



September 22, 2019

# DIGGING DEEPER

John 6:1-15

**The purpose of this document** is to help us  
take the word beyond our Sunday gathering  
and to **think through the practical**  
**implications of the Scriptures** and then to  
**be intentional about living the word out.**

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# The Test

## Questions Worth Asking

### A Curious Crowd (John 6:1-4)

After performing signs in Jerusalem that made him public enemy number one to the religious leaders, Jesus stole away to have some quiet time. The crowd that was in Jerusalem witnessing the work of the Lord had different thoughts about Jesus than the religious leaders. They were intrigued by the signs that Jesus performed and followed him to learn more about him. Even though they weren't quite sure what to make of this mystery man that was known by his disciples as Messiah, the crowd saw enough to press in and get a closer look. Even now, as believers, there are still aspects about Christ that we are still learning as we grow in the faith. There are moments that he messes up our paradigm or challenges our way of thinking. Rather than being closed off to things we haven't seen or heard before, we are better served to be like the curious crowd and press into the presence of God to learn more about who he is and what he is doing.

- Why is it so important for you as a believer to not put God in the box of your thinking and to continue to be inquisitive and search his word to get to know him?

### Food for Thought (John 6:5-7; Genesis 22:11-14)

While the crowd was coming to learn more about Jesus, the Lord was looking to teach the disciples more about himself. Jesus leveraged the coming crowd as a teaching aide to show more of himself to the disciples. The Lord wanted to see where his disciples thought they should go to buy the large crowd of people some food. He really didn't need their counsel to solve this situation. This was simply a test of the regularly broadcasted thinking of man. The Lord wasn't looking to torture the disciples. He was giving them a test to help them. Through testing we learn what is in our heart and we are also positioned to learn new and wonderful things about the Lord to grow our faith. Yes, the tests of the Lord stretch us in ways we didn't think we could bend. It challenges our thinking in ways that makes us uncomfortable. But it ultimately grows in ways that allows are faith to become deeper, fuller and more fulfilling. We must embrace the test as our great Rabbi (teacher) desires to grow us in our faith.

- How have tests from God helped you to see the limitations you have put on trusting in him and compel you to draw closer to him?

## Steps Worth Taking

1. **A Curious Crowd** – We must stop closing ourselves off to God because things don't come the way we want them to and/or expect them to.
  - Read the word daily and ask the question, "what is God teaching me about his character?" while you meditate on his truth.
2. **Food for Thought** – God doesn't torture us, but he does test us to grow us.
  - Write two of the most significant challenges you are facing in your life today.
  - On another piece of paper write down what you are learning about yourself and God through these situations.

# The Stretch

## Questions Worth Asking

### Failing Foresight (John 6:7; Hebrews 11:1,6)

Philip was not able to figure out how to get the resources to feed such a large crowd. So rather than answer Jesus' questions, which he would have been able to answer because he was born and raised in the nearby town of Bethsaida, Philip decided to point out to the Lord the problem. Like Philip, our inability to figure out the "how" to the "what" that God is asking us moves us to question rather than respond. The Lord didn't ask Philip to figure anything out. He simply asked him to provide information that he already had. The Lord isn't asking us to provide him with solutions, he is simply asking us to give him what we already have.

- What about our senses (experiences) seem to trip us up from responding rightly to our Savior's request?

### Bread Without Belief (John 6:8-9; Matthew 17:14-21)

Unlike Philip, Andrew responded to the Lord's request to find what food was available among the crowd (Mark 6:38). Andrew returned with what he was able to find, but he decided to add some commentary upon presenting the few morsels from a little boy's meal. He felt the food was insufficient because he was working off the what he could see in the basket instead of seeing who was before him. Moses, Abraham, Gideon, Barak, and possibly even you have pointed out the limitations of the life being offered in service to the Lord. Here is my little, but it clearly doesn't look like it will be enough. The Lord has proven that he can do little with much if we will simply trust to give all, no matter how small, that we have. Give your morsel to the Messiah and watch him do much.

- How has the all-sufficiency of the Savior helped you to have a different perspective on the insufficiency you once felt (or still wrestle with) within yourself?

### Serving Without Solutions (John 6:10)

Though the disciples may have stumbled over an inability to figure things out, when given instructions by the Lord, they didn't hesitate to act. The Lord told them to seat the crowd. This act would have positioned the people with an expectation that they would be fed. And the last the disciples knew, they didn't have the means to feed the people. Yet, they trusted the Lord enough to prepare the people for a meal. The disciples' willingness to obey the Lord even though they weren't certain how the matter would be resolved demonstrates the type of faith that is needed to feed thousands. The Lord wants to use us to feed the crowd, but we must be willing to obey him even when we don't understand.

- How does the faithfulness of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit fuel you to faithfully serve even when you don't have all the answers?

## Steps Worth Taking

1. **Failing Foresight / Bread Without Belief** – We must see past what we can see if we are going to see a move of God.
  - Set aside quiet time twice a day to meditate on the word of God.
2. **Serving Without Solutions** – The Lord requires us to obey him and he is worthy to be trusted even when we don't understand how he is going to work things out.
  - Identify a command in the word of God that you have struggled with (i.e. [Ephesians 4:32](#)) and follow through even though it feels uncomfortable.

# The Growth

## Questions Worth Asking

### Living with Leftovers (John 6:11-13; Luke 8:22-25)

The measly meal of the little boy not only fed a crowd of more than 5,000 people, but there were baskets full leftover. The disciples and all the people witnessed the Lord of more than enough show up and provide. When we are willing to trust and obey the Lord, even in situations and moments of seeming lack, we are positioned to witness the God that brought the children out of Egypt on full display. And the leftovers from that experience will fuel our faith for years to come as we recall that the Lord of more than enough is not limited in his ability to provide for those who are pursuing his presence.

- How does the feasting on what God has done in your life give you the boldness to trust and obey him in present uncertain times?

### Recognizing the Redeemer (John 6:14-15)

So amazing was the sight that the Lord performed that the people couldn't help but acknowledge that he was someone special. And while the crowd didn't make the connection that Jesus was the Christ, the disciples couldn't help but to continue to affirm what they have come to believe. As with other miracles, the disciples were learning who Jesus truly is and what he was really capable of. Our awareness of who God is as we are witnesses to what he does helps us to have an even firmer footing in our faith. Jesus continues to show us that he is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is worthy of our undivided devotion; he deserves our full confidence and trust. The believer must remember that we have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. The miracle of the cross trumps the miracle of feeding the crowd. Our response should be even more radical since we actually know who he is. He is the Christ, the one who came to save the world from sin. And he did just that for you and me.

- How does remembering who Jesus is and what he has done rekindle an attitude of gratitude within you?

## Steps Worth Taking

1. **Living with Leftovers** – Eating from the leftovers of past miracles can help us to willingly position ourselves to experience future miracles from our great Creator.
  - Share with someone a time when God showed up and moved in your life in a way that blew your mind.
  - Feast (meditate) on the many layers that led to that miraculous moment and how you came to stand in awe of God.
2. **Recognizing the Redeemer** – Babies light up when they see their parents. We should light up at the sight of our Savior.
  - Recall how your perception of God changed after experience the saving power of the Son of God and the zeal you were ready to live with for the Lord.
  - Capture that zeal and use it to love on someone so that they may come to see the Savior through you.