

ONE NEED

AT A TIME

[LEADER PREP GUIDE]

GETTING STARTED

When was the last time you were physically, spiritually, or emotionally in need? Who helped you with your need and was it resolved for good? Make a list of 10 needs you've had—physical, spiritual, and emotional. Next to each need, describe how the need was met. (If the need hasn't been met yet, write "unmet" next to the need.)

Leader Note: Open in prayer. *Father, thank You for Your Word. Lord, we recognize that more than anything, we need You. Help us recognize our own dependence on You and, out of an overflow of what You've given us, help us to meet the needs of those around us, one person at a time.*

OVERVIEW

In this study, we're going to look at the story when Jesus fed the 4,000. We'll discover how Jesus was sensitive to the unique needs of the people around Him and see how He healed them in the specific ways they needed healing. Jesus recognized the people He was with needed something specific (food), so He used what little He had to provide them with something to eat. Finally, we'll be challenged to look for ways that we can help meet the needs of others, whether those needs are physical, spiritual, or emotional.

Open up and read Matthew 15:29-39

Leader Note: If time allows, read aloud another account of this same story in John 6:1-14. Ask the group, "What else can we learn from this passage that we didn't read in Matthew's account?" Next, ask the group the following questions to make sure everyone understands the passage.

UNPACKING THE VERSES

1. What did the "great crowds" bring to Jesus and what did He do for those who came to Him?

Leader Note: Verse 30 shares the crowds came to Jesus "bringing him the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others" and "he healed them."

2. What word did Jesus use to describe how He felt toward the people?

Leader Note: In verse 32, we read that Jesus said to His disciples, "I have compassion for these people..." Make special note that to have compassion means you don't simply feel sorry for another person, you have a desire to help them!



3. What did Jesus do before He broke the loaves and fed the crowd?

Leader Note: In verse 36, we read that He gave thanks and then broke the bread. Encourage the group to follow Jesus' example by giving thanks to God first and then meeting the need set before you.

4. What does verse 37 tell us about how the crowd's needs were met?

Leader Note: We read that the crowd "all ate and were satisfied." Despite the disciples' doubts, Jesus used what He had and fed the entire crowd so that they ALL ate and were satisfied.

5. What did Jesus do after He sent the crowd away?

Leader Note: We learn in verse 39 that Jesus "got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan." Ask your group what this might tell us about Jesus' character. (Jesus helped them because He saw a need and knew He could meet it, and then He moved on, seemingly not asking for anything in return.)

ONE NEED AT A TIME

In this passage, we see that Jesus was sensitive to the needs of people around Him and He used what He had to help meet their needs. He saw that people needed healing, so He healed them. He saw they needed food, so He fed them. Just as we saw from Jesus' example, we can help meet the needs of those around us by slowing down, seeing what they need, and then using what we have to help meet their specific need.

One at a time, this might mean that when you see an elderly person who needs help loading groceries in their car, you offer to help them. When you see a young mom who's feeling overwhelmed, you offer her help or encouragement. When you see a homeless person on the street, you get them a meal and sit with them.

LIVING IT OUT

1. Have you ever seen a need but looked the other way? How will you think differently the next time you see someone in need?
2. Has there ever been a time when you had a need that was met and it drew you closer to Jesus? What can you do to make sure the same thing happens to someone else?
3. What are some practical things you and/or your family can do TODAY to help meet the needs of someone God has put along your path?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You that You have given us our greatest need through Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross. Thank You for Your Word and for Jesus' example to us. We pray that You would give us boldness to meet the needs of those around us, one person at a time. Give us eyes to see, words to speak, and hands to help so that others would know Your great love for them. We love You, Lord, and we pray all these things in Jesus' holy and precious name. Amen.

