

LIFE GROUP LESSON

John the Life-Giving Gospel • Week of May 17

Introduction

In John, chapter six, we see Jesus continuing his preaching and teaching, purposeful in his Father's work. As he heals and feeds the multitude, and his popularity increases, so do opinions about him. Many are attracted because of what they think Jesus will do for them. Like the crowds, we may come to points in our lives when we think: *'I should be lord and Jesus should serve me ... if he serves me, I'll follow; but if not, I'm out of here.* We too may experience shifts in our attitudes when storms arise: *Why is this happening to me? I thought if I followed Jesus, things would be good for me. If he doesn't show up and make this right, I'm going back to _____!* Friends, this is a dangerous place to be.

Read John 6:1-15

"Surely this is the Prophet we have been expecting"! Why did the people say this? Read Deuteronomy 18:15. According to Moses' words in this Scripture, the LORD promised to raise up a Prophet like Moses, and when he did, they should listen to that Prophet. Here is Jesus. He steps on the scene and claims to be the only One who can lead people out of slavery to sin, and yet our agendas keep us from freedom. He is not about what we *think* he should be about.

Discussion:

- How do self-focused agendas keep us from seeing the truth about Jesus ... about his purpose and about our roles in aligning with his purpose?
- Jesus tests Philip, according to v6, 'for he already knew what he was going to do'. When Jesus tests us – and he already knows what he is going to do – what should our response be? What about when his words seem impossible?
- Andrew is hopeful, according to v8-9, yet he still struggles to see what Jesus can and will do. When has Jesus invited you to join him in his work, and you responded in faith even though it seemed impossible? What did you learn from that experience?

Read John 6:16-21

- As the people are about to 'force him to be their king', we see Jesus "slipping away into the hills by himself" (v15). Time alone with his Father is essential with Jesus. Yet, he was with his Father and not his disciples when a gale swept down upon the disciples on the sea. It seems on the heels of something special and miraculous – i.e. being a part of a miracle like serving 5,000+ individuals – we immediately face an unexpected storm. What does v21 say about letting Jesus into our 'boat'? How does his presence result in safe arrival at our destination?

Read John 6:22-40

- The crowds go back across to Capernaum looking for Jesus. What does Jesus say in v26-27?
- Notice their response in v28: "We want to perform God's works, too. What should we do?" But Jesus told them—

"This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent" (John 6:29).
- What is the difference in *do* and *believe*?

Do is based on effort. *Believe* is rooted in faith. They want to share the fame and popularity of Jesus. But when he says simply *believe* ... that is hard. *Believe* is an on-going act of surrendering our will and control over to Jesus. When Jesus is in the driver-seat of our mind, body, and spirit, he tells us what to do. Thus, as Jesus makes this clarification in v29, there is a shift in the exchange, and a deeper (darker) motive begins to surface. "Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do?" ... and they begin to attribute God's provision in the wilderness to Moses instead of to the LORD God.

Jesus sets them straight – and all of us who read John, chapter six—

"I tell you the truth, Moses didn't give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world ... I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But you haven't believed in me even though you have seen me" (John 6:32-33, 35-36).

Read John 6:41-59

These verses show us how Jesus is not a people-pleaser. He speaks truth and it cuts. Yet, he is always clear about his mission: "For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will" (v38). If Jesus

did not come to do his own will, but only his Father’s will, how much less is Jesus going to be about *your* will – your personal agenda, your feel-good comfort – as though he is your cosmic bell-hop!

- Thoughts? Do you resonate with making demands of Jesus? Have you ever threatened to go away if self-centered prayers were not answered?

Further Consideration

It may be time we stop and assess our hearts. Am I my own god? Or is the Living LORD God of Israel made known to us through His Son, *Yeshua Hamashiach* God? *Be still and know that I AM GOD!* declares our LORD through the psalmist (Psalm 46:10a) “... I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world” (Psalm 46:10b; see also Psalm 2:12 and Psalm 110:1). If Jesus has come down from heaven (v33) and is the only one who has seen the Father (v46), then he is the only way to the Father! When we come to him, we must be about what Jesus has always been about: Honoring his Father.

- Understanding that Jesus’ mission is not about our personal comfort, how might we be better prepared to face storms of life? (share a word of encouragement with fellow Life Group participants)

In Closing

Jesus’ words “... *unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you. But anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person up at the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink*” (vv53-54) are certainly difficult to receive. But friend, we too must hear his words today. He invites us to ‘feast’ on his presence offered to us. Spiritual caloric intake is available only through the Holy Spirit. Don’t try to reason-it-out with physical ears but hear and *listen* with spiritual ears—

“Yes, I am the bread of life!” (John 6:48)

Read John 6:60-71

Close in a time of prayer. Ask the Lord to give you a greater measure of faith so you may feast upon him. Ask the blessing over the meal he provides: His very body and life offered to *you*. Dine on him today in your spirit, so one day you will dine with him in glory.

One Year Bible Reading

May 17: 1 Samuel 20:1-21:15, John 9:1-41, Psalm 113:1-114:8, Proverbs 15:15-17

May 18: 1 Samuel 22:1-23:29, John 10:1-21, Psalm 115:1-18, Proverbs 15:18-19

May 19: 1 Samuel 24:1-25:44, John 10:22-42, Psalm 116:1-19, Proverbs 15:20-21

May 20: 1 Samuel 26:1-28:25, John 11:1-54, Psalm 117:1-2, Proverbs 15:22-23

May 21: 1 Samuel 29:1-31:13, John 11:55-12:19, Psalm 118:1-18, Prov. 15:24-26

May 22: 2 Samuel 1:1-2:11, John 12:20-50, Psalm 118:19-29, Proverbs 15:27-28

May 23: 2 Samuel 2:12-3:39, John 13:1-30, Psalm 119:1-16, Proverbs 15:29-30



Text: John 6

PLAIN TRUTH:

Don’t be _____, Jesus is the _____ of _____ and whoever _____ in him has _____ life.

1. This is the _____ God wants from you: _____ in the _____ he has sent.
2. _____ in Jesus’ teachings _____ you from the _____ and _____ of the world.

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