MEN'S STUDY · THURSDAYS, OCT 29 – DEC 3

Let Thanksgiving Rise

Five times Jesus gave thanks before the answer came

THE SERIES

Five weeks of thanks for the Thanksgiving season: four Thursdays leading up to Thanksgiving Day, and a fifth the week after.

Week 1	Oct 29	**He Gave Thanks over Five Small Loaves** John 6:1–14 · thanks in the not-enough ♪ *Song: Country*
Week 2	Nov 5	**He Gave Thanks Through His Tears** John 11:1–44 · thanks at the grave ♪ *Song: Reggae*
Week 3	Nov 12	**He Received Thanks from the One** Luke 17:11–19 · the leper who came back ♪ *Song: Folk*
Week 4	Nov 19	**He Gave Thanks When the Cities Rejected Him** Matthew 11:20–26 · thanks in rejection ♪ *Song: Gospel*
		No study Nov 26 · Happy Thanksgiving
Week 5	Dec 3	**He Gave Thanks with the Traitor at the Table** Luke 22:14–23 · thanks with betrayal at His side ♪ *Song: Rock*

Each week follows the same pattern: a key verse, the passage from *The One*, a short devotional, questions to talk through together, and a closing prayer.

THE SONG

We'll sing **"Let Thanksgiving Rise"** every week, in a different style each time: Country, Reggae, Folk, Gospel, and Rock. Same words, a new sound. Each verse is one of these moments, in the same order as the studies: the five loaves, Lazarus, the ten lepers, and the Last Supper. The chorus is our answer: our own thanks.

> *I'll always give thanks for who You are and what You've done*
> *Incense rising through the night*
> *Let thanksgiving rise*
> *Let thanksgiving rise*
> *Let thanksgiving rise*
> *Before the dawn*

LINES YOU MIGHT MISS

"Incense rising through the night": Scripture pictures prayer as incense (Psalm 141:2; Revelation 5:8).

"Before the dawn": thanks given in the dark, before you can see the answer. That's the thread through all five weeks.

Bread at both ends: the song begins and ends with Jesus holding bread and giving thanks: on a hillside with five loaves, then at the Last Supper. The Bible uses the same word for His thanks both times, *eucharisteō*, which is where the word Eucharist comes from.

He Gave Thanks over Five Small Loaves

You may not know this about Jesus: He gave thanks before the miracle

KEY VERSE

> *"Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted." — John 6:11*

PASSAGE · MARK 6:35–44 · FROM *THE ONE*

(Mk) **35**When it was late in the day, (M14:15) as evening approached, (Mk) His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is deserted, and it's late in the day. **36**Send the crowd away, so they can go into the surrounding villages (L9:12) and farms to find lodging and (Mk) buy food for themselves. For they have nothing to eat, and we're in a deserted place here."

(Mk) **37**But He answered them, (M14:16) "They don't need to leave. (Mk) You give them something to eat." (J6:6) He said this to test them, for He knew what He would do. (Mk) So they asked Him, "Do You want us to spend two hundred day's wages to buy bread (J6:7) so everyone can have a little to eat?"

38"How many loaves do you have?" He asked. "Go see." After they found out, one of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, told Him, (J6:8) "There's a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, (Mk) but what are these among so many?"

(M14:17) "Bring them here to Me," **39**Jesus said. (Mk) "Make the people sit down on the grass in groups." (J6:10) Now there was plenty of green grass there so the men, about five thousand, (Mk) sat in groups by fifties and hundreds.

41Then He took the five loaves and two fish and looking up to heaven, He blessed the loaves, broke them, and distributed them to His disciples to set before the people, along with the two fish. **42**Everyone ate and was filled.

(J6:12) And when they were satisfied, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the left-over broken pieces so nothing is lost." (Mk) **43**So they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces from (J6:13) the five barley loaves (Mk) and all the left over fish. **44**Those who ate the loaves were five thousand men, (M14:21) in addition to women and children. (J6:14-15) When the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they said, "This is definitely the expected Prophet, who is to come into the world."

DEVOTIONAL

Fifteen thousand hungry faces.
Five loaves.
Two fish.
One command to feed the crowd.
Philip counts the cost.
Andrew names the lack.
They say what they don't have,
yet fail to ask for Jesus' help.

It never occurs that He might feed
as the Father fed in the wilderness..
They had seen Jesus
Turn water into wine,
heal the sick and lame,
calm a storm,
even raise the dead-
but feeding thousands He could not do.

So they stared in silence at the impossible.
Then another command: "Have them sit."
While they couldn't feed the throng, they could oversee the crowd.

The impossible exposed their doubt;
The practical exposed their desire.

And Jesus-already knowing-
Took the loaves,
Lifted them high.
And then gave thanks.
Not after the miracle
but before.

Jesus knew all along what He would do.
And so He offered thanks
not just to honor the Father,
but to show the disciples-
and us-
how to give thanks in the waiting,
in the wilderness,
in the not-enough.

Reflection Question
When I face not-enough,
do I stall between command and trust-
or give thanks like Jesus did?

What It Means to Me

In the waiting:
I recall God's past provision
and rest in His unchanging character.

In the wilderness:
I shift my focus from what I lack
to Who is with me now,
trusting Him for daily bread.

In the not-enough:
I name the insufficiency honestly,
then give thanks before the miracle,
declaring trust in His faithfulness.

Thanksgiving isn't the result of abundance;
it's an expression of faith.
It ties me into God's unbroken story of provision-
yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Jesus told the disciples, “You give them something to eat.” Then we read, “He said this to test them, for He knew what He would do.” Why would Jesus give them a task He already knew they couldn’t do? When has God tested you with a "not-enough"?
2. The disciples did the math: even “two hundred day’s wages” of bread would give everyone only “a little to eat.” Andrew found the boy’s lunch but asked, “what are these among so many?” When you face a shortfall, do you count the cost, or bring what little you have?
3. These men had seen Jesus turn water into wine, heal the sick, and calm a storm. Why is it so easy to forget past provision when a new need shows up?
4. Jesus looked up to heaven and blessed the loaves before a single one multiplied. What does thanking God before the answer say about what we believe about Him?
5. A boy gave everything he had, and it was small. What "five loaves" could you put in Jesus' hands right now?
6. Jesus said, “Gather up the left-over broken pieces so nothing is lost,” and they filled twelve baskets. What do the leftovers tell us about how God provides?
7. Are you in the waiting, the wilderness, or the not-enough right now? What would giving thanks before the miracle look like for you this week?

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your faithfulness in the past.
Thank You for manna in the wilderness,
for loaves multiplied on the hillside,
for every provision I've already seen.

And thank You for what is yet to come.
Teach me to give thanks
in the waiting,
in the wilderness,
in the not-enough.

You are the same yesterday,
today,
and forever.

I trust You.
I thank You.
In Jesus' name-Amen.