

LEARNER GUIDE

John 6:1-15

Jesus isn't defined by the _____ . Jesus is defined by the _____ .

Who is Jesus? Jesus isn't who _____ says He is. Jesus is who _____ says He is.

John 6:24-36

"For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." Then they said, "Sir, give us this bread always." (CSB)

Jesus offered the people _____ , and they asked for _____ .

Jesus came to satisfy their _____ , but the people wanted to satisfy their _____ .

The people had an appetite or desire for _____ .

Jesus came to satisfy the hunger or need for _____ .

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever felt like there wasn't *enough* (*enough time, enough talent, enough money, enough energy*) to do something God was asking from you? What did you lack? And how did the Lord provide?
2. Read John 6:13. How many baskets were left over after everyone had eaten all they wanted? Do you think there is any significance in that number? And if so, what is God trying to teach us through it?
3. After Jesus fed the people, they tried to take him by force and make him the king. But He hadn't come to be a military conqueror or political leader. What are some of the things our world today tries to make Jesus that He isn't?
4. Many in our world desire unconditional approval, but what they need is God's unconditional love. As believers, what does it look like for us to show unconditional love without giving unconditional approval? Can you think of a specific example?
5. What does it mean to belong to Jesus? What are the costs of belonging to Jesus? What are the benefits?

PERSONAL STUDY

Part One

Read John 6:1-14.

The account of Jesus feeding the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels, which points us to the significance of the event. The miracle marked a pivotal moment in Jesus' ministry because it so clearly communicated Jesus as the Messiah prophesied about in the Old Testament. Specifically it brought to the people's minds two important events.

Read John 6:31-33. When Jesus multiplied the barley loaves and fed God's people, what came to their minds?

The Jews were expecting the Messiah to come as a prophet like Moses, who led God's people in the wilderness and instructed them to eat the manna (the bread from heaven) that God provided (Exodus 16). And they saw a clear connection between Moses and his manna and Jesus and his loaves and fish.

They also likely recognized another Old Testament connection. Read 2 Kings 4:42-44 and record the ways this event mirrors Jesus' miracle of multiplying loaves and fish.

Like the barley bread was multiplied to feed an impossible number in Elisha's day so it happened with Jesus. And just like in 2 Kings, when Jesus fed the people, they had all they wanted, and still some was left over.

Given these clear connections, most Jews who would have been following Jesus would have recognized He must be the Messiah. The problem was they were very confused about what the Messiah had actually come to do. They thought Messiah only meant Israel's king.

Close in prayer, thanking Jesus for coming as Messiah, Savior of the world, and for His death and resurrection, which provides eternal life for everyone who believes in Him.

Part Two

Read John 6:16-22

Similarly to the Gospel of John, Matthew and Mark follow up their accounts of Jesus feeding the 5,000 with the account of Jesus walking on water. Read Mark's record of the event in Mark 6:45-52.

Look at Mark 6:45. Who made the decision for the disciples to go ahead of Jesus to the other side of the Sea of Galilee?

Mark's account provides us with the insight that the disciples were completely in God's will because Jesus commanded they take the boat across the lake. The Sea of Galilee was and is known for its sudden, violent windstorms that make the lake dangerous. And that's exactly what happened to the disciples on their trip across it. After straining at the oars with the wind against them for several hours, the men had barely made it halfway across. How do you think the disciples were feeling?

Is it possible to feel exhausted, frustrated, unproductive and still be in God's will? Explain.

Look again at Mark 6:51-52. The Scripture tells us that the storm on the boat that night taught the disciples something that the feeding of the 5,000 the day before had failed to show them. Matthew's account of the event goes on to tell us what truth was reinforced in the disciples' hearts: *And when they got into the boat, the wind stopped. And those who were on the boat worshiped Him saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"* Matthew 14:33-34

Sometimes God uses our difficult circumstances to teach us the deepest truths. What difficult circumstance in your life has God used to teach you something about Himself?

Close in prayer, acknowledging that being in God's will doesn't always mean the work is easy but is always meant to help us know Him more.

Part Three

Read John 6:23-71

In the Book of John, Jesus makes seven “I am” statements. John 6 gives us the first of those seven statement. What “I am” statement does Jesus make in John 6:35?

Bread was the primary source of nutrition in Bible times, and families would have spent a considerable amount of time preparing it. According to Dr. Cynthia Shafer-Elliott, an Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible at William Jessup University, bread was prepared using the following steps:

Wheat seeds are planted in the ground of the earth, and wheat stalks grow.

The stalks are cut down and ground on a course stone to break the soft centers of the grain kernels into flour.

Water, salt, yeast, and most likely a little bit of honey are added to the flour to make a dough.

The dough is kneaded, using squeezing, pressing and pounding motions.

The dough is placed in a very hot small domed clay oven to bake.

After a few minutes, the dough is removed from the oven and consumed (eaten).

What parts of the bread-making process remind you of Jesus?

Read Isaiah 53:1-5. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be planted on the earth in order that He might be crushed for our sins so that by His wounds we could be healed. As bread is necessary for physical life, so Jesus is necessary for eternal life. Consuming the Bread of Life means receiving Jesus by faith and being given the life that He brings.

The world offers other breads that claim to satisfy, such as fame, fortune, worldly success, but no other bread gives the kind of Life that Jesus gives. Matt Chandler said it this way, “Jesus is the only bread that breaks for you. All other breads will break you.”

Close in prayer, praising the Bread of Life, who gives eternal life to those who receive Him.

Heart-to-Heart

Spend some time with Jesus using one of the suggestions below. Remember to reference the RESOURCES pages to help you.

- Revisit a verse or passage that stuck out to you this week. Compare the text in a few different Bible translations or do a word study on a few key words.
 - Read a commentary on John 6.
 - Journal about what you learned through His Word this week.
 - Spend time in prayer, focusing on what the Holy Spirit revealed to you through your study of John 6.
 - Record any questions you still have about the text.
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Looking Ahead

Read John 7-8.

Use the space below to record anything that jumps out to you or any questions that come to mind about the text.
