each kid. You will pretend these are "bread."

Gather kids together and give each kid a prepared cup. Invite kids to participate in a call-and-response prayer/praise time that combines taste and prayer. You'll share the following three calls to prayer with the kids, and each time you do, invite them to eat a piece of their "bread."

1. **When thousands of people were hungry, Jesus fed them with just five small bread loaves and two small fish. Jesus did a miracle and took care of their needs! Let's thank Jesus for providing for us! Repeat after me: Thank You, Jesus, for providing for us!** Encourage kids to repeat after you and eat a piece of their bread.
2. **Long ago, when God's people, the Israelites were hungry, God gave manna in the wilderness. This helped them at that time with their hunger. Bread helps with physical hunger. But to live forever and be forgiven from sin, we need Jesus. God gives us the true bread from heaven—His own Son, Jesus—to forever remove our sins, the wrong things we do. Let's thank Jesus for removing our sins! Repeat after me: Thank You, Jesus, for forgiving our sins!** Encourage kids to repeat after you and eat their piece of bread.
3. **Jesus beat death on the cross so we can live forever with God. Let's thank Jesus for giving us life! Repeat after me: Thank You, Jesus, for giving us life!** Encourage kids to repeat after you and eat their piece of bread.



## Game: Bread Toss

**SUPPLIES:** paper plates (3), permanent marker (prep only), fake/pretend pieces of bread (3 pieces)

**Allergy Caution:** Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

Before the activity begins, use a permanent marker to write a number on each paper plate: 300, 200, and 100. Place the plates in a triangle shape a few feet away from where the kids will line up.

Direct kids to line up and give the first kid in line the three pieces of bread. "**What have we learned today?** Allow kids to respond. Guide them toward recalling that Jesus is the bread of life. **Today we have talked a lot about bread. Jesus said He is the bread of life, and we know that Jesus gives us life because He died on the cross for our sins. Because Jesus rose from the dead three days later, He defeated death. He gives us life—better than any piece of bread or manna ever could!**

**Let's play a game. You will have three pieces of bread that you can toss and try to land on these paper plates. Each plate is worth points. Let's see how many points you can earn!"**

Guide kids to take turns tossing the three slices of bread onto the paper plates. Total their points and give them a high-five or fist bump as they give the bread to the next person in line. Continue until all kids have had a chance to play.