



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 6

1 Sometime later, Jesus made his way back to the Roman port city of Tiberias, embarking on a ship headed for the other side of the Galilean Sea.

2 Word had already spread far and wide about the miraculous things Jesus was doing, including physical healings. A large crowd followed Him by land, all the way around the lake.

3 They found Him with His students, resting at the top of a hill overlooking the water.

4 This all happened not long before the next Passover celebration.

5 From a long way off Jesus saw the huge group walking their way toward Him. They were easy to spot – a horde marching together through lonely fields. He turned to Philip, saying “It’s lunchtime and this could take awhile. Where do we go to get all of them something to eat?”

6 Jesus had a plan, of course. He was just throwing Philip a curve ball.

7 Philip was furiously doing the math in his head. “Master, just to give them all a snack would cost almost a year’s salary for a working man. That is, if there was somewhere to get it.”

8 Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was just as practical but working the math a different way. He said,

9 “I found a boy who’s carrying a lunch. Looks like five biscuits and a couple of sardines. But what’s that compared to this crowd?”

10 Jesus answered with instructions to organize the crowd for the missing meal. “Have the head of each household seat his group.” There was plenty of room to do so in the open fields, even though the number of men alone numbered about five thousand.

11 The boy’s lunch was placed in Jesus’ hands. He thanked the boy then thanked God for providing what they needed. He started handing out the bread and fish, handful after handful. It was brought to each group and they ate, and ate, and ate. No one went hungry. In fact, everyone was stuffed.

12 When the need was satisfied, Jesus stopped. He told His students “Gather up the leftovers. I don’t want any wasted or thrown away.”

13 They did as they were told, and used twelve large baskets to collect the remaining food. They had to cram the baskets to fit it all in.

14 Once their stomachs were filled, the crowd realized what a miracle it really was. This was no run-of-the-mill teacher! Jesus must really be **the** Prophet, God showing Himself to the world - the Liberator! By whatever name He was the Boss!

15 The excitement of the idea grew into a frenzy and Jesus was concerned they might try to forcibly crown Him as Redeemer-King right then and there. That would not be productive, so after a time with the crowd He slipped away for a while, alone, to a spot farther up the mountain.

16 The students of Jesus remained busy till evening, when they returned to the seashore.

17 They waited on Jesus for a good while, but not seeing Him anywhere they finally set out for Capernaum. After dark would be too treacherous to launch.

18 The plan backfired when a huge squall blew in, churning the water all around the boat.

19 They fought their way through the storm, rowing nearly four miles against the breakers. Then Jesus appeared in the flashes of lightning coming right toward them, walking on the water. The exhausted seaman thought they'd seen a ghost.

20 So Jesus called out to them "It's just Me. Settle down!"

21 Immediately they reached out to help Jesus into the boat. Not a split-second later they landed exactly where they were headed - danger averted.

22 The next morning after the storm, word got around the huge crowd that the boat used by Jesus' students was missing. No one had seen Jesus come back to join them.

23 Of all the vessels that had traveled from Tiberias and anchored near shore, only that one boat had set out the previous night. Everyone could see it for themselves, for the moorage was right next to the place where Jesus had thanked God for multiplying the bread.

24 Finding the Jesus group gone, many of the crowd scrambled for the remaining boats and set out in hot pursuit. As fast as their oars could move them, they raced to Capernaum seeking out Jesus and His missing students.

25 When they finally found Him, out of breath they asked "Teacher, how - when did You get here?"

26 Jesus answered them with a shake of His head "Hungry already? Now it's not even miracles people seek. All they want is a menu. Serve a feast one day and they crave it everyday.

27 "Don't run yourselves ragged trying to fill your bellies. An earthly snack may go bad, but the real feast never spoils. That's the kind of food for which you should work up an appetite. Seasoned by God Himself, it's a meal to be savored. You'll never 'die of hunger' again. And it's what I'm serving."

28 They asked Him "If that's what God wants to do, how do we 'work up' that kind of appetite?"

29 "Chew on this," Jesus said, "and digest it - He wants you to put your total trust in the One He sent to save you. Is that too much to swallow?"

30 This wasn't the type of food talk they were hoping for. They grew skeptical once again. "OK, then. You want us to fall in with You. What's to convince us You're the One? Show us something compelling.

31 "Here's an idea - how about a consistent diet? You know, like our forefathers? God fed them everyday with bread from Heaven. It says so, right there in the scriptures."

32 "Oh come on," Jesus replied. "The stuff you got from Moses wasn't anything special. Right now God is giving you the **real** food of Heaven. Or do you just want junk food?"

33 "The 'bread of God' doesn't just get you by for a day. It's alive! It can feed the whole world, for a day and forever!"

34 The interest of the crowd returned. "Now You're talking! That's exactly what we're looking for. Give us some of that!"

35 Jesus got to the clincher. "I am that 'bread.' Full of life. Pursue Me and you'll never know hunger again. Take a deep drink of faith in Me and you'll never be thirsty again.

36 "I've said it over and over again "If you've seen Me you've seen the One!" And still it bounces right off your foreheads.

37 "The Father is pouring out all the good stuff on Me. Just watch and see! Really! Stick around. I won't chase you away.

38 "I haven't come down here to satisfy Myself, but to carry out the orders of the One who sent Me.

39 "This is what the Father wants Me to do: I am to gather up all who will come and keep them safe and sound. Until all is said and done, I am to make sure not one is lost.

40 "And this is what the Father wants you to do: Seek Me out and stick with Me. You'll be full of life everlasting, and nothing's going to hold you down on the day of judgment."

41 The local religious leaders had joined the crowd and shook their heads, murmuring amongst themselves. What was all this about "I am the bread of life" and "I've come down from Heaven." Was He totally insane?

42 They tried to shout Jesus down with insults. "Isn't this just Jesus, the son of that carpenter, Joseph and his wife Mary? Haven't we known Him since He was a kid? What's all this crazy talk of "I descended from above?""

43 Jesus heard it and said "Stop right there.

44 "You're never going to 'get it' unless the Father Himself opens your minds. But for those whose minds **are** open to the Father's leading, they won't be able to stay away. They'll stick with Me all the way to Heaven. I will personally raise them up.

45 "It's right there in the writings of the prophets. In every single scroll the Father is pointing to the Son. Those who understand that - who really know what the Father is saying - follow Me.

46 "And why? Because they sense that I've seen the Father face-to-face. It rubs off.

47 "OK, I'm saying it one more time - he who stakes his claim with Me is going to live forever.

48 "I am **the** 'Bread' that brings **the** 'Life.'

49 "Your forefathers ate something they called 'what is it?' It got them by, but it wasn't magical. They still eventually died.

50 "But now real 'Bread' and real 'Life' are raining down from Heaven. Sink your teeth into that bread and you'll live forever.

51 "Have you figured it out yet? I am that 'Bread.' I bring the very life of Heaven down with Me. I urge you - eat this bread! You'll never die. Everything I am - body included - I willingly give as a life-saving meal for the whole world."

52 This made the religious leaders queasy. "That's disgusting! Does He think we're cannibals?"

53 Jesus shook His head. "So, that's where you're going with this idea? Good grief. Fine, I'll play along: If you don't 'eat' the body of God's Son; if you don't 'drink' deep of His blood, He'll never really get inside of you."

54 Jesus turned to address the whole crowd. "Did you get that? If you want eternal life, you'll have to 'eat' Me and 'drink' My blood! That way you'll have no choice on the judgment day. You'll have to 'raise up' because nothing's going to hold Me back when it's time to go.

55 "No more empty calories. What you need is real food and drink. I'm it.

56 "Ingest Me, right down to your toes. Then I'll be so fully 'in' you that they won't be able to tell us apart! You'll be just like Me.

57 “The Father sent Me down here from the *real* feast. I would utterly starve if I didn't feed on Him moment to moment. You can do the same thing. Feed on Me and you'll never die.

58 “So, here's the difference: Your forefathers got a shower of mush to get them by for a while. It wasn't magical food - they still died. But now it's raining food from Heaven's table. Eat, friends! You'll live forever!”

59 This message in the street became the sermon Jesus preached that very Saturday in the Capernaum Meeting House.

60 Even the students of Jesus had a hard time with this message. They certainly couldn't explain it to anyone else. “Do you have any clue what He's talking about?” they asked each other.

61 When Jesus heard what was going on He asked them afterwards “Seriously, this concept has you all tripped up? Why?”

62 “You think I should just pack it up and head back to Heaven where I came from? Is it that hopeless?”

63 “This is spiritual food I'm talking about. And God's Spirit makes it possible for you to handle it. You'll never sort it out with worldly wisdom, that's for sure! What I'm telling you is full of the Spirit of Life. Let the Spirit guide you to understanding.

64 “Sadly, this will never get through to those too stubborn to believe.” Jesus said this knowing full-well whose hearts were hard, and who in particular would eventually betray Him.

65 Jesus continued. “It's certainly true that no one stands a chance of following where I'm going unless the Father Himself makes it possible. It's not a matter of personal willpower. This kind of calling is a pure gift.”

66 This line of teaching really rattled a lot of those who had followed Jesus for a long time. A large number gave up and headed for home.

67 As the crowd dwindled, Jesus turned to His chosen twelve. “So, are you ready to pack your bags and leave, too?”

68 No one knew what to say. Finally Simon Peter spoke up. “Lord, if we quit You, where do we go? You keep talking about eternal life, and we still want it.

69 “Once we decided to follow You, You showed that You're really the Christ - the living, breathing Son of God. Even if we don't understand, We still trust You.”

70 Jesus answered, “All of you? You don't think that right here in this group of twelve there might be someone ready to betray Me yet?”

71 Jesus was referring of His student, Judas Iscariot, son of the elder Simon. It was already clear in Jesus' mind that Judas was going to betray Him eventually.

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) Why do you think Jesus asked Philip where they could buy bread for the crowd when he already knew he would feed them?
- 2) Why is it significant that the crowd realized how powerful Jesus' miracle of feeding them was? What could this mean for feeding an army?
- 3) Why would the students of Jesus be surprised that he was walking on the water when they had witnessed so many miracles already?
- 4)
- 5) In what ways do you work for food that perishes? In what ways do you miss the food that is eternal?
- 6) What are the "works of God" according to verse 29?

- 7) What is the “I am” statement in verse 35?

- 8) There’s an old adage that says, “Familiarity breeds contempt”. How is this applicable in this passage? (see verse 42)

- 9) Who can “come to Jesus”? How does the Father draw us to Jesus?

- 10) How controversial was it that Jesus called the people to eat his flesh and drink his blood? How is Jesus flesh compared to manna from heaven?

- 11) Why did many of his students leave after hearing this teaching? Would you be able to stay?

- 12) How will you respond to the question Jesus asks in verse 67 – “Will you also go away”?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- Nehemiah 9:15
- Isaiah 54:13
- Matthew 14:13-21
- Luke 9:10-17
- Mark 6:45-52