

John Chapter 6 Continued

We saw in the last lesson how Jesus fed the multitude. Now the people have followed Jesus to Capernaum.

John 6:25 "And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?"

They had not seen Jesus leave, so this question was understandable. This name Rabbi, was a way of showing respect to Jesus as their teacher and their spiritual leader.

John 6:26 "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled."

This phrase emphasizes Jesus' point that the crowds which followed Him were motivated by superficial desire for food rather than any understanding of the true spiritual significance of Jesus' person and mission.

Jesus scolds them for being so shallow in their view. A great miracle has been done by Him and instead of them realizing that He is Messiah, they have followed so they can be fed again or receive more signs, wonders, and healings from Him.

They are looking on the gifts and not looking at the Giver. Jesus is disappointed in them because they do not understand who He is.

John 6:27 "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

Jesus rebuked the crowd for purely materialistic notions of the messianic kingdom. Although Messiah's kingdom would be literal and physical someday, the people failed to see the overriding spiritual character and blessing of "eternal life" given immediately to those who believed the witness of God to His Son.

Jesus in the verse above, is instructing these people to worry more about their spirit and less about their flesh. The spirit of man shall live on, but the flesh will return to dust. Jesus is telling them that the gift of eternal life which He shall give them is much more important than food for their flesh.

Jesus has been set aside from the beginning for this purpose by the Father.

"The food which endureth unto everlasting life" is a continuing discourse indicates that this was a reference to Jesus Himself.

John 6:28 “Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?”

This is the same as saying “How can I know the will of God in my life? What must I do?”

They thought Jesus was saying that God required them to do some works to earn everlasting life, which they thought they would be able to do.

John 6:29 “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

The crowd misunderstood Jesus’ prohibition (in verse 27), do not work, which prompted Jesus to remind them that an exclusive focus on material blessings is wrong. The only work God desired was faith or trust in Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. The “work” that God requires is to believe in His Son.

Just as Abraham's faith was counted unto him for righteousness, those whom Jesus saves must believe in Jesus as Savior and Lord. God sent Jesus to save whosoever will believe.

John 6:30 “They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?”

The question demonstrated the obtuseness, the spiritual blindness of the crowd, and their shallow, selfish curiosity. The feeding of the 5000 (15,000 to 20,000 as we saw in verse 10), was enough sign to demonstrate Christ’s deity.

Now they want another sign. They are so blinded; they would not believe with dozens of signs.

John 6:31 “Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

The crowd’s logic appeared to be that Jesus’ miraculous feeding was a small miracle compared to what Moses did. In order for them to believe in Him, they would need to see Him feed the nation of Israel on the same scale that God did when He sent manna and fed the entire nation of Israel during their wilderness wanderings for 40 years.

They were demanding that Jesus outdo Moses if they were to believe in Him. They quoted from (Psalm 78:24).

What they do not realize, is that they are speaking to the Bread of life. It appears here, that they want Jesus to feed them on a regular basis, as their fathers were fed manna in the desert.

John 6:32 “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.”

The manna God gave was temporary and perished and was only a meager shadow of what God offered them in the true bread, Jesus Christ, who gives spiritual and eternal life to mankind or the world.

Jesus explains to these people who are caught up in the law of Moses, that Moses did not feed the children of Israel, God did. Jesus here is speaking of Himself as being the true Bread of life.

John 6:33 “For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.”

This phrase is synonymous with the phrase “bread from heaven” (verse 32).

Jesus again here, is speaking of Himself being the Bread which brings eternal life. Jesus came from heaven and took on the flesh of man.

John 6:34 “Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.”

Here again, we see John mentioning something that is not mentioned in the other gospels. This shows Jesus as the Bread of life. These people are looking for physical bread and they want Jesus to furnish it for them with no effort on their part. They have misunderstood what Jesus was telling them.

This statement once again demonstrated the blindness of the crowd, for they were thinking of some physical bread and failed to understand the spiritual implication that Jesus was the “bread”.

John 6:35 “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

“I am the bread of life” means the bread that gives life. The life of which He speaks is spiritual and eternal.

The obtuseness (in verse 35), prompted Jesus to speak very plainly that He was referring to Himself.

Just as the bread on the table in the tabernacle symbolized Jesus, He is showing here that through belief in Him they would have their needs taken care of. Jesus literally came down from heaven (like the manna), giving Himself to us so that we might have life eternal.

In heaven, there is a river of life and a tree which furnishes twelve manner of fruits for each month (Revelation 22:1-2). Jesus is the water and the tree of life.

John 6:36 “But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.”

Jesus tells them, you have seen me and my miracles and still you do not believe me.

John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

The Father has given to Jesus as His followers whosoever will. Those who come to Jesus and accept Him as Savior and Lord shall not be turned away. Salvation is a free gift from God, but we must reach out and receive it unto ourselves before we have it. Jesus will not deny His own.

This verse emphasizes the sovereign will of God in the selection of those who come to Him for salvation. The Father has predestined those who would be saved. The absolute sovereignty of God is the basis of Jesus' confidence in the success of His mission.

The security of salvation rests in the sovereignty of God, for God is the guarantee that “all” He has chosen will come to Him for salvation. As God is Omniscient, He knows who will and who won't heed the calling of the Holy Spirit and come to Jesus.

The idea of “gives Me” is that every person chosen by God and drawn by God (verse 44), must be seen as a gift of the Father's love to the Son. The Son receives each “love gift” (verse 37), holds on to each (verse 39), and will raise each to eternal glory (verses 39-40). No one chosen will be lost.

This saving purpose is the Father's will which the Son will not fail to do perfectly.

John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”

“For I came down from heaven” is another indication of Jesus' deity.

When Jesus agonizes in the garden before His crucifixion, His last words are "Nevertheless not my will, but thine". Jesus was on a mission. He submitted His will to the will of God the Father.

John 6:39 “And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), tells of the time when Jesus shall raise the dead in Christ to eternal life with Him. The Father's will is to glorify Jesus by His followers.

In (Hebrews chapter 2), we see that everything is in Jesus' hands. He is over all creation.

Hebrews 2:8 “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.”

The Creator is in total control of His creation.

John 6:40 “And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

“That every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him”; this verse emphasizes human responsibility in salvation. Although God is sovereign, He works through faith, so that a person must believe in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God who alone offers the only way of salvation. However, even faith is a gift of God, intellectually harmonizing the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man is humanly impossible. But perfectly resolved in the infinite mind of God.

John 3:16, explains this completely “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The parable of the harvest of wheat is symbolic of this last day when the wheat will be carried into the barn (heaven), and the chaff (unbeliever), will be burned. (Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17), both tell of the wheat and chaff.

In (verses 41-50), we see this section constitutes the beginning of the crowd’s reaction to Jesus’ discourse on the bread of life and may be divided into 3 sections.

- (1) The murmuring reaction of the crowd (verses 41-42);
- (2) Jesus’ rebuke of the crowd for their reaction (verses 43-46);
- (3) Jesus’ reiteration of His message to the crowd (verses 47-51).

John 6:41 “The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.”

In this gospel the term “Jews” is often associated with hostility toward Christ. It is used ironically to indicate the incongruity of their rising hostility toward their Messiah. Since they hardened their hearts, God judicially hardened their hearts also. In the tribulation, Israel will turn to Jesus as their true Messiah and be saved.

The reaction of the synagogue crowds to Jesus’ statements was the same as the Jews in the wilderness who grumbled against God both before and after the manna was given to them.

Because Jesus said that “I am the bread which came down from heaven”, the Jews anger centered in two things:

- (1) That Jesus said He was the bread, and
- (2) That He came down from heaven.

Both the Jews in Jerusalem and the Galileans reacted negatively when Jesus placed Himself equal with God.

John 6:42 “And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?”

These Jews could not see through spiritual eyes. They thought of Jesus as Joseph's son. Jesus was in fact, the Son of God. They didn't believe Him because they had seen Him grow up and they did not believe He was their Messiah.

On a human level, they knew Jesus as a fellow Galilean. These words are reminiscent of Jesus' words (in 4:44), "a prophet has no honor in his own country." Their hostility sprang from the root of unbelief. Jesus' death was impending because hostility had resulted everywhere He went.

John 6:43 "Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves."

Murmuring has always displeased God. Just as God punished those who murmured on the way to the Promised Land, God dislikes this murmuring here.

John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

It is the Father's will that all should be saved. He sent Jesus into the world to save the world. Whosoever believes in Jesus as Savior and Lord shall be saved.

The Holy Spirit tugs at our heart and draws us to Jesus.

God will not always strive with us. If we refuse over and over, the Holy Spirit will stop drawing.

John Chapter 6 Continued Questions

1. Where have the people followed Jesus?
2. By what name did they call Jesus?
3. What did the name they called Him by show?
4. Why did Jesus say they had followed Him?
5. What did Jesus say labor not for?
6. Why is the spiritual more important than the flesh?
7. In verse 28, what question did they ask Jesus?
8. What was Jesus' answer to them?
9. What did they ask Jesus for in verse 30?
10. What great miracle had they just witnessed?

11. What did they tell Jesus their fathers had eaten in the wilderness?
12. What are they really asking Jesus to do?
13. Jesus told them _____ did not give the bread from heaven, the _____ did.
14. In verse 33, who is the Bread of life?
15. What does John show that the other gospels omit?
16. What selfish thing were they asking Jesus for?
17. Who will come to Jesus?
18. Why had Jesus come to earth in verse 38?
19. In verse 40, Jesus tells us what the Father's will is. What is it?
20. Quote John 3:16.
21. Where can we find the parable of the wheat?
22. Why were the Jews murmuring?
23. Who did they think Jesus to be?
24. Who can come to Jesus?