

Lesson 7.23 Feeding the Five Thousand: Problem Solving

Topic: Conflict Management  
Subtopic: Problem Solving  
3D. God Leads Us  
4C. The Problem Solving Process  
Class: Standard IV (Grade 4)

Materials Needed:  
Blackboard and Chalk  
Exercise book

References: Matthew 14:14-21

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will know the steps of the problem solving process and be able to use them.

Memory Verse: Philippians 4:19

**Attitude:** Students will seek God's wisdom in making choices about how to solve a problem.

### Teacher Activities

**Introduction:** *Optional Worship.*

What are some decisions that students have to make? How do you decide difficult decisions?

**Bible Story:** Scripture reading.

Write on the board the ABCs of Problem Solving and then discuss the problem Jesus and the disciples were facing using the ABCs.

*A- Ask, What is the problem?*

*B- Brainstorm ideas*

*C- Choose what to do*

*D- Do the Plan*

*E- Examine the results*

**Application:** Share a story about Rolland and Heidi Baker and God's miraculous provision. Guide the students in practicing the five steps by discussing a community problem. situation.

**Evaluation:** Do you use a process similar to this when you have to make decisions? Do you ask God to guide you in decisions?

### Student Activities

**Introduction:** Students share examples of decisions and discuss how they make decisions.

**Bible Story:** Reader reads Matthew 14:14-21

**Application:** Students discuss a problem situation and work through the five problem solving steps with the teacher's help.

**Evaluation:** Were students able to apply the problem solving process to real life problem?

**Extension Activities:** *Memory Verse.* Write the verse on the board. Erase one or two words at a time and have students repeat it until they are repeating it without looking. *More Problem Solving.* Have students chose another problem and solve it in small groups.

## Notes for Teacher

The Bible Story today tells about the problem the disciples had: how to feed five thousand people. The solution they came up with was one they would not have thought of without Jesus' intervention. The lesson today reviews the ABC problem solving process that was introduced in an earlier lesson. It also points out the importance of seeking God's help when problem solving. If you want to actually *do* a community

Key Points: A problem solving process can help us find a good solution to our conflicts. God may have a better plan than we do—prayer and scripture may reveal God's plan.

Introduction: Ask students some questions to get them thinking about decision making.

- What are some decisions that students have to make?
- How do you decide difficult decisions?

Bible Story: Have a Reader read the scripture passage from Matthew 14:14-21. Ask some questions for discussion. As the Reader reads, have another student write the ABCs on the board.

- **Why had the crowd stayed so long?** Jesus had compassion for the crowd; He was healing the sick.
- Point to A on the board and have someone read *Ask, 'What is the problem?'* **What did the disciples think the problem was?** As twilight fell, Jesus disciples brought the concern to Jesus that there was no food for a crowd this size.
- Point to B- *Brainstorm solutions.* **The disciples had evidently been discussing this and had brainstormed some solutions. What were they?** (They suggested sending the crowd home; They had also tried to collect food from the crowd but all they found were five loaves and two fish.)
- **Jesus had another idea. What was that?** (The disciples should feed the people. Jesus prayed and gave thanks for the food. )
- **What happened?** (As the disciples distributed the food, they were able to feed the crowd and collected twelve full baskets of broken pieces afterwards.)
- **What did Jesus do afterwards?** (Jesus immediately made his disciples get into the boat and cross to the other side while he went up on the mountain to pray---the third time in this chapter we note Jesus prays.)
- **Jesus was a man of prayer. He knew that God was His source and so He trusted God to supply when there was not any food. God often has solutions we would not think of. After we brainstorm all the solutions we can think of it is a good idea to pray and ask God what to do.**

Application: Sometimes when we have thought of all the solutions we can, God still has a better solution. We need to pray as we consider problem situations and seek God's guidance.

*Share a True Story.* Rolland and Heidi Baker are missionaries to Mozambique. They have several orphanages where they care for abandoned children. One time a flood came and one of the orphanages got flooded. The children fled into the streets. Many of them came to the Baker's home and the Bakers let them come in but they did not have any food for them. A neighbor knocked on their door. She had made soup (chili) for the Baker family. There was enough for the

four people in their family but not for all the children staying in their home. They didn't know what to do so they just started dishing up the chili. The soup lasted until everyone had enough. Source: *Always Enough: God's Miraculous Provision among the Poorest Children on Earth* by Rolland and Heidi Baker (Chosen, 2003)

**Use the story below to practice the five problem solving steps.**

*There was a school with students from three different cultural groups. (Choose groups that would be appropriate to your students. In Kenya you might use three tribal groups. In the U.S. you might use Hispanic, African American and Caucasian.) The students were very belligerent toward each other and often got into fights and arguments, dividing into the different groups. One day the teacher said to the class, I want some ideas to help us all get along together and make this class a friendly place for everyone. Can you help me?*

- Start with A- Ask, “What is the problem? Who does the teacher need to talk to find out more about what the problem is? (Students from each of the groups, possibly some parents and community people, other teachers) Since we only have the information I have given you, let's decide on a problem definition. Have several students suggest possible problem definitions. Then, as a class, agree together on a problem definition.
- B- Brainstorm – Require the students to think of 6-10 possible solutions. Do not let anyone comment on the suggestions and do not criticize any ideas no matter how wild they may seem.
- C- Choose what to do – Ask what things you need to consider as you make your decision. Cost? Available resources? Time? Acceptance by others? What is practical? Make a decision as a class about the best solution. Remind students that in real life situations this is when you would stop and pray about the best solution.
- D-Do the plan and E-Examine the results – Ask the class how they would go about implementing the plan and when they would evaluate it if they actually decided to do it.

*Optional Small Groups.* Have the groups choose a problem or decision. They may choose a community problem or a decision someone in the group needs to make. Then work through the five problem solving steps, writing down what their ideas for each step as they go along.