

LIFE GROUP LESSON

I AM • Week of May 7

Introduction

Let's be honest, there are times we follow Jesus because we want him to do something for us. If Jesus is true bread from heaven, as we will read about, we must understand that the things of this world, including physical appetites, will one day pass away. But Jesus – and our need for him – will never pass away. We were made for heaven, not earth. In John, chapter six, Jesus feeds a large crowd of 5000 men, with a boy's 'five barley loaves and two fish' (John 6:1-2, 8-10). Scripture says the crowd follows him because of his miraculous signs and healing of the sick. Indeed, feeding this crowd was a miracle; the people wonder if he is the prophet they had been expecting (Deuteronomy 18:15, see also 2 Kings 4:42-44).

As Jesus has the people sit down on the grassy slopes, he takes the bread and gives thanks to God. The Lord then serves everyone more than enough. They eat until they are full, but only until the next day when they are hungry again. We know this because the next day, the crowd is looking for Jesus; in fact, more boats from Tiberias arrive at the place where Jesus fed the 5000 men. It seems word is getting out that not only does Jesus perform miracles, he even feeds us! Yet, notice when they cross over to Capernaum looking for Jesus and find him on the other side of the lake, they want to know, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" – as if to say, 'Jesus, you should have checked in with us first.'

"Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval'" (John 6:26-27).

Read John 6:28-71

(Please read slowly. Ask the Holy Spirit for insight, to open your minds to hear and understand. Focus on what Jesus is saying to the people around him, and to us)

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

These are difficult words; but beautiful words, as Peter declares, words of life (v68). Jesus speaks figuratively about eating his flesh and drinking his blood; we can see how many were confused and offended. Notice when Jesus says – "I am the true bread that

came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will not die as your ancestors did (even though they ate the manna) but will live forever" (v58) – he is saying "I AM that Manna" my Father provided in the wilderness. Jesus gives his body, broken for us. Jesus gives his blood so that we may have life. As we remain in the Lord Jesus, he remains in us. He is true bread, true drink.

2. What are you going to do about it?

There is a reason Jesus was born in Bethlehem, *House of Bread*. There is a reason Jesus tells his disciples to pray, *Give us today our daily bread* (Matthew 6:11); there is a reason Moses was able to remain in the LORD's presence in the wilderness, on Mt. Sinai forty days and forty nights (Exodus 24:15-18); there is a reason Jesus quotes God's words to Moses when he is tempted in the wilderness: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God' (Matthew 4:4). Christ is our sustenance. There is no life apart from him.

"And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD"
(Deuteronomy 8:3 RSV).

3. How can we help you?

The opening verses of the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (John 1:1, 14 RSV). Only as a man could the Christ of God take our place in death, pay a price we could never pay, and achieve victory over sin and death. Because of this, Jesus is able to say: "For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will. And this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them up at the last day. For it is my Father's will that all who see his Son and believe in him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day" (John 6:38-40).

Do you find life's sustenance in the Son of God?

In Closing – Please listen, meditate, feast upon Jesus – true Bread – as we listen to a song written and performed by Ashley Beth Kyker Vital-Herne (2014), 'Manna' – here is the link: <https://youtu.be/G7PyukLIUY0>
The lyrics will follow on the next page.

You are the very air I breathe
You are the food I eat
You are the very drink I drink
I need you, I need you

Jesus, we need you more
Down to the very core
Lord, the only thing that can fill me is you
Only Your Spirit, your love, and your truth

More than all that is required to stay alive
We worship you, O Lord,
Giving you our love, our lives
We need you more, we need you more, we need you more

I could search the heavens high
I could search the valley low
Still no one I could find that compares to you, not to you

Lord, in my weakness I tried
To fill the voids deep inside
But love is not out of sight
No, it is mine, it is mine

Your grace and your mercy
You offered it to me
Your love now consumes me
It is mine, it is mine

Lord, you are the very air I breathe
You are the very food I eat
You are the very drink I drink
I need you, I need you

Close in a Time of Prayer asking:

How can I pray for my fellow Life Group participants this week?

One Year Bible Reading

May 7:1 Samuel 1:1-2:21, John 5:1-23, Psalm 105:37-45, Proverbs 14:28-29
May 8: 1 Samuel 2:22-4:22, John 5:24-47, Psalm 106:1-12, Proverbs 14:30-31
May 9: 1 Samuel 5:1-7:17, John 6:1-21, Psalm 106:13-31, Proverbs 14:32-33
May 10: 1 Samuel 8:1-9:27, John 6:22-42, Psalm 106:32-48, Proverbs 14:34-35
May 11: 1 Samuel 10:1-11:15, John 6:43-71, Psalm 107:1-43, Proverbs 15:1-3
May 12: 1 Samuel 12:1-13:23, John 7:1-30, Psalm 108:1-13, Proverbs 15:4
May 13: 1 Samuel 14:1-52, John 7:31-53, Psalm 109:1-31, Proverbs 15:5-7

I AM

Text: John 6:22-59

Plain Truth:

**Jesus uses the _____ to highlight
the _____.**

- 1. Our hunger for _____ brings us to the
_____ where Jesus satisfies our _____
for meaning.**
- 2. Jesus points out they're putting the _____
before the _____.**

May 7, 2023