



H

HIGHLIGHT: John 6:22-35

²²The next day, the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea knew there had been only one boat. They also knew that Jesus had not boarded the boat with His disciples, but that His disciples had gone off alone. ²³Some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they ate the bread after the Lord gave thanks. ²⁴When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You get here?”

²⁶Jesus answered, “I assure you: You are looking for Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled. ²⁷Don’t work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal of approval on Him.”

²⁸“What can we do to perform the works of God?” they asked.

²⁹Jesus replied, “This is the work of God—that you believe in the One He has sent.”

³⁰“What sign then are You going to do so we may see and believe You?” they asked. “What are You going to perform? ³¹Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

³²Jesus said to them, “I assure you: Moses didn’t give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the real bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴Then they said, “Sir, give us this bread always!”

³⁵“I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to Me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Me will ever be thirsty again.



EXPLAIN

Leaders: Feel free to use any of the “Explain” materials to guide discussion as it is needed or to expound on a certain area of the text as it comes up during your Life Group time, but the purpose of this section is to deepen your own personal understanding of the Word. Your members have access to all of this material as well.

As a crowd followed Jesus around, Jesus took drastic steps to make sure they were fed: He took five loaves of bread and two fish and turned them into enough for a crowd of perhaps 20,000 people (including women and children) to be completely full *and* have leftovers. The next day, they found Him and He revealed that He was more than they even knew to look for.

- v.25 Consider what the people asking this question had just seen: Jesus’ disciples loaded into the only available boat and rowed across the sea, and Jesus went up the mountain to be alone. The following morning, when some of the other boats washed up on shore (perhaps because of the storm), they went into Capernaum to look for Jesus. Now consider their question when they found Him with His disciples: “When did you get here?” The obvious question would have been, “How did you get here?” This is a precursor to the truth that Jesus is about to expose: they are not interested in knowing the One performing these miracles, but simply what He can do for them.
- v.27 A common point from critics of Jesus’ divinity is that Jesus never explicitly claimed He was the Messiah. This logic is purely faulty, though, for He did it all the time—just as an Eastern rabbi, not a Western debater. We see an example of this in verse 27. Jesus calls Himself “the Son of Man” ten times in the book of John alone. This is an explicit connection to well-known Messianic prophecy, specifically Daniel 7:13-14.
- vv.29-30 The word “believe” in verse 29 is in a tense that implies continuousness: the work of God is living a life of faith that Jesus is the Son of God, and that His work is sufficient to cover our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. However, when the people replied to this, they followed “believe” with an object, “You.” Here’s what the difference means: Jesus asks for a lifestyle consistent with belief in Him; they wanted to know why they should believe the words He was saying. They’d just seen Him multiply bread and fish so that an enormous crowd was full and noticed that He’d made it across a lake overnight without so much as a boat, and still they look for a sign.
- v.31 C.K. Barrett explains the problem with asking for a sign: “Rigid proof would render impossible the work of God, which is to believe in Jesus.” The Israelites in the Old Testament were constantly seeing signs and still practicing disbelief. In this passage, the Israelites were looking back at those people and saying, “give us a sign like they saw so that we can believe you.” If what you seek is a sign, you’re only seeking sensationalism. You want the thing the sign-giver gives you, rather than the sign-giver, Himself. Seek a sign and you’ll be left wanting; seek Jesus and you’ll find Him every time.
- vv.32-33 After their incorrect understanding of the passage they supplied, Jesus corrects their thinking and explains it: Moses was not the miracle-doer, it was God. Now, God has supplied manna from heaven again, except this time it is the kind that truly satisfies. While the manna in Exodus could only satisfy the people’s stomachs for a day, the Bread of Life, Jesus, satisfies our souls forever.



APPLY

*Your Leader Guide will have material that the member guides do not have. The **bolded** material is what the people in your group will have, the other material is only for you to help guide discussion.*

This guide can be as strict a script or as general a resource as the leader needs it to be.

- 1. What stuck out to you or challenged you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text?**
- 2. According to v. 26, why were the people seeking Jesus? Do you think that people still come to Jesus today for similar reasons? Why or why not? What are some “things” people want to get out of following Jesus?**

We've seen in multiple places throughout the gospels that the people expected the Messiah to be a sort of political revolutionary. He would show up, overthrow the Roman government, and return Israel to the crown jewel it once was. What they didn't realize is that Jesus came to do something even bigger: He ushered God's Kingdom to earth. These people saw Him performing amazing miracles and thought that, perhaps, this was going to be the one to take Rome down. Perhaps they simply saw Him as a solution to having to work for their food—if He could multiply bread like this, He was a gold mine!

What Jesus points out, though, is that they were coming to Him for the wrong reasons. They were trying to get something from Him—whether it was a piece of bread or a political revolution. We should not seek Jesus to get something else; we seek Jesus to find God.

- 3. According to verse 29, what is “the work of God”? What was it that made you believe in Jesus?**

In Greek, the word for “believe” in v.29 indicates that it's a present, continuous action. Jesus is saying, in effect, that we should live a life consistent with belief in Him. This is not a work that produces our salvation, rather it is the work we do in response to the salvation Jesus provides.

Every believer has a moment when their faith became real—so real that it changed the course of their life. Take some time to talk about that moment in each of your lives.

- 4. What makes the people's response in vv. 30-31 so frustrating? How can we find ourselves saying those exact same things?**

Remember what they just witnessed: He took a small lunch for one boy and turned it into a lunch for *thousands*. Right before their eyes. Still, they ask for a sign. So many times, as we let our focus drift from Christ, we can find ourselves in a similar situation: forgetting what He's already done for us and asking Him for just one more thing to prove He is who He says He is.



5. What kind of hunger does Jesus satisfy? How has He satisfied that hunger in you? How does that encourage you to live a life of faith in Him?

Jeremiah 2 tells of the Israelites constantly trying to drink from broken cisterns. We do the same thing—we run to any avenue we can find that promises to fill the hole in our lives. While it may work for a season, these other sources eventually run dry and leave us as empty as we were before. Jesus, however, promises to do the exact opposite. He fills something deeper than the stuff of the world ever could: He, alone, provides purpose, rest, and the kind of meaning that lasts forever.

R

RESPOND

Challenge your group to answer:

- **Who is someone you know who needs to hear that Jesus is the only true bread that satisfies? How can you make that happen?**

Encourage one another through email, text messages, or coffee dates throughout the week to build up and encourage each other.

