

The Scottish Sleuths

and

The Case of

The Mystifying Miracles

Pre-School

**Vacation Bible School
Curriculum**

*Teacher's Manual
4 and 5 year olds*

Introduction

Welcome to the *Scottish Sleuths* Vacation Bible School curriculum series. Each year, our Scottish Super Sleuths, Angus McTavish and Professor Dabney Thornwell, are called in to solve a Biblical “case” with the help of the VBS children. The detective characters symbolically portray the message that we want the students to learn to become thoughtful investigators of Biblical truth.

This year’s case takes us into the Gospels with a study of some of the miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ. While we are amazed at the miracles themselves, they are most important because of what they show us about Jesus. The children will learn that Jesus is the bread of life, the light of the world, the Lord over nature, the victor over sin and Satan, and the resurrection and the life. These miracles truly show us Jesus!

Curriculum Distinctives

1. Focuses on the verbal transmission of Bible stories (The art of storytelling).
2. Emphasizes class discussion in an open question and answer format.
3. Age-appropriate.
4. Maximizes the small amount of time with profound truths and clear Biblical principles.
5. Reduces the amount of “busy work.”
6. Does not overload with too much content or too many activities.

Vacation Bible School is a ministry that is intended to be primarily evangelistic in nature. Yet since many of your children may in fact be regularly “churched,” it is essential that VBS also be used as an opportunity to teach God’s Word more intensively. Thus, *The Scottish Sleuth* series

works hard to be both evangelistic in method as well as discipleship-focused.

This curriculum presents the clear gospel message from God’s Word in the context of loving relationships between teachers and their students. Accordingly, it is vital for each teacher to recognize that VBS is all about:

- a) Showing the love of Christ to each one of your students;
- b) Faithfully and clearly presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ from God’s Word; and,
- c) Praying for God’s Spirit to do His work in the lives of the VBS children.

Please feel free to use your creative energy to mold this curriculum to your own personality and the make-up of your particular class!

On Classroom Setup

The most important thing to remember about your classroom setup is that it should be conducive to learning. Arrange the room in such a way that the students can effectively hear and see the teacher(s) and have classroom discussion. Also, post the Scripture Memory, Application Points and other visual aids that will focus the minds of the children on God’s truths.

Don’t worry about decorating according to the theme—but you are welcome to be as creative as possible. Simply make the room a place which helps the children learn.

Overview of Daily Lessons

**Bread of
Life**

Day One

Theme: Jesus is the **Bread of Life**
Bible Text: John 6:1-14; 25-51

Scripture Memory: John 6:35

**Lord over
Nature**

Day Two

Theme: Jesus is the **Lord over Nature**
Bible Text: Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 14:22-33; John 6:15-21

Scripture Memory: John 16:33

**Light of
the World**

Day Three

Theme: Jesus is the **Light of the World**
Bible Text: John 9:1-41

Scripture Memory: John 8:12

**Victor over
Sin and Satan**

Day Four

Theme: Jesus is the **Victor over Sin and Satan**
Bible Text: Mark 2:1-12; Mark 5:1-20

Scripture Memory: I John 2:2

**Resurrection
and the Life**

Day Five

Theme: Jesus is the **Resurrection and the Life**
Bible Text: John 11:1-44

Scripture Memory: Review all memory verses

Scripture Memory

: All Scripture Memory passages are taken from the New International Version (NIV)

Day One: John 6:35

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry..."

Day Two: John 16:33

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Day Three: John 8:12

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Day Four: I John 2:2

(Jesus) is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Day Five: Review all Memory Work

Daily Schedule

9:00 - 9:15	Opening Program
9:15 - 9:45	Welcome/Icebreaker Bible Lesson
9:45 - 10:05	Recreation
10:05 - 10:25	Snack Time
10:25 - 10:45	Music
10:45 - 11:05	Bible Application
11:05 - 11:25	Crafts
11:25 - 11:45 **	Bible Memory
11:45 - Noon	Closing Program

****Day Five Only: 11:30 - Noon
Closing Celebration**

Jesus is the Bread of Life

DAY ONE

Bible Text

John 6:1-14; 25-51

Memory Verse

John 6:35

Scripture Truth

Jesus is the bread of life that satisfies all of our spiritual needs.

Lesson Aims

For the students to understand that (1) Jesus feeds our spiritual hunger, (2) we will starve without Him, and (3) we can either live by faith or act from our own calculations.

Opening Program

The opening program includes a skit to introduce the day's theme, a time of singing, and announcements. After the opening program, go with your students back to your classroom.

Welcome

Introduce yourself, your co-teacher(s), and your classroom helpers. Greet the boys and girls warmly, working diligently to memorize their names. Make sure each student has a name tag.

Icebreaker

[Note: Each day's icebreaker is intended to prepare the students to learn God's Word and to encourage interaction between students and teachers.]

Have the students sit down and get their attention.

Have the students tell **one of their favorite foods** to the class. Begin by telling them your favorite food.

You may want to have pictures of various foods on hand to stimulate their memories and discussion.

Transition: *God has given us so many tasty things to eat, hasn't He? He has also given us food so that we may grow and thrive.*

Without adequate food to eat, a person cannot live for long. Today's Bible Lesson will be on this very subject. Pay close attention to what kind of food is most important for all of us.

Bible Lesson

[Note: The "Bible Lesson" time is intended to: 1) Allow the students to read and hear God's Word and gain understanding of what it says; 2) Raise questions in their minds that will be discussed during the "Bible Application" time.]

Materials: Young children need this storytelling time to be dramatic as well as visual. Feel free to bring in pictures, drawings, flannelgraphs, puppets, etc., as visual aids. **Today's lesson should be taught using visual items that depict the miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand.**

[All stories included in the Bible Lesson are from the New International Version.]

Introduction: *This week, we will be studying some of the miracles that our Lord Jesus Christ did while He was here on earth. Does anyone know what a MIRACLE is? A miracle is a mighty act of God that is done in our world, visible to our senses, to confirm His Word. Miracles done by Jesus not only helped people in dramatic fashion, but they taught them more about who He was. So, our lessons this week will help teach us more about Jesus Christ and how we should respond to Him.*

In today's lesson, Jesus has just finished healing some sick people and teaching about His purposes for coming to earth...

Read John 6:1-7.

¹ Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), ² and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. ³ Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. ⁴ The Jewish Passover Feast was near. ⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

Ask these questions to promote listening and comprehension. You may have to help them answer some of these questions. [Get short answers; save further elaboration for Application Time]: *Why were large crowds following Jesus?* [They were amazed by the great miracles He did, especially healing the sick.] *Why did Jesus ask Philip about feeding the great crowds?* [To test him, to see what he would do.]

Let's continue. Read verses 8-10.

⁸ Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, ⁹ "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them.

Say: *Wow! How do you think 5,000 men, not to mention women and children, are going to share five loaves of bread and two small fish? Let's see.*

Read verses 11-14.

¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks,

and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. ¹² When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." ¹³ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Discussion: *How did Jesus feed all those people with so little? [He performed a miracle.] They even had more than enough, didn't they? Leftovers to boot! What did the people think about Jesus now? [They thought He was a prophet from heaven.]*

Now let's read what Jesus has to say about this amazing miracle.

Read verses 25-29.

²⁵ When the crowds found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "When did you get here?" ²⁶ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." ²⁸ Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" ²⁹ Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

Discussion: *Why did the crowds come looking for Jesus? [Because they had their fill of food.] What did Jesus tell them to do? [Work for food that is eternal, not just for food that spoils.] What is the work that God requires? [To believe in Jesus!]*

Keep listening closely to what Jesus is teaching about Himself with this miracle.

Read verses 30-35 (emphasize verse 35).

³⁰ So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?" ³¹ Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³² Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴ "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread." ³⁵ Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

Say: *Did you hear that? Jesus said that He is the bread of life—which is much better than the bread that came from heaven back in Moses' day and much, much better than the bread we eat every day.*

Finally, read verses 41-44, 48-51.

⁴¹ At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." ⁴² They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven?'" ⁴³ "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. ⁴⁴ "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. ⁵⁰ But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Say: *Did you hear that? Jesus again said that He is the bread that comes from heaven. He is the one that gives us life. His miracle of feeding all of those people with just a boy's lunch was intended to teach them something about Jesus.*

We will apply this "Bread of Life" miracle to our own lives during our Bible Application time.

Close this time with prayer, thanking God for His Word.

Recreation

Go with your children to the Recreation Area. The Recreation Team will be responsible for your students during this time. **Use this time as your break.**

Snack

Snacks will be delivered to your classroom. Lead the class in a prayer of thanks for the food and drink. Make sure the students respect each other while eating and clean up after themselves. **This is also a good time for all of the children to take a restroom break.**

Music

Escort your children to the Music Area. The Music Team will lead the class in a time of singing and learning the various VBS songs. Use this time to prepare for Bible Application Time.

Bible Application

[Note: For pre-schoolers, the Bible Application time is intended to reinforce the truths that were presented during the Bible Lesson time. The “Application Points” are included here simply for the teacher’s understanding, since they may be too difficult for this group to comprehend. One or two word concepts will be the focus of each segment.]

Application Point 1:

Our true problem is spiritual hunger

Materials: Various pictures of food items

Have students raise their hands in response to these questions. *Who here has ever been hungry? Who has ever gone without eating for a whole day? Who has gone without eating for a whole week? Even though you and I know what it means to be hungry, we have no idea what it means to go hungry for days upon days upon days.*

Have a helper hold up pictures (one at a time) of a variety of different foods, while you talk to the children. *Who enjoys this food? Does it make you hungry? Would eating this satisfy your hunger? Ask other*

questions, as desired.

Show pictures from the lesson. *The crowd that was following Jesus was very hungry and needed to eat. But, they were suffering from much more than just physical hunger—they were spiritually hungry as well. Do you know what it mean to be “spiritually hungry?” It means that they were in need of Jesus in their life.*

In our story, the people could not feed themselves—they had nothing to eat, and there was no McDonald’s in the area either. This problem is also the same for our spiritual hunger—we cannot take care of our own spiritual needs. Why? Because we are dead in our sins and trespasses. Can a dead person feed himself? [No!]

Now, how do you know when you are physically hungry and need to eat some food? [Stomach rumbles, feel weak, etc.] So, how do you think you would know when you are spiritually hungry and in need of the Lord? Will your stomach rumble? Will you feel weak? [No.] We have to learn about how much we need Jesus. And we learn that lesson from God’s Word and His Spirit.

Application Point 2:

Jesus satisfies our spiritual hunger

Materials: Loaf of bread

Show the visual aids: *In our Bible Lesson, Jesus asked Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” But, He already knew the answer, didn’t He? Jesus knew that He was going to provide food for the crowd by His own miraculous power. By doing so, Jesus taught the people a big lesson about Himself: **That only He can satisfy our spiritual hunger.***

Show the class the loaf of bread. *Jesus called himself “The Bread of Life.” Isn’t that an interesting name for Jesus! Just as this loaf of bread would feed you and make you full of life, Jesus feeds us and gives us life as well.*

So, how can people think that there are other ways to enjoy life without Jesus? Remember, even people in our story thought that it was Moses that brought manna from heaven—when it was really God! Yes, we often look to many other things to give us an enjoyable life.

Boys and girls, we are wrong if we think that true life can be had without Jesus. He is the only one who can satisfy all our spiritual needs.

Application Point 3:

Who are you going to trust?

Show pictures again. *Remember what Philip said when Jesus asked him how they were going to feed all of the people? He said, “Eight months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!” Philip did what we are all tempted to do: **we try to figure things out for ourselves without trusting God.***

*Boys and girls, it is easy to look at our problems and think that they are impossible, just like Philip thought. One day you will find yourselves in a situation that seems to hard for you or anyone else, even your parents. What will you do? **You may want to give your own testimony of faith here that would help the children understand how they need to trust the Lord in situations that seem impossible.***

Every time you are in a situation that is too difficult for you, you have a choice—Am I

going to trust myself to figure this out or put my trust in God to see me through? Who are you going to trust?

*And, as you get older, God will bring more and more difficult problems in to your life to teach you to rely on Him. **Remember, you will only find true “life” in Jesus!***

Close in prayer, thanking God for giving us Jesus, the Bread of Life.

Note: If you need to fill some time before Crafts, have some coloring sheets available.

Crafts

Have your helpers escort your students to the Crafts Area. The VBS crafts team will lead your students in a crafts project. Use this time for a break or to prepare for Bible Memory time.

Bible Memory

Begin by reminding the students the importance of memorizing God’s Word:

- (1) We “hide it in our hearts” so we will turn away from sin and obey God.**
- (2) It changes the way we think—focusing on pleasing God instead of pleasing self.**
- (3) It helps us to know Jesus more and love Jesus more.**

If desired, relate to the students how Scripture memory has impacted your life.

Today's Scripture Memory is found in

John 6:35

“Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry...”

Write the Scripture memory passage on the board or on poster board.

Today's memory verse reminds us that Jesus is the giver of life to this dead world of ours. Whoever comes to Jesus will never be spiritually hungry or thirsty anymore.

Activity: Memory Rhythm. Help the children make up a “rhythm” or chant to make memorizing easier. Make it fun!

Example:

Then Jesus declared
(Yes, He declared)
I am (clap, clap)
The bread of life
(The bread of life).
He who comes to me
(Only me)
Will never (no never)
Go hungry (clap, clap)
Go hungry (clap, clap)

Have different groups echo each other. Review the Scripture a number of times to reinforce it.

Hand out Scripture memory reminder cards and encourage the students ask their parents to help them memorize each day.

Closing Program

Go with your students to the area designated for the Closing Program. Remind them to be respectful of others on their way to and during the Closing Program. Afterwards, escort the students to their pick-up location.

END DAY ONE