

Bible Studies on the “signs” in John’s Gospel

Study 5: The Hungry are Fed

1. **Discuss:** When you cater, do you like to have too much food, or exactly the right amount? Why? How do you feel when you don’t have enough for your guests, even the unexpected ones? What do you do if or when you are confronted with that problem?
2. **Read John 6:1-14**
 - a. Is Jesus at this point of his ministry looking for crowds to teach and minister to? Why or why not? (vv. 1, 3-4, 15; cf. Mark 6:31-32)
 - b. Why is the crowd coming to Jesus? (v. 2) Is that OK? Why or why not?
 - c. What can we learn from the actions of the little boy? (v. 8-9, 12-13)
 - d. What was the solution that Jesus had in mind to the catering problem? (vv. 6, 10-11)
 - e. What conclusion to the crowd come to about who Jesus is? And why? (v. 14; cf. Deuteronomy 18:15-19)

Note: Background to the feeding

Two Old Testament incidents provide background for this incident.

The first is the 40 years Israel spent wandering in the desert after their exodus from Egypt under Moses. The desert provided nothing to eat or drink, and they cried out to Moses (cf. John 6:32) to feed them:
READ Exodus 16:4

The second is Elisha’s feeding of the hundred men with twenty loaves: READ 2 Kings 4:42-44

3. **Read John 6:22-40**
 - a. How would you describe the efforts that some from the crowd made to find Jesus? What motivated that pursuit? (vv. 26, cf. 14-15)
 - b. In the context of Jesus’ discussion with the crowd, what is the “food which perishes” that the crowd are pursuing? (v. 27, cf. 11-13, 15, 31, 49, 58)
 - c. How do you feel when you have wasted your time and effort on some pursuit, task, project, or venture? What do you do to ensure that you don’t waste your limited resources?
 - d. Jesus’ words to his pursuers in verse 27 are also a warning for us. How might we “work for food which perishes”?
 - e. Is it easy to obtain the food which lasts into eternal life? Why or why not? (vv. 27, 29)
4. **Read John 6:41-58**
 - a. Is Jesus literally saying he is bread? What does he mean? How might this help us to understand what is going in communion, for example?
 - b. What are the various responses to what Jesus says? Do we see similar responses in our community today?
5. **Conclusion**
 - a. What does this incident tell us about who Jesus is and what he came to do? vv. 35, 51; John 1:3; 2:10; 10:10; Psalm 145:15-16)
 - b. What does this teach us about what we come to Jesus for?
 - c. What does this teach us about how we should respond to Jesus?