

starter

loaves and fishes

AIMS

To show the value Jesus placed on children and to reflect on their importance to the Church today;

INTRODUCTION

This is a sketch that can be used as a starter in the context of worship or another activity, group or session. You may use this information to introduce the sketch.

Terry Pratchett is the author of the excellent Discworld stories. We would love to be able to tell you that he wrote this presentation. However, we have borrowed one of his favourite ideas.... The trouser legs of time!

Terry uses the trouser legs of time to show that the way we treat people, the choices that we make have a huge impact on what happens to us, to other people, and even to the world. Choose this and one thing happens, choose that and we slide down a different trouser leg of time with an entirely different outcome.

We are going to take a look at how the way a young man was treated by adults affected 5,000 people. Two trouser legs, two very different outcomes!

YOU WILL NEED

Cast: Narrator, Jesus, Philip, Andrew, Child. Other voices may be needed for the ending.

Set: No set needed. Only props needed are 2 sets of sandwiches for the child.

THE SKETCH

Narrator	The feeding of the 5,000 Trouser leg 1
Jesus	Philip, there are some 5,000 people here and it is getting late. We should feed them...
Philip	Yes Master... Er Master.... You know there are about 5,000 people here don't you?
Jesus	Yes Philip
Philip	OK... and how many are hungry? Alright hands up you lot – who's feeling peckish? Andrew give me a hand here will you? You count that lot and I'll do this lot.... 1, 2, 3
Andrew	Oi – you – only one hand up please – not both! How do you expect us to get the catering right if you mess us about?
Philip	<i>(Whispered consultation and much pointing at fingers as if adding up)</i> Well in round numbers I make that about er 5,000 of them hungry.
Andrew	5,000... never mind whether they mess about... how are we going to get the catering right - period?

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- Philip Err Jesus... there's 5,000 of them wanting food... and err petty cash is a bit short just now... How much do we have Andrew?
- Andrew *Starts to count pennies*
- Child *(to Andrew) Excuse me.. (he is ignored)... Excuse me*
- Andrew Not now kid.... I'm busy
- Child But I've got..
- Andrew Yeah yeah... a big hole in your tummy.... So have we all, now let me count
- Child *(To Philip) Excuse me...*
- Philip *(Too busy to listen) What? Can't you see? We're busy – Jesus expects us to feed all these people... now go away!*
- Child But I've got..
- Philip Measles? Mumps? A new bike? I don't care! Let me think!
- Child *(Looks hurt, turns away – goes to edge of stage and eats a sandwich)*
- Jesus Philip... how are we doing
- Philip Got a bit of a problem Master...How many Big Macs can we buy with £3.36?
- Jesus *(With sadness in his voice) Ohh Philip!*
Pause for a few seconds...
- Narrator The feeding of the 5,000 Trouser Leg 2
- Jesus Philip, there are some 5,000 people here and it is getting late. We should feed them...
- Philip Yes Master... Er Master.... You know there are about 5,000 people here don't you?
- Jesus Yes Philip
- Philip OK... and how many are hungry? Alright hands up you lot – who's feeling peckish? Andrew give me a hand here will you? You count that lot and I'll do this lot.... 1, 2, 3
- Andrew Oi – you – only one hand up please – not both! How do you expect us to get the catering right if you mess us about?
- Philip *(Whispered consultation and much pointing at fingers as if adding up) Well in round numbers I make that about er 5,000 of them hungry.*

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Andrew	5,000... never mind whether they mess about... how are we going to get the catering right period?
Philip	Err Jesus... there's 5,000 of them wanting food... and err petty cash is a bit short just now... How much have we got Andrew?
Andrew	<i>Starts to count pennies</i>
Child	<i>(to Andrew) Excuse me.. (he is ignored)... Excuse me</i>
Andrew	What? Can't you see we're
Jesus	Let the little children come to me for the kingdom of God belongs to those like them
Andrew	Yes lad, what can I do for you?
Child	Well – it's not much, but I've got my packed lunch my mum gave me...
Philip	Really – if it's a really big packed lunch – it could help a bit!
Child	5 rolls and 3 fishes... Here <i>(gives it to Philip)</i>
Philip	5 rolls and 3 fishes – we've got 5,000 to feed here... why don't you just eat it yourself
Child	Please – give it to the teacher...
Jesus	If you have faith the size of a grain of mustard seed you can say to this mountain 'Move" and it will...
Philip	Ohh – OK – every little helps... Jesus, there's a lad here willing to share his packed lunch.... Its not much, but...
Child	Here you are <i>(gives Jesus the bag)</i>
Jesus	<i>Thanks the child, Blesses the food, breaks the rolls and starts to hand out food</i>
Narrator	Afterwards they gathered the scraps and found that there were sufficient to fill 12 baskets.

FOR DISCUSSION

After the sketch you can up the discussion for comments. You might want to consider the following questions or points:

1. How did the child make a difference to the story?
2. Can you think of any other examples from the Bible where children make a difference?
3. How do children make a difference to the church?

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4. Jesus said: "Whoever receives one such child in my name, receives me" and Jesus "Unless you become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven". How can we respond more faithfully to what Jesus taught about children and the kingdom of God?

Prayer

End the session with prayer. Here is one you might like to use:

Generous God,
who from scraps and leftovers makes the stuff of life;
make us all life-givers
in our affirming of each other,
young and old, black and white, male and female,
and bring us together to share your everlasting picnic.
Amen

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

THE NEXT STEP

If you want more starters please revisit the menu. If you want to go onto a main course there are some all-age suggestions on the menu. For Desert try Kennings and Cookies, which was written by a teenager.

Acknowledgements

The original sketch is by Colin Kemp, who holds the copyright. Please contact the Vision4life website if you require more information about using this sketch beyond local churches.