

In Spirit and in Truth: Rooted and Established Freedom Church of Denton

John 6

Jesus Christ Miraculously Proven to be the Humble But Omnipotent Bread of Life To His True Disciples

Volume 1, Lesson 19

- **In Devotion** (feel free to highlight, underline, and scribble notes. Take your time, working through the following material over the course of the next week...it would be better for you to get through one sentence with understanding than the whole lesson with no understanding!)

*Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst –
John 6:39*

*Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in Me,
and I in him – John 6:56*

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe – John 6:63-64

Here the humble Savior condescends in a series of two providentially-timed miracles designed to reveal the Christ as the true spiritual food of heaven, in whom exists the grace and power, not only to save, but also to preserve and protect through the treachery and tumult of the waters of life. He takes his students to discipleship school in the classroom of nature, the physical realm that He Himself had created, and continues to exercise dominion over.

With Passover at hand, He retreated to the opposite side of the Sea of Galilee in what would amount to nothing less than a divine set-up. Knowing full well that the craving of the encroaching crowds would exceed the disciples' humble supply of grocery, He arranged the occasion and tasked the disciples with the impossible feat of supplying and serving this makeshift seaside diner. All they could muster was two loaves of bread and five fish, hardly enough to feed the five thousand that had gathered.

In a miracle orchestrated to meet them on their level, Christ supernaturally multiplied the meager offering so that everyone of these pastoral patrons left with a full stomach. This was an exhibition of God's grace, demonstrating that He was more than enough to meet all of their needs. And as is always the case with Jesus, there was a higher purpose in His

method. Christ ministered to their physical need in order that He might gain access to their hearts, the tabernacles that He Himself hoped to occupy.

Unlike the professional religionists in their adorned environments, Jesus' pulpit was a pasture, and His adornment was authority and power. The humility of the setting and the meekness of His message would eventually prove too spiritual and too humble for the pride and carnality of many (if not most) of those in this crowd to accept.

Man's faithlessness has never stopped the faithfulness of God though; so in spite of their self-interest and short-sightedness, Jesus not only fed the crowd, but then, in a poignant lesson to His disciples, sent them to gather the leftover fragments, proving that not only did He want to use them in the collaboration of His gospel work, but that He would water them as they watered the lost sheep of Israel and the world.

Impressed by the undeniable power, but blinded by the divine purpose, unsurprisingly, the majority of the multitude failed to perceive the glory of the true power of Christ's godliness. Instead, they purposed to remake Him in their image by establishing Him as their political savior in the mold of an earthly regent, decked in all of the pomp, regalia, and circumstance of the highest order. Christ would have nothing of this, instead retreating to a lonely place that He might please the only One that really mattered, namely His Father that was in heaven.

That same evening He would perform the second miracle by supernaturally walking on the water in the midst of a raging storm. The disciples had been rowing for some three or four miles, undoubtedly feeling as though they were getting nowhere, being no match for the uninvited waves that kept pounding the slow-moving vessel. Jesus' rescue was met at first with great fear, having defied all sound reason, logic, and all of their life experience. Then He spoke. Their fears were calmed, he was received in the boat, and in a matter of moments, He was able to do what they had been unsuccessful in doing in all of their previous exertion and effort. At once the boat appeared at their destination.

The next day the crowds sought and found Jesus in Capernaum, only to have their mail read by the One who does not need the testimony of a man to know a man. He told them that they had only sought Him because they had had their fill of the loaves. Their religion had taken them as far as it could, which was still an infinite distance from the shore of God's grace. A distance that could only be traversed by them providing that which God required, which was of course, their faith. Simple belief in the One that the Father had sent would be all that was required to bridge the otherwise insurmountable gap.

Unfortunately, this was still more than many of them were willing to give. Many in that crowd were still not willing to believe without the so-called proof of a "sign." People that find themselves in this frame of mind are unaware that the very nature of the demand for a sign all but guarantees that no amount of "proof" will suffice. This is because the questioning comes, ultimately, from a place of unbelief. Christ had already performed enough among them to have convinced even the most ardent of atheists.

It's no surprise then their immediate appeal was to Moses, the one in whom they had placed their trust. Christ straightway attempts to lift their thoughts higher to the source of the true bread which is from heaven. He identifies Himself as the bread of life and further instructs them that they would have to eat of his flesh and drink of his blood to obtain eternal life. Now He had gone too far. This was the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back. He had found the outer limit of the majority of their fleshly hearts. They would go no further. And many of them followed Him no more.

He let them go without objection or plea, turning then to test his disciples and the ones that the Father had given to Him. "Do you want to go away as well?" He asked. True disciples must be tested, but will continue to believe and trust when every other prop, false comfort, selfish motivation, and self-made religion fail. Christ is the only hope for those that have lost hope in all else.

Some come to God of their own power and follow for all kinds of reasons. We shouldn't be the least surprised then when many fall away on account of the cross and the less-traveled paths it takes us down.

- **In Meditation**

Read and pray through John 6, two to three times with your S.P.E.C.S. on. You may choose to read it through in different translations. Make sure and record your observations. Begin to ask God how you can not only apply this to your own life, but in the training and instruction of others in righteousness.

John 6:1-15 The Feeding of the Five Thousand

Meditate on the who, what, when, and where of this passage and record your observations _____

Evaluate the motivation of the multitude that was following Jesus. How can we behave similarly in our relationship with God? _____

What do you think is the significance of Passover and the timing of this miracle? _____

In what way was Jesus trying to "test" Philip in verse five? _____

What should Philip's response have been? _____

How did Jesus utilize the disciples in the performance of this miracle and what was He

trying to teach them? _____

We discover later in the passage that many of those that are following Jesus will turn away, and yet here in verse fourteen, after seeing Him perform the miracle, they call him the Prophet. How do you reconcile these two facts? _____

Why do you think the crowd wanted to make Jesus a king? What kind of king do you think they expected and wanted? Why was this of no interest to Jesus? _____

What do you think is the connection between the performance of this miracle and Jesus' subsequent revelation in the following verses that He is the "bread of life"? _____

Jesus is interacting in this passage with two distinct groups of people - his twelve disciples and the multitude. What do you think are the needs of each of these two groups and what are Jesus' goals and purposes with each? _____

John 6:16-21 Jesus Walks on Water

What does this miracle reveal about the heart, character, and attributes of Christ? _____

What is the significance of the fact that as soon as they received Him into the boat, they appeared at their destination? _____

John 6:22-59 Jesus Is the Bread of Life

The next day the crowd again finds Jesus. In what way did they continue to misunderstand the fulness of who Christ was and the purpose of the miracles He had performed? _____

After He gently attempts to correct their motivations, He prescribes for them the work that God requires. Explain the irony of the statement in verse 29 that belief is the "work" that God requires, when belief really requires no work at all! _____

What does this entire discussion about the manna that they made mention of in the wilderness, and the bread from Heaven that Christ provides, reveal about the nature of the crowd's continued misunderstanding? What was Christ's message to them? _____

What does it mean that Christ is "the bread of life" and to "eat his flesh" and "drink his blood"? _____

John 6:60-71 Jesus Alone Has the Words of Life

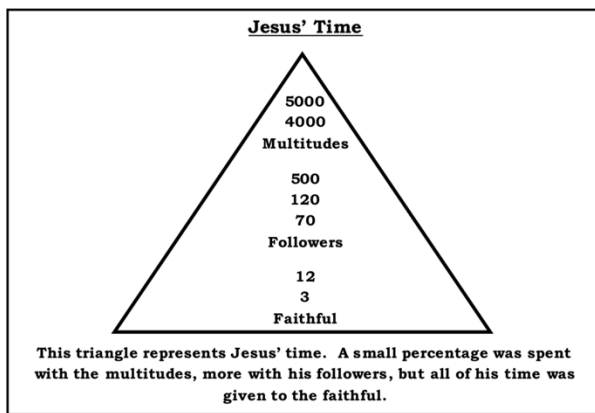
What was it that caused many of the disciples to turn and walk away from Christ? _____

What was in their heart that caused them not to accept Christ's teachings? _____

What does this passage reveal about the heart, character, and practice of a true disciple of Christ? _____

Sharpening Your Axe

Consider the following diagram. It shows the breakdown of the time Jesus spent with various classes of His followers. The least of His time, represented by the top of the triangle, was spent with the larger crowds while most of his time was spent with His most faithful, as represented by the bottom of the triangle. Why is this? What can we learn about not only being a disciple, but also making disciples from these considerations? Go back to chapter six again and meditate on Jesus



In Prayer

Thank you Lord that You have revealed yourself as our Provider, not only as one who meets our temporal earthly needs, but also as one that satisfies our deepest spiritual and eternal needs. Teach us Lord how to depend wholly upon You and Your moment-by-moment grace for all that we need for life and godliness. Help us to trust You through all of life's trials and trouble, taking up our crosses and following You, even when all of Your fair weather friends all fall away. In Jesus name.