

JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE

John 6:22-59

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Jesus and the crowd

Key-location: Synagogue in Capernaum

Key-repetitions:

- Bring back to life/raise up from the dead: (Jn 6:39, 40, 44, 54).
- Live forever/eternal life: (Jn 6:27, 40, 47, 51, 54, 58).
- Father wants: (Jn 6:38, 39, 40, 57).
- Crowd/people: (Jn 6:24, 25, 28, 30, 34, 41, 52).
- People grumbled/argued: (Jn 6:41, 43, 52, 60-61).
- Believe in Jesus: (Jn 6:29, 35, 40, 47, 64, 69).
- Bread/manna/food: (Jn 6:26, 27, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58).

Key-attitudes:

- People's selfishness in wanting Jesus to daily feed them.
- Jesus' sternness when he answered the crowd.
- Conflict between Jesus and the people.
- Peter's confidence in Jesus.

Initial-situation:

The third year of Jesus' public ministry began when King Herod ordered the murder of John the Baptist. After Jesus fed the multitude of 5,000 men, the people wanted to annihilate King Herod and to crown Jesus as king. Jesus sent the disciples across the lake in a boat. However, Jesus remained behind to pray. Late that night, Jesus walked across the water and joined the disciples in the boat.

Initial-problem:

A crowd stayed on the shore of the lake where Jesus fed the 5,000. The next day, the crowd went looking for Jesus.

Final-situation:

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One who came from God."

BIBLE STORY

Jesus, the Bread of Life

A crowd stayed on the opposite shore of the lake where Jesus fed the 5,000. The next day, the crowd realized that only one boat had been there, and Jesus did not enter

it with his disciples. They saw the disciples go off without Jesus. Some boats landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread. Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus (Jn 6:22-24).

They found Jesus on the other side of the lake in the synagogue in Capernaum. They asked him, "Teacher, when did you get here?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth. You're looking for me because you filled your stomachs with bread, not because you understood my miracles. Don't work for food that spoils, but work for food that endures to eternal life – food the Son of Man will give you. God the Father has placed his seal of approval on the Son of Man."

The people asked Jesus, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

Jesus answered, "This is what God wants you to do: believe in the one he's sent."

The people asked Jesus, "What miracle will you perform that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the desert."

Jesus answered the people, "I tell you the truth, Moses didn't give you the bread from heaven. It's my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread that God gives is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

The people said, "Sir, give us this bread from now on."

Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. The person who comes to me will never go hungry. The person who believes in me will never be thirsty. I've already told you; you've seen me and still you don't believe. Every person that the Father gives me will come to me, and I'll never turn away anyone who comes to me. I didn't come down from heaven to do what I want to do, but to do what my Father who sent me wants me to do. The one who sent me wants me to never lose any of those whom he has given to me. He wants me to bring them back to life on the last day. My Father wants that all people who look to the Son and believe in him to have eternal life; he wants me to bring them back to life on the last day" (Jn 6:25-40).

The Jews began to grumble about Jesus because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." The people said, "Isn't Jesus, the son of Joseph? Don't we know his father and mother? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven?'"

Jesus answered, "Stop grumbling among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. I'll bring him back to life on the last day. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. I tell you the truth, he who believes in me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna bread in the desert, but they died. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he'll not die. He'll live forever. The bread that I give is my flesh, which I'll give so that the world may live."

The Jews started arguing among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus insisted, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you've no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I'll bring him back to life on the last day. My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. In

the same way that the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna bread and later died. Whoever eats this bread will live forever."

Many Disciples Abandon Jesus

Many disciples heard Jesus' words and said, "This is a difficult teaching. Who can accept it?"

Jesus was aware that his disciples were grumbling and he told them, "Does this offend you? The Spirit gives life; human power and willpower is of no use. The words I've spoken to you are spiritual and they are life. Yet some of you refuse to believe." Jesus knew from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him.

After this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

Jesus asked the twelve apostles, "Do you want to leave with the others?"

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One who came from God" (Jn 6:60-71).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How was the crowd's interest different from Jesus' interest?
2. In our culture, how are some people following Jesus for the wrong reason?
3. How did Jesus use the crowd's desire for food as a teaching moment?
4. What did the Father want Jesus to do?
5. What did Jesus mean when he said he is the Bread of Life?
6. What promises did Jesus make for those who come to him?
7. How is the bread Jesus gives, greater than the bread Moses gave?
8. What did Jesus mean by eating his flesh and drinking his blood?
9. Why did many people find Jesus' teaching hard and unacceptable?
10. How do people today try to turn Jesus into their "errand boy" to do what they want him to do?
11. Why did Peter and the others decide to stay with Jesus?
12. What keeps you from turning your back on Jesus and going to something else?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Jesus rejects self-centered people who want to follow him only for physical and temporal benefits.** Jesus criticized the people who looked for him only because he gave them food (Jn 6:26-27).

2. **Doing the work of God does not come from actions done, but from believing Jesus.** The multitude asked about the works God requires and Jesus answered that the work of God is to believe in the one he sent (Jn 6:28-29).
3. **People who make a sincere commitment to believe in Jesus Christ as God's Son and as their personal Savior, have a guarantee of eternal life.** Jesus promised that he would not lose even one person whom the Father had given him (Jn 6:39).
4. **Jesus, the true Bread of Life, fulfilled the meaning of the miracle of manna in the Old Testament.** See Exodus 16:1-3, 13-16, 31. Jesus is the true Bread of Heaven and the Bread that God the Father gives (Jn 6:32). He is the Bread of Life (Jn 6:35, 48). He is the Bread that is superior to manna (Jn 6:50, 58). Manna was unable to prevent the death of those who ate it; however, those who feed on Jesus will never die (Jn 6:58). Jesus is the complete spiritual nutrition for mankind. The believer depends on Jesus to exist and to have strength, just as he depends on food (bread) to sustain his physical life (Jn 6:32, 35, 48).
5. **The person who does not understand that he is sinful and needs a Savior, but follows Jesus seeking physical and material benefits, will become disappointed in him and will feel deceived by him.** The Jews didn't seek Jesus as the Savior to deliver them from the power of Satan, sin and death. They just wanted Jesus to be their king, so he could cure their diseases, give them food and liberate them from the control of the Romans (Jn 6:14-15, 34). They felt deceived by Jesus because he didn't do what they wanted him to do (Jn 6:60-66).
6. **A person can hide their true feelings from other people, but not from God.** The other eleven disciples did not know that Judas was not a true believer, but Jesus knew that Judas would betray him to their enemies (Jn 6:64, 70).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Chant:

Words in **bold and underlined** are stressed. Stress words by stretching them out instead of increasing volume.

GROUP 1	GROUP 2
Jesus promises:	Believers respond:
<p><u>Do not work for food that spoils</u>, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you (Jn 6:27 NIV).</p>	<p><u>Lord, to whom shall we go?</u> You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God (Jn 6:68-69 NIV).</p>
<p>All those the Father gives me will come to me, and <u>whoever comes to me</u> I will never drive away (Jn 6:37 NIV).</p>	<p>Lord, to whom shall we go? <u>You have the words of eternal life.</u> We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God (Jn 6:68-69 NIV).</p>
<p>For my Father's will is that <u>everyone</u> who looks to the Son and believes in him <u>shall have eternal life</u>, and I will raise them up at the last day (Jn 6:40 NIV)</p>	<p>Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that <u>you are the Holy One of God</u> (Jn 6:68-69 NIV).</p>