

# Jesus, the Bread of Life

## Portraits of Jesus—John 6

February 7, 2021

### **DAY 1: Jesus feeds the five thousand. John 6:1-15**

*John 6:5 When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" <sup>6</sup> He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.*

1. Jesus is about to perform a miracle yet takes time and effort to “test” his disciples. What things strikes you about this test?

*John 6:7 Philip answered him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" <sup>8</sup> Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, <sup>9</sup> "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"*

2. In the face of an estimated crowd of 15,000 men, women and children, what strikes you about the disciples' discussion?

*John 6:10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. <sup>11</sup> Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.*

*<sup>12</sup> When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." <sup>13</sup> So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.*

3. What food was available at the beginning?

4. How much food was distributed?

5. How much food was left over?

*John 6:14 After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."*

6. After a very public sign what conclusion about Jesus did the people draw? Were they right?

*John 6:15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.*

7. Why did Jesus leave at the end of the miracle?

## **DAY 2: Jesus walks on the water. John 6:16-24**

1. This next episode immediately follows the feeding of the 5,000.

*John 6:16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, <sup>17</sup> where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. <sup>18</sup> A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. <sup>19</sup> When they had rowed three or three and a half miles...*

2. Can you picture the scene? It's about midnight. The sea waters "grew rough" and a "strong wind was blowing" against them. They had already been rowing for about four hours.

*John 6:19b ...they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified.*

3. Picture yourself in their position on the boat. If after all of this physical exertion for about four hours, what response would you have had if you had seen Jesus walking on the water?

4. Why do you think Jesus chose to do this miracle?

*John 6:20 But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid."*

5. Again, what would have been your response?

*John 6:21 Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.*

6. After recovering from the waves, the strong winds, the stunner of Jesus walking on water, they get another stunner! What happened after Jesus got in the boat?

*John 6:22 The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone.*

7. How does information affect how you see this miracle of walking on water?

8. Three big miracles in one day: (1) Fed the 5,000, (2) walked on water, and (3) "docked" the boat after immediately getting in the boat. What strikes you from these three miracles?

### DAY 3: Jesus, the bread of life John 6:25-35

1. The day after the feeding of the 5,000 people went looking for Jesus!

*John 6:26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill."*

2. It's easy to follow Jesus when you believe He's a vending machine for all you want. This is what we see in the crowd's response to the feeding of the 5,000. What should have been the response to this miracle?

3. Jesus, as He has done repeatedly in John uses a metaphor to illustrate an important spiritual truth. In this case it's food.

*John 6:27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."*

4. What does Jesus mean by "food that spoils"?

5. What does Jesus mean by "food that endures to eternal life"?

6. Where does this second kind of food originate?

*John 6:28 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."*

7. What does their question in v. 28 assume?

8. How does Jesus seek to correct their perspective?

*John 6:30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?"<sup>31</sup> Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"*

9. They watched yesterday's miracle. Now they think they need another miracle to believe.

*John 6:32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven."<sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."<sup>34</sup> "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread."*

*John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "**I am the bread of life.** He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."*

10. The bread Jesus wants to give people to quiet their hungry souls is Himself!

11. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## **DAY 4: Jesus, the bread of life, continued. John 6:36-59**

*John 6:47 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.*

<sup>48</sup> *I am the bread of life.*

<sup>49</sup> *Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died.*

<sup>50</sup> *But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die.*

1. “Life” is one of the themes Jesus teaches.
2. “Life” has different usages: physical life, spiritual life, eternal life (quantity of time), eternal life (“life to the full”), and a quality of life that is shared between people God and people (John 17).
3. To illustrate what “life” is Jesus uses the analogy of food. What does physical food do for us?
4. Manna is a type of bread that the Hebrews ate during their forty year wandering in the desert. Physical food has its limitations. What are some?
5. Jesus says there is another “bread” which someone can eat and not die! What is that bread?

*John 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

6. Jesus identifies the bread He gives as Himself. His origin is in heaven. He has come down to earth. His bread that gives us life begins with His death, His life that He gave for us.

*John 6:52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" <sup>53</sup> Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. <sup>54</sup> Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

7. Jesus continues to speak metaphorically, not precisely. He is not saying that we eat His literal flesh and drink His literal blood. It’s an analogy. We are to partake of His sacrificial death for us. We are to “hitch our wagon” to the cross. It is the cross that is instrumental in giving us eternal life.

8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

## **DAY 5: Many disciples desert Jesus. John 6:60-71**

*John 6:60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"<sup>61</sup> Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you?"<sup>62</sup> What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!*

1. The apostle Paul tells us we all have “itching ears”. If we like the teaching we hear we’re a “fan”, but if we don’t like what we’re hearing we rebel. In this case the followers grumbled.

2. Jesus hints at a prophecy to come, which they will witness—His ascension! (Acts 1)

*John 6:63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.*

3. In the same way that Nicodemus and the woman at the well did not understand spiritual truth, not even His disciples understand spiritual truth without divine help.

4. Jesus was not shocked by supposed believers turning away.

*John 6:64 Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him.*

*John 6:65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."*

5. Our fallen human nature must come alive with light to understand the things of God. It is impossible for a human being to understand the true God without the Holy Spirit’s power.

*John 6:66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.*

<sup>67</sup> *"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.*

<sup>68</sup> *Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."*

6. Peter had been around long enough, and the Holy Spirit gave Peter insight at this key moment. What does Peter realize about Jesus in v. 68?

*John 6:69 "We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

7. What does Peter understand about Jesus in v. 69?

8. Let’s review John 6: (1) Feeding of the 5,000, (2) Jesus walks on water, (3) Jesus is the bread of Life, and (4) Our fallen human nature is in desperate need of God’s intervention if we are to enjoy the life of Jesus!

9. What strikes you from John 6?