

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

Lesson 6 - Study Questions

John 6:1-71

DAY ONE

1. What words from the spiritual reflection or commentary from Lesson 5 did you find meaningful for you this week? Record your thoughts here.

Read John 6:1-15

2a. As chapter 6 begins, Jesus and His disciples have left Jerusalem and returned to Galilee via the Sea of Galilee. A large crowd followed Him because they saw the signs He was performing on the sick (verse 2). Comment on their motivation for following Jesus (did this indicate sincere belief?).

b. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples (verse 3). What important Jewish feast was near (verse 4)?

3. Important Bible history often happened on mountaintops. Name two miraculous events from the Old Testament that occurred on mountaintops.

NOTE: For the answer to a great trivia question, look at Ezekiel 28:13-14 and note that the prophet says that the Garden of Eden was on a mountaintop

4a. After a large crowd gathered on the mountainside, Jesus asked Philip where they could buy enough food for the crowd (verses 5-7). His words echo two Old Testament events in which a large crowd needed sustenance. Read the following verses and briefly note any similarities.

Numbers 11:13

2 Kings 4:42-44

b. Philip answered emphatically that two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little (verse 8). Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, told Jesus that there was a boy who had five barley loaves. What other comment did Andrew make (verse 9)?

5a. Instead of responding Jesus told the disciple to have the people recline (verse 10). According to verse 11, what did Jesus do with the bread and the fish?

b. John does not include the Last Supper in his gospel; however, he anticipated it here. What about the description of this miracle reminds you of the Eucharist?

6a. When all the people had had their fill, the disciples gathered 12 baskets of fragments so as not to waste food (verses 12-13). When the people saw this magnificent miracle, what did they say (verse 14)?

b. According to verse 15, why did Jesus withdraw to the mountain alone?

7. CONNECTION: Jesus was testing Philip when He asked him where to get food for 5,000, knowing Philip would think it was an impossible task. When Jesus fed the multitude, Philip must have been humbled by the miraculous evidence of Jesus' power. Tim Staples of Catholic Answers tells a story of how he, too, was humbled by God. Tim, a Protestant, was assigned at Army boot camp to room with Matt, a Catholic. Tim intended to convert Matt, but instead Matt converted Tim. Like Philip, Tim would have said this was completely impossible, but God proved him wrong. In what way have you been humbled by God's power over the impossible? Share an example with your small group.

Read Isaiah 55:8-9 and write a prayer today praising God for His miraculous power.

DAY TWO

Read John 6:16-21

8. As Jesus remained on the mountain to pray, and evening came, what were the disciples doing and where were they heading (verses 16-17)?

NOTE: Capernaum was a trading and fishing village located on the Northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It is often referred to as “the town of Jesus” because it is mentioned in several gospels as a place where He taught, and several of His disciples were originally from there (Peter, Andrew, James and John).

9a. The disciples had rowed far out in a rough sea when something unexpected took place. Describe what happened and the disciples’ reaction (verse 19).

b. Most of us have seen paintings of this incident. If you were the painter, how would you depict the faces and postures of the disciples?

10a. Record Jesus’ words to His disciples in verse 20. (Good memory verse)

b. The Greek word for “It is I” is more accurately translated as “I Am”. Read Exodus 3:14. In light of this verse, what do you think that Jesus is really saying to His disciples?

11a. The disciples wanted to take Jesus into the boat but it immediately arrived at the shore (verse 21). Read Job 9:8 and point out a similarity in that verse with this week’s lesson.

b. The little boat being tossed on a rough sea held the twelve disciples. Jesus walked on the water nearby. This is the fifth “sign” (miracle) in the Gospel of John. What do you think the boat could represent?

12. CONNECTION: Jesus stayed behind on the mountain to pray while His disciples got into the boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. It was a dark and stormy night. As they frantically tried to maneuver their boat in the storm, Jesus suddenly appeared before them, walking on the water! He reassured them and brought them to safety. Recall a storm or even a bit of small turbulence you’ve experienced in the last month when Jesus suddenly “appeared” and placed you safely on dry land. Describe the incident and your feelings after the trouble was resolved. Share some details for your small group.

Confident that you are never alone read Psalm 139:7-10. Record a phrase that reminds you of the Lord's reassurance. Begin your prayer hearing Jesus' words speaking to you, His beloved: "It is I. Do not be afraid."

DAY THREE

Read John 6:22-34

13a. When the crowd realized that Jesus and His disciples had departed, they sailed to Capernaum looking for Him (verses 22-24). When they found Him they asked Him when He had arrived (verse 25), but Jesus sidestepped their question. According to verse 26, why did Jesus say that they were looking for Him?

b. Jesus was referring to the multiplication of the loaves (the 4th sign) in which they were fed barley loaves. What point were they missing?

14a. Jesus redirected the crowd's goals towards a different kind of food. Complete the following phrases from verse 27:

Do not work for food that perishes

which the Son of Man

For on him the Father, God,

b. Record the definition of the word "seal" that would best apply in this verse.

15. In response to Jesus' command, the crowd asked how they were to work for eternal food. How did Jesus answer them in verse 29?

16a. What did the crowd then demand of Him so that they could believe (verse 30 and first half of 31)?

b. What sign did Moses give the Israelites according to the end of verse 31?

17a. In verse 32 Jesus corrected the crowd saying that it was not Moses that gave them the manna from heaven but His Father. Jesus then spoke about the “true bread from heaven.” Where does this bread come from and what does it do (verse 33)?

b. How did the crowd respond (verse 34)?

18. CONNECTION: The crowd was confused between the barley loaves and the Bread from Heaven but they knew they wanted Jesus’ Bread. Anyone who has stood in front of an open fridge feeling anxious knows that spiritual and physical hunger can be confused. We medicate our feelings with another potato chip or glass of wine rather than contemplation of God’s eternal Word where we find His will for us. The anxieties we attempt to assuage can only be satisfied by Jesus, the Eternal Bread from heaven. Describe a time you were tempted to depend on food or drink for comfort but stepped back and prayed instead, or a time you wished you had.

Rather than be anxious let us emulate Mary, whom the Church calls Jesus’ first disciple and who called herself the handmaid of the Lord - someone who humbly waits to fulfill the Master’s will. Read and record the first two sentences of Luke 1:38.

DAY FOUR

Read John 6:35-51

19. At the end of yesterday’s lesson, the crowd begged Jesus to give them the bread of God. In verse 35 of today’s lesson, what beautiful promise did Jesus make to those who come to Him and believe in Him? (Good memory verse)

NOTE: In the next several verses, Jesus told the crowd that He is carrying out His Father’s will that He will draw people to the Father and raise them up on the last day; that He is the bread of God come down from heaven; that this bread will give them eternal life.

20a. Jesus pointed out the lack of belief among His listeners even though they had witnessed His works (verse 36). What will He do to anyone (and everything) the Father gives Him (verse 37)?

b. Jesus explained why this is true. Record verse 38.

21. Read verses 39-40 and describe the result of believing in Jesus the Son of God.

22a. In verse 41 the Jews began to complain about Jesus' claim to be the "bread come down from heaven." Why did they have such difficulty with Jesus talking about "His" Father (verse 42)?

b. Jesus told them to stop murmuring (verse 43) and then He continued His discourse on His Father in heaven. In verse 44 what did Jesus mean when He said, "No one can come to me unless the Father Who sent me draw him"?

23a. Faith in Jesus is a gift from God. Record the phrases in verse 45 in which Jesus highlights this concept.

b. According to verse 46, who is the only One who has seen the Father?

24. Then Jesus repeated His claim to be the "bread of life" (verses 47-48) contrasting the manna their ancestors ate in the desert with the Bread He will give them (verses 49-51). Briefly summarize the difference.

25. CONNECTION: Like the God of the Old Testament who gave manna to Israel, Jesus said He Himself would be the bread of life ... and thus He would give His own flesh for the life of the world. Jesus explained that His bread would do more than fill our stomachs. Jesus continues to lay down His life for us in the Eucharist. "It is the gift of God who has become one of us. It is the gift of love with sacrifice. If we have put self out for others in big or small ways, or have cried for another's woes or laughed for another's joy, or held a hand in sympathy or just listened when there were no answers, we know the quality of this gift." *SacredSpace.ie*. Describe a small or big way you lay down your life for others.

Read and record [John 15:13](#) and let these thoughts lead you into prayer.

DAY FIVE

Read John 6:52-59

26a. Following Jesus' statements that He is the bread from heaven for them to eat, the Jews began quarreling among themselves (verse 52). What did they ask?

b. Jesus responded by emphasizing and repeating an important message (verses 53-54). What is that message?

27a. Despite the Jews' reactions, Jesus did not soften his words, nor did He say that He was speaking symbolically. Instead His instructions became even more adamant and literal. Record verse 55.

b. While teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum, Jesus made several promises to those who eat His flesh and drink His blood (verses 56-59). From these verses, select one of His promises and state what it means to you. Keep in mind that these promises are not only for the people of Jesus' day, they are promises He makes to us, also.

28. The Jews in Jesus' time did not have the advantage of knowing the "rest of the story" as we do. For us, the words of Jesus in today's lesson come alive during the Last Supper. Read the following scriptural passages and select one verse that relates Jesus' promises to the Eucharist.

Matthew 26:26-28

1 Corinthians 10:16

29. CONNECTION: St. Theresa of Calcutta worked tirelessly caring for poor people in slums around the world in physical works of mercy. Yet each day she and her Missionaries of Charity would wake early and spend an hour in Eucharistic Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. She said many beautiful things about Eucharistic Adoration, for example: "Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration." Comment for your small group on how you can benefit from this special time.

St. Francis of Assisi marveled: “That the Lord of the Universe, God and the Son of God, should humble himself like this under the form of a little bread, for our salvation.” Contemplating this marvelous gift of the Eucharist, write a prayer of thanksgiving.

DAY SIX

Read John 6:60-71

30a. Up until now, Jesus was speaking to a large crowd who resisted His teachings. According to verse 60, even some of His disciples said, “This saying is hard; who can accept it?” Remembering that all scripture is true, it is not always easy. Is there a passage in this lesson that made you uncomfortable? If so, for what reason?

b. Jesus responded with two questions in verses 61-62 which put their doubts in perspective. Record them.

31a. Fill in the blanks to finish verse 63:

It is the _____ that gives life; while the _____ is of no avail. The words I have spoken to you are _____ and _____

b. How would you explain the difference between the “flesh” Jesus refers to in verse 63 and the “flesh” He speaks of in verse 53-55?

32. We are all dependent on God’s grace to come to Jesus. Complete Jesus’ statement below regarding this from verse 65.

And He said, “For this reason I have to tell you that no one can come to me

NOTE: The Catechism of the Catholic Church (paragraph 259) includes the following statement: “Everyone who glorifies the Father does so through the Son in the Holy Spirit; everyone who follows Christ does so because the Father draws him and the Spirit moves him.”

33. Many of Jesus’ disciples found this teaching too difficult to embrace. What was the result of their disbelief according to verse 66?

34. After many of his disciples left Him, Jesus asked the twelve if they, too, wished to leave Him. Speaking for the twelve, how did Peter answer Jesus (verses 68-69)? (Good memory verses)

35. This dialogue with His followers must have been bittersweet for Jesus. Many left, but the twelve Apostles stayed and Peter pledged his trust and devotion. Yet, Jesus was also beginning to think of the one who would betray Him. What words from verses 70-71 indicate this?

36. CONNECTION: We come to Christ through the grace given to us by the Father, merited by the great work of salvation of Jesus Christ; yet, not all respond to that grace. Peter responded, but Judas turned away. In any case, our faith and trust in the Lord are priceless gifts from Him, worthy of nurturing and proclaiming. Consider a time when a friend or loved one gave you a gift that you felt you did not deserve. For what reason were you given that gift? How did it make you feel?

Today, begin your prayer in thanksgiving that you have received the priceless gift of faith.

Read Lesson 6 John 6:1-71 in the *Meditation and Commentary on the Gospel of John* by Rev. Alfred McBride, O. Praem. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE) © 2010, 1991, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission.

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