



elev8

life on another level

Student Workbook

YEAR 1

Life and Action

Diet

Bible Readings

Genesis 1

Daniel 1

Acts 10

1 Corinthians 10:14-33



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this week you will be able to:

- Locate the theme of food in the Bible.
- Express the theme or story in your own way.
- Apply your learning from the story to your own family and community.

Notes from Bible Reading

Scripture A word or phrase that stood out to me:

Observation What is happening in this Bible reading?

Application Something that I learned about who I am or how I should live:

Prayer What I would like to say to God, ask of God, or what I think God is saying to me:

Key Question What does the Bible say about food?

Engage

Go around the group and share one thing for each heading that has happened since you last met:

- Plus – What has been good or enjoyable?
- Minus – What has been difficult or painful?
- Interesting – What has been unusual or thought provoking?

Tell the group what your favourite food is.

Explore – Locate

- *What stood out to you in the Bible readings this week?*
- *What did you find meaningful or significant?*
- *Is there anything that you didn't understand or found confusing?*
- *Any questions or comments you may have?*

Read together: Matthew 4:1-4, 11:16-19 & 14:13-21

Food is an integral part of Christian spirituality.

In a world where the low cost and easy availability of food has made obesity an epidemic here, yet the expense and scarcity of food leaves ten million people a year to die of starvation and malnutrition, we desperately need a theology and ethics of eating.

Unsurprisingly, the Bible has plenty to say about food and eating!

From the sacrificial offerings of the Old Testament to the communion meal that binds all Christians together, it is clear that food is more than just fuel for the body; it is also sustenance for the soul.

Biblical Perspective

A quick scan of the New Testament shows us that Jesus:

- Enjoyed food – in fact some called Him a glutton and a drunkard. (Matthew 11: 18-19)
- Celebrated with food – His first miracle was turning water into wine at wedding celebration. (John 2: 1-11)

- Sometimes abstained from eating food – on occasion He fasted to enrich His prayer life. (Matthew 4: 1-4)
- Provided food for hungry people – and He didn't skimp, but gave in abundance! (Matthew 14: 13-21)
- Saw food as symbolic of deeper spiritual realities – images of bread, wine, grain, fat calves, fish etc abound in the parables and teachings of Jesus. The centrepiece of the Christian faith, the death and resurrection of Christ, is remembered by bread and wine. (Matthew 26: 26-29)
- Taught us to share our food – if we have enough then there is no excuse for letting someone else go hungry. (Matthew 25: 34-35)
- Ate food with all kinds of people – Jesus ate with rich, poor, sinners, saints, and in doing so demonstrated the hospitality of God. (Matthew 9: 10-13, Matthew 22: 2-11)
- Ate food after the resurrection – a meal of fish on the beach indicates that we will continue to enjoy food in our resurrected bodies. (Luke 24: 40-43)

Explore – Express

Share a meal together as part of your Peer Group. Appoint someone to coordinate the food, and then enjoy your normal discussion over a meal. There's no need to be too lavish, but put some thought into making the meal and the setting attractive.

Here are some suggestions of ways you can recognise the spiritual significance of what you are eating – you may know of others:

- Pray silently as you prepare the meal for those who are going to eat it, and consciously adopt an attitude of love towards them.
- Set the table attractively – perhaps with a theme that will enhance the experience of the meal, or stimulate community.
- Light a candle at the beginning of the meal to symbolise the presence of Christ at your table.
- Use the meal time to note any special occasions or seasons. Have candles or other symbols placed on the table setting.
- Create a special place for guests and make sure they are served first.
- Say a prayer of thanks for your meal before you commence eating (say grace) either together or silently as individuals.
- Perhaps hold hands while you give thanks for your food.
- Pause before you eat to be mindful of the food – the look, colour, texture, taste and smell.
- Make the whole meal a communion meal by introducing it and beginning with breaking bread, sharing it around, passing drinks around and praying.
- Each person pour the drinks of the person next to them.
- Use food to symbolise some important occasion or idea. Each person may take a portion of the symbolic food (bread, cake, special morsel) and share something related to it.
- Pause for a moment between courses and read a selection of scripture.
- Each person share a significant moment from their day.
- Clean up afterwards with mindfulness and gratitude. Say a prayer of thanksgiving as you do.

Discuss the following:

How does Jesus' attitude to food influence our own approach to food?

Could our culture learn anything from Jesus' approach to food?

From your experience today and in the light of Scripture, what advice would you include in a "Guide to the Spirituality of Food"?

In the light of your experience today, is there anything that has been affirmed in your attitude to food, or is there something you would like to change?

Explore – Integrate

Summarise and share your insights and thoughts from the conversation.

Extend

Discuss with your group the challenges you are tackling. Use the time to ask for any help you might need, or to work together on any shared projects that you have.

Questions that may be helpful include:

- What challenges are you working on at the moment?
- Do you need any support or assistance?
- Are there any challenges that you have completed that we need to recognise and celebrate?
- Are there any new challenges that you want to work on?

Encourage

Tell another student in your group something you value or appreciate about them.

Give thanks for God's provision in your life.

Pray for the hungry in this world.

Ask God to provide for any specific material need that you have.