

Eating Together: An Act of Worship

Lesson overview:

Psalm 34:8 invites us to, “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” Jesus calls Himself the bread of life and He encourages His followers to be the salt of the earth. There are innumerable references to fruit, fish, and oil in the Bible. Sometimes food staples such as these are mentioned as part of the typical diet consumed. Other times they are specifically referenced as illustrations and challenges for the reader. If you’re looking for a multi-sensory approach to family devotions, head into the kitchen. Grab an apron, mixing bowls, measuring cups, ingredients, and the Bible. Begin in prayer, read a passage of Scripture, and discuss its meaning as you follow the recipe and prepare the food. I have included some devotional ideas to get you started. The best part of these devotions is the final product! Not too much can compare to fresh baked bread out of the oven. Yum!

Opening prayer: *God who provides us with food and enjoys spending time with us, we ask you to bless our time together. Bless our family as we prepare a meal/snack together and spend time learning about how you feed our souls with your living Word. Amen.*

Activity 1: Make Soft Pretzels together

(If making pretzels together is not your thing, simply make a meal together. When it comes to the later conversation about salt, talk about things that you have had that have salt on them verses unsalted. How does that taste change?)

<https://sallysbakingaddiction.com/easy-homemade-soft-pretzels/#tasty-recipes-66433>

Description

This is one of the easiest ways to prepare homemade soft pretzels and the results are extra delicious! The dough is a family recipe and only needs to rest for 10 minutes before shaping. The quick baking soda boil gives the pretzels their traditional flavor. Make sure you watch the video in the blog post for how to shape pretzels!

Ingredients

1 and ½ cups (360ml) **warm water** (lukewarm– no need to take temperature)
1 packet active dry or instant **yeast** (2 and ¼ teaspoons)
1 teaspoon **salt**
1 Tablespoon **brown sugar**
1 Tablespoon **unsalted butter**, melted and slightly cool
3 and ¾-4 cups (460-500g) **all-purpose flour**, plus more for work surface
coarse sea salt for sprinkling

Baking Soda Bath

½ cup (120g) **baking soda**
9 cups (2,160ml) **water**

Instructions

1. Whisk the yeast into warm water. Allow to sit for 1 minute. Whisk in salt, brown sugar, and melted butter. Slowly add 3 cups of flour, 1 cup at a time. Mix with a wooden spoon (or dough hook attached to stand mixer) until dough is thick. Add 3/4 cup more flour until the dough is no longer sticky. If it is still sticky, add 1/4 – 1/2 cup more, as needed. Poke the dough with your finger – if it bounces back, it is ready to knead.
2. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface. Knead the dough for 3 minutes and shape into a ball. Cover lightly with a towel and allow to rest for 10 minutes. (Meanwhile, I like to get the water + baking soda boiling as instructed in step 6.)
3. Preheat oven to 400°F (204°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. Silicone baking mats are highly recommended over parchment paper. If using parchment paper, lightly spray with nonstick spray or grease with butter. Set aside.
4. With a sharp knife or pizza cutter, cut dough into 1/3 cup sections.
5. Roll the dough into a 20-22 inch rope. Take the ends and draw them together so the dough forms a circle. Twist the ends, then bring them towards yourself and press them down into a pretzel shape.
6. Bring baking soda and 9 cups of water to a boil in a large pot. Drop 1-2 pretzels into the boiling water for 20-30 seconds. Any more than that and your pretzels will have a metallic taste. Using a slotted spatula, lift the pretzel out of the water and allow as much of the excess water to drip off. Place pretzel onto prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle half of the pretzels with coarse sea salt.
7. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown.

Feasting on the Word: Read and discuss Matthew 5:13, in which Jesus challenges his followers to be the salt of the earth. Jesus words here are rather harsh. He says, “If the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything.”

Lets read a little bit more form Chapter 5 of Matthew

Salt and Light

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Activity 2: Taste and SEE!

Once the pretzels have come out of the oven, let them cool and enjoy. Taste test the unsalted first and then with salt.

Discuss:

- Does the salt improve the taste?
- What is the purpose of salt? (To flavor, to preserve, to heal)
- When we eat something salty, how do we feel? (Thirsty)
- How should we be like salt? (We should bring out the best in people. We should not blend in. People should notice something different about us and want what we have!)

Discuss the shape of the pretzel. Tradition says that its shape was created to teach people about the Trinity. Talk about the doctrine of the Trinity. Who is God? Jesus? The Holy Spirit? What is our relationship like with each of them?

Optional Activity: Color a placemat to have at your place at the table that reminds us God's love and provision.

You are the
Light of the world.
A city on a hill
cannot be hidden.

Matthew 5:14

