



## THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE STUDY

June 6, 2015

### Sabbath School Program: Bread of Life

*This program uses the metaphor of bread to explore the importance of Bible study in the Christian life.*

#### Preparation

- Collect six kinds of bread from a range of cultures, such as flat breads, corn bread, rye bread, bagels, gluten-free bread, etc.
- Display them attractively on a table at the front of the church.
- If you have a small group, you may also provide some cubes of the less crumbly breads in small sandwich bags to involve everyone in the experience. Make sure that you include some gluten and wheat-free bread for people with special diets.
- A postcard, filing card, or piece of paper for each person, and pens.

#### Introduction

Today we're going to use bread to help us understand the importance of Bible study in our lives. Here we have some different kinds of bread. We have...(pick up and introduce each kind of bread). We often refer to the Bible as the Bread of Life, and Jesus also called Himself the bread of life. Why is bread so important? Let's have a closer look.

*If possible, hand out small pieces of bread so that everyone can choose one they like to eat. Otherwise invite six people to come to the front and explore each kind of bread through their senses as you describe below.*

- Look at your bread carefully. What do you notice that's special about this bread when you look at it closely? *Invite comments.*

- Feel your bread carefully. What's special about the texture of this bread when you take the time to feel it? *Invite comments.*

- Smell your bread. How does this bread smell different from other breads? *Invite comments.*

- If you wish you can break off a piece of bread and taste it. What are some of the different flavors you can detect in this bread? *Invite comments.*

*If you invited helpers to the front, thank them and let them sit down again.*

We can say that bread is essential to our diets, we can admire the different kinds of bread. We can even smell, touch and taste the bread! But for us to be sustained and nourished by the bread, we need to bite it, chew it, swallow it and digest it.

When we study God's Word, our sense of smell can remind us to "inhale" and ask God's Spirit to inspire our study; our sense of sight reminds us to read the words; hearing reminds us to take in the words and understand their meaning for us; touch reminds us to let the words touch our heart; and taste reminds us to make God's Word a part of our life.

### **Favorite Bread**

- Invite people to turn to a neighbor and talk about their favorite bread. What do they like best about that kind of bread? What would they miss most if they couldn't get it or make it?

- Invite feedback: What are some of the more unusual breads people enjoy?

### **Lots of Different Loaves**

We all like different kinds of bread, depending on our culture, tastes and dietary needs. And we can all eat our bread in different ways—we can make sandwiches, use breadcrumbs in recipes, dip bread in oil, stuff it like pita bread, etc.

We can also enjoy many different ways to study the Bible, and we can find the ways that work best for us, at different times, and in different situations. How we study the Bible will depend on what God's Spirit is inspiring us to study; our interests (biblical history, poetry, biography, prophecy, promises, etc.); our spiritual gifts (preaching, teaching, helping, caring, encouraging, communicating, etc.); our talents (writing, music, art, photography, etc.) our learning preferences (verbal, visual, or sensory/active); our level of education; and our circumstances and needs, etc.

### **Jesus Feeds 5,000 People** (Matt. 14:13-21)

Let's take a familiar Bible story about bread and experiment with one way we can explore God's Word.

Read this short passage in groups of 2 to 4 and then share some of your different responses to the following questions:

- What do I like best about this passage?

- What is the most important message that God is speaking to me through this passage today?

- What does this passage help me to understand about God's love for me?

- What difference will this passage make to my life right now?

- How would I like to respond actively to this Bible passage? (e.g., by praying, or by making, writing, sharing, or doing something.)

Invite two people to feedback about this 'reflection to action' Bible study format.

### **Favorite Bible Study Approaches**

- We all like to study the Bible in different ways. Write about one of your favorite Bible study approaches on a postcard.

- We will collect them and keep them in a box (or post them on a bulletin board, etc.), so that you can learn from each other and try different ways to study.

- You don't have to submit a card. You can also take a card to write on and bring it back next week for including in the Bible Study Project.

### **Closing Questions:**

- How will I make Bible study as essential to my life as eating bread?

- What differences might it make to my life if Bible study were a more central part of my Christian experience?

- What different Bible study approaches could I explore that will help me make Bible study more central in my life?

### **Musical Selections:**

*Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*

271—"Break Thou the Bread of Life"

272—"Give Me the Bible"

274—"O Word of God Incarnate"

277—"For Your Holy Book We Thank You"