



Feasting on God 1 1



You will need:

- Biro, and pencils
- Sheets of plain paper and card in various colours
- Icebreaker:**
- A range of quality dried fruits (or box of chocolates)
- Cocktail sticks
- A tray
- Cling film
- In advance, place bite-sized, stone-free chunks of fruit onto the cocktail sticks.
- Cover with cling film until needed.
- (Or use a large box of chocolates with a selection of milk, white and dark chocolates with different fillings.)
- Word Search:**
- 5 Paper plates – plain, cheap ones that can be written on
- Permanent markers or pens that will write on the surface of the plate
- One Word-Search sheet per person
- Write one of the Word Search Bible references on the back of each of the paper plates. If you have a large group, make two or more sets of plates so that your small groups are not too big.
- Creative Meditation:**
- One copy of Psalm 103 in a modern translation for each person in the group
- Sheets of plain paper and card in various colours
- Glue sticks and double-sided sticky tape
- Collage scraps of all kinds – fabric, lace, paper scraps, stickers, wool, string, wooden shapes, pipe cleaners, beads, etc – use whatever you have available and will appeal to your group
- Scissors
- Crayons and felt pens
- Play Dough or modelling clay (see Internet for play dough recipes or purchase Crayola Model Magic if possible)
- Tables
- Arrange all the items neatly – in trays and boxes so they can easily be kept tidy. Place the items on tables so that everyone can access them easily without overcrowding.
- Refreshment break:**
- Cups and drinks
- Family Prayer Time:**
- One plain index card or postcard-sized piece of card per person
- Jesus and Me (JAM) Session:**
- One set of journal pages for each person.
- Perhaps you can copy them and make them look like an attractive menu by having a card folder around the menu, or rolling the pages up and tying them with a smart ribbon. Be creative so that the activity looks interesting and inviting.
- Take-away Menu (optional):**
- Small individual packets of raisins.

By the end of the session, the group members will:

- Know that our spiritual life is nurtured and nourished by feasting on God.
- Feel a hunger for spending time with God in more satisfying ways.
- Respond by 'tasting' God slowly and carefully through different kinds of meditation and deep reflection on his word, his creation and his gifts.



KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: Feasting on God



Before you start:

1. Prayerfully read through the whole lesson at least twice
2. Gather all the materials you need for each section (see pg. 1)
3. Work with another team member and plan who will manage each section of the session.

Leadership Personal Preparation:

Think about an occasion when you took the time to feast on God through meditation and focusing on him, his Word, his creation, etc. How did the experience change your life? How did it deepen your understanding of God, and your relationship with him? If you have never tried feasting on God, try it this week, before the session. If the Holy Spirit invites you to do so, be ready to tell your story during the welcome or the conclusion. Otherwise use the inspiration of the story to fill you with enthusiasm for today's material.

Please note: there is a different programme sequence this week.

Welcome and Prayer – 5 mins

Invite feedback about the promises kept, or not kept, after last week's session. Who managed to keep their promise? Who didn't and why was it difficult? Who kept their promises even though there were challenges to overcome?

Say:



Today we are going to have a feast – but it will be a different kind of feast! Today we are going to discover what it means to feast on God in fresh and delicious ways.

If you were spending time with your best friend, would you rather spend five minutes together quickly eating a packet of crisps, or an evening together eating a five-course meal in your favourite restaurant? How do you spend time with God? Do you snack on God in bite-sized chunks or have you discovered the wonder of feasting with him?

Often we're content to snack and sip on God. But this limits our experience of him and his power in our lives. Try feasting on him and enjoy the banquet!





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Ice Breaker - 7 mins

You will need:

1. The prepared dried fruits (or box of chocolates)
 - Bring out the trays of fruit or boxes of chocolates and invite each person to choose one. Then use the following script to help you talk the group through experiencing the treats with four of their senses.
 - 'Today we will learn how to feast on the fruit (or chocolate) slowly and experience it with several different senses. Take one of the treats that you really like, but don't put it in your mouth just yet!
 - First, look at your treat. Examine it carefully. Look at the different colours, shades and textures. Make sure that you know it so well that if you put it back on the tray and mixed it up with all the others you would be able to recognise which one was yours.' (Allow about 20-30 seconds for looking at the treat.)
 - 'Now smell the treat. How does it smell? What other things smell like this? What undertones of different fragrances can you detect? Fruity, spicy, herby, woody, etc. Inhale the smell deeply several times and focus on the aroma.' (Allow about 20-30 seconds for smelling the treat.)
 - 'Now you can put it in your mouth, but don't bite it. Just keep it in your mouth, on your tongue, and let it sit there, feeling the juices and flavours trickle slowly into your mouth.' (Allow 20-30 seconds for holding the food on the tongue.) 'Think about the flavours – sweet, salty, fruity, sharp, etc.
 - Then begin to suck the food slowly, focussing on the flavours and the texture. Suck it for another 20-30 seconds and then begin to swirl it in your mouth.
 - After a while begin to chew the food, very slowly. Try to chew it 30 times.
 - Once you have swallowed everything, think about the experience and what you have learned from eating in a different way.'

Feedback - discuss in pairs:

What was different about eating like this?
What did you like best about eating your treat so slowly?
What was difficult about eating slowly?

Feedback - discuss with the group:

What insights can you learn from this, about how to spend time feasting on God?

Word-Search 25/35 mins

You will need:

1. 5 Paper plates with the Word Search references written on the back.
 2. Permanent markers or pens that will write on the surface of the plate
 3. One Word-Search sheet per person
 4. Plain paper
 5. Pens and pencils
- Divide your entire group into five smaller groups.
 - Give each group a large plate with one of the scripture references from the Word Search study written on the back of it.
 - Ask each group to look up their verse, write it on the front of their plate and discuss what it means.
 - Bring the group back together.
 - Invite each group to present their plate to the rest of the groups, by reading out their verse and highlighting the main points of their discussion.
 - As a large group discuss the rest of the points on the Word Search. Then break up into groups of four to think about the last question.
 - Encourage the groups to gather as many ideas as they can for meditating on God. Ask them to write them down for you.
 - Collect them together and type up a handout for the group that you can give out next week.
 - Give a copy of the Word Search sheet to each person to take away.





KID for Teens: Leaders Guide: Feasting on God



Creative Meditation - 25 mins

You will need:

1. Psalm 103 per person
2. Sheets of plain paper and card in various colours
3. Glue sticks and double-sided sticky tape
4. Collage scraps
5. Scissors
6. Pens and pencils
7. Crayons and felt pens
8. Play Dough or modelling clay

- Provide several tables (depending on the size of your group) with an arrangement of quality craft materials, neatly presented. (The quality of materials and neatness of the arrangement helps to create a good environment for the meditative process – poor quality supplies and a messy table will be distracting.)
- Give a copy of a modern version of Psalm 103 to each person in the group.
- Ask an interesting speaker to read the Psalm out loud.
- Then ask some 'wondering questions':
- I wonder which verse or phrase in this Psalm you like the best...
- I wonder which verse in the Psalm is the most important one...
- I wonder which verse or phrase in the Psalm best describes where you are at the moment...
- I wonder which verse is the least helpful to you at the moment... Why do you think it has been included in the chapter?
- Encourage people to discuss their 'wondering' thoughts and ideas, stressing that there are no right or wrong answers.
- Then give everyone 10-15 minutes to create something in response to thinking about God in Psalm 103.
- Stress that whatever they make or do is just between them and God. They will not be asked to read anything aloud, or show what they have made. They can create something from the craft materials, write something down, move around, or just sit still to think, pray or read. It is up to them, and it will depend on their preferences, how they feel today and their learning styles, etc.
- After 15 minutes ask everyone to stop what they are doing and tidy everything up.
- Then move into family groups for the refreshment break and a family prayer time.

Refreshment Break - 5 mins

You will need:

1. Drinks and cups
- Serve drinks for everyone.

Family Prayer Time - 10 mins

You will need:

1. Plain index cards or postcard-sized cards – at least one per person
 2. Pens
- Give each person a plain index card or a postcard-sized piece of card and ask them to return to their family groups.
 - Ask each person to read Psalm 23.
 - Then ask them to choose one of the verses in the psalm and to personalise it to create a prayer for the person sitting on their right.
 - For example: 'Father God, you are Lucy's shepherd. Thank you for providing everything she needs. Amen.' Or 'Dear Father, please be close to Mum during the dark valley of her illness, and comfort her. Thank you. Amen.'
 - Then invite each person to give their written prayer card to the person on their right.

Jam Session (Jesus and Me) - 10 mins

You will need:

1. One set of Journal Pages per participant
- Ask each person to turn to their journal pages and meditate on Psalm 23 in a fresh way.
 - Allow 10 minutes for them to start this activity and during this time, play some reflective, peaceful Christian music. Perhaps you could find a contemporary arrangement of Psalm 23.
 - Encourage them to continue the Bible meditation experience during the week and to make sure they take the time to feast on the Psalm and to share their special experiences with the group next week.

Take-Away Menu (optional)

You will need:

1. Small individual packets of raisins
- Give each person a small packet of raisins to remind them to feast on God.
 - Suggest that they eat something slowly occasionally, to remind them how to meditate on God using their different senses and all of their attention.
 - The items they created during the creative meditation can also be taken away and kept in their Spiritual Memory Box.

Closing Prayer



KID for Teens: Handout: Feasting on God Word Search - Feasting on God



Christians have meditated in different ways on God's Word for centuries. Meditation is about feasting on God – savouring every mouthful of his Word, his creation, his wisdom and everything he has done and said.

The more time we spend thinking carefully about what he has said and made, the deeper our understanding of God will be. The more we understand about God, the more our lives can reflect his love and power, and the more like him we will become.

Discover what our minds need to feast on so that they will be filled up with God. When we are feasting on him we will have all the energy we need to follow him and to face life's adventures and challenges with strength, courage, wisdom and hope.

Read the following verses:

1. Joshua 1:8
2. Psalm 48:9
3. Psalm 119:27
4. Psalm 119:148
5. Psalm 143:5

Discuss as a large group:

1. After reading these verses, what have you discovered about taking time to think about God, or to feast on him?
2. We can also meditate on God's creativity in nature, his management of the world's history, and his power in our lives. Why do you think it is important to think about these things, as well as the words in the Bible?
3. Jeremiah wrote: 'When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty.' Jeremiah 15:16. How do you think Jeremiah 'ate' God's words?

Work in groups of 4 to list all the different kinds of ways you can feast on God's word and his creation. For example:

- Search the internet for creative ideas related to Bible verses
- Listen to the Bible on MP3
- Go to a beautiful place outdoors

Give these ideas to your leader who will collect them all together and make a handout for you to take away next week.



My thoughts about
my chosen verse
of Psalm 23

Practise feasting on a familiar Psalm.

PREPARING THE FEAST:

Look up Psalm 23 in your favourite version of the Bible, and write it out in full here:



Menu

Feast on Psalm 23 by trying each of the following 'courses'.

Grace

Thank God for what you are about to receive.
Ask the Holy Spirit to show you all the good things in the passage
that will feed you and help you to grow well.

Appetiser

Read the Psalm slowly and simply in your chosen version.
Read it aloud if you wish because this can sometimes
add a different understanding to what you are reading.

Salad

Read the Psalm again and see which of the verses grabs your attention.
This is like eating a mixed salad, where each verse is a different ingredient.
Choose the verse that is the most appealing to you and underline it on your written copy.

Main Course

Savour your chosen verse. Write it on the circular 'plate' on the next page.
Imagine it is like the treat that you learned to eat slowly.
Look at it, explore it, sense it, taste it, suck it, swirl it in your thoughts and chew on it.
See if you can savour just one verse for at least 10 minutes.

Around the plate, write or doodle any thoughts or ideas you have about this verse.

Take some play-dough or clay and mould and shape the clay as you think about the text.
Maybe the shapes you make will be abstract,
or maybe you will make a model of something specific as you reflect on the words.

Or create a 'popcorn' placemat, by writing down the odd words that pop into your mind.
Sprinkle them here and there, or group them in whatever way makes sense to you.

Drinks

Sit in God's presence – as if you are immersed in it.
Soak up the words of the whole psalm again, and listen to them
as if God himself is speaking them to you.
Write on your placemat any other ideas and thoughts that occur to you

Desserts

Write, draw or create something that illustrates the best thought or idea
that came to you during your feasting.



Thanking the Chef

Use the inspiration you have experienced during your feast to shape
a simple prayer of thanks to God.
Tell him how much you enjoyed the meal and what you enjoyed the most.

Take Away

In the day that follows your Psalm feast, notice the energising effect
that the banquet has on the way you relate to God, yourself and others.
What difference has the spiritual food made to you and your life?

Advance Reservations Recommended

Plan ahead and book another feast.
Ask God to show you what you should feast on next time –
a passage of scripture, a scene of nature, the work he is doing in your life, etc.