

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to John 6

This morning, we are continuing our study through the Gospel of John.

There was one thing I dreaded more than anything else in school – and that was when the teacher said, “Ok class, take out a piece of paper – we are going to have a pop quiz”

And the reason I hated them so much was because they were so unexpected – and another reason I hated them was because I was unprepared.

And the grades I received on my pop quizzes revealed my readiness

As believers, many of the trials and difficulties in our walk in Christ – are God’s pop quizzes.

Whether we pass or fail, depends on our readiness

Do we truly trust Him?

Do we truly believe what He says?

This morning, in our text, we are going to see Jesus give a pop quiz to His disciples.

They have walked alongside Him for two years; they have seen sign after sign that reveals who He is.

They have sat through the Sermon on the Mount and other teachings –

It is time to see where they stand

It is time to see what they are made of

And we will see this as Jesus Feeds the 5000

By the way, this is the only miracle besides the Resurrection of Jesus Christ that we find in all four gospels.

Let's pray...

[Jhn 6:1-14 NKJV] 1 **After these things** Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is [the Sea] of Tiberias. 2 Then a **great multitude followed Him**, because they saw **His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.**

For the past couple of weeks, John (inspired by the Holy Spirit) has provided for us the dialogue that Jesus had with some of the Jewish religious rulers while He was down in Jerusalem observing one of the Jewish feasts.

You might remember that they were upset and had accused Jesus of violating the Sabbath by healing a man that had been lame for 38 years.

And as a result, Jesus revealed to them His credentials / His witnesses that spoke of who He is and by what authority He did what He did – He was sent by God, to do the work of God and He Himself is God.

So from the end of the encounter that Jesus had with the religious rulers – John now takes us from Jerusalem back up to the Sea of Galilee.

And depending on what feast Jesus went down to Jerusalem for in chapter 5 (John doesn't tell us), the events that take place here in chapter 6 happened 6 months to a year after what happened in chapter 5.

So, Jesus and His disciples are up near the Sea of Galilee

And a huge crowd of thousands of people began to follow Him.

Now, the word that is used here for “follow” - the tense implies that the crowds kept following Him continuously.

Why did they follow Jesus?

Because, they saw the signs which He performed, on those who were diseased.

Those who were weak, without strength, powerless, feeble – in fact, John uses the same word to describe the lame man back in chapter 5.

It was one picture of the many healings Jesus was doing.

So the crowds see these signs / healings and they start to follow.

Now, at first – we may think this is a good thing – after all, these signs were done so that we would believe.

However, what was happening here and we will see this in the next few weeks, is that the multitude only followed Jesus to get something from Him.

Whether it was entertainment or healing – they followed to see what He would do next

Their interest was in the miraculous – not the Miracle Worker.

**3 And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.**

As we read this verse – you might be asking yourself, why Jesus went up the mountain with His disciples.

I want to remind you that the purpose for John writing his gospel was not to give us another detailed account of everything that Jesus did

He wants us to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He is the Messiah and that by believing that we can have life.

So John skips a lot of details

However, if we read Matthew, Mark and Luke – we get the reasons for Jesus taking disciples up to the mountain.

Turn to Mark 6

**[Mar 6:30-31 NKJV] 30 Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. 31 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.**

So, in Mark's gospel, he tells us that it was during this time that Jesus' disciples had just returned – returned from where? Jesus had sent them out two by two, preaching that people should repent, casting out demons, and anointing with oil many that were sick

We also find in Luke's gospel that it was at this time that they had received word that John the Baptist had been beheaded by Herod and now Herod is looking to arrest Jesus.

So they were all tired, they are all wore out – they have been giving and giving of themselves in ministry.

They were all hungry, they were all mourning for their friend – and Jesus takes them up to a deserted place in Bethsaida

They just want to get away from everyone

The other gospels tell us that they get into a boat and as they get to Bethsaida – there was a crowd waiting for them

And Jesus didn't tell His disciples to turn the boat around – He ministered to the people – He taught them – He healed many of them.

**I had you make a note that Jesus sat down with His disciples –**

This doesn't mean that they crashed under a tree –

This means that as they got up to the top of the hill, Jesus once again began to minister to His disciples.

**4 Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.**

The significance of this verse is that this begins the last year of Jesus' earthly ministry.

**5 Then Jesus lifted up [His] eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" 6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.**

Jesus is ministering to His disciples, He lifts up His eyes and He sees the crowd coming toward –

And even though He knows that they are following Him for the wrong reason, even though He knows that many of them are going to abandon Him by the end of the chapter, **make a note: He had compassion on them.**

He didn't simply feel sorry for them – that is sympathy

He had compassion – He was moved to do something about it –

The Gospel of Mark tells us that when He saw them, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. (Mark 6:34)

Now, before we get to Philip – in the other gospels we find that the disciples didn't have compassion for the multitudes.

In fact, the disciples tell Jesus to send the people away.

"We are tired Jesus, we just want to rest and eat – we tired of dealing with these people all the time"

So here Jesus goes to Philip – Why Philip?

Because Bethsaida was his hood

He knew where all the good bakeries were

Jesus knew how to resolve the problem

But He goes to Philip to test him /

It's pop quiz time.

This is where Philip is going to find out what he is made of

This is where Philip is going to find out whether or not he has been paying attention to what Jesus had taught the disciples for the past two years.

Church –

Sometimes our difficulties are God's pop quizzes.

And He wants to show us what we're really made of.

These quizzes show us whether or not we have really placed our trust in Him

It shows us where we are lacking; it shows us areas in our lives we need to surrender to Him

**[2Co 13:5 NKJV] 5 Examine yourselves [as to] whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?--unless indeed you are disqualified.**

The scriptures tell us to be ready at all times for these pop quizzes

**[2Ti 2:15 NKJV] 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**

Later on in 2 Timothy – Paul reiterates this to Timothy and the church

**[2Ti 4:2 NKJV] 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season [and] out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.**

Church – we can find great comfort in this, that God is in control of the pop quizzes in our life.

God's not trying to break us with the tests, He's trying to prove to us what we can do if we fully trust Him.



I was reading this week that in the early days, some of the railroad bridges that were constructed over long canyons, they had to be tested.

And the way they are tested is that they would load a train with enough cars and equipment to double its normal load and park it in the middle of the bridge where it stays there for 24 hours.

The intent was not to break it

It was to prove that it wouldn't break

That's what God is wanting to do with our trials and testing's.

He's not going to load the bridge with so much stuff that it will break, but with enough to prove that it won't break.

When we fail our trials, it's not because we weren't strong enough, but we just quit.

God is simply trying to teach us how to handle things His way.

When we're faced with a difficult situation, are we going to respond in God's way, or in our way?

**7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."**

A denarri was a day's wage

So just to get a picture of what Philip is saying –

I know we are dealing with inflation

But if I make \$50 a day – Philip is saying we would need \$10k to buy bread alone – and that would only allow everyone small piece of bread.

That is not including the price for fish, the price for delivery service, the price for charcoal, etc...

So what Philip is saying is – it is humanly impossible to feed the multitude with our resources.

Even if they had that kind of money, it wouldn't even begin to meet the need.

**8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, **but** what are they among so many?"**

Andrew is the next disciple to take up the teacher's pop quiz.

He too was from Bethsaida –

He heard Philip tell Jesus that it was humanly impossible to feed the crowd – and he says, I searched the crowd and – I found a little boy and he is packing a lunch,

5 barley loaves and two small fish.

First of all, barley was the coarsest, toughest kind of grain – it was what the poor people ate.

And these rolls were usually the size of a dinner roll.

So five dinner rolls and two small fish.

If Andrew would have stopped right there – he would have aced the test

But then he said the word “but”

He was aware of the provisions – but then he started to look at the situation practically – and then he raised his objection to it.

5 dinner rolls and 2 fish will never work

Church, how many times has the Lord provided for us five loaves and two fish and we failed to use them because we thought they were too small.

But over and over again in the scriptures, we find that the Lord seems to delight in using a little to do a lot.

**[1Ki 17:8-16 NKJV] 8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which [belongs] to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow [was] there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in**

a cup, that I may drink." 11 And as she was going to get [it], he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." 12 So she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I [am] gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." 13 And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go [and] do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring [it] to me; and afterward make [some] for yourself and your son. 14 "For thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.' " 15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for [many] days. 16 The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah.

So not only did Elijah eat, the widow and her household ate for many days and the handful of flour and the little oil never ran out.

Church, God doesn't require much to do a great work.

Hand full of flour in His hands – no problem

5 rolls and two fish in His hands – no problem as we will see

You or I – no problem

God is looking for availability

He is looking for people who are willing to give Him a chance to use them

He is looking for people who are willing to say, "Yes, you can use me"

**10 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.**

Here is the next test that Jesus gives to them.

Make the people sit down.

Now, think about this – the disciples know there is a problem.

Jesus has commanded them to feed the people – but they have no clue on how it is going to get done.

Here Jesus gives them an order to make the crowd sit down

Even though they lacked faith, I love the fact that Jesus didn't tell them – get out of the way clowns, let me show you how it is done.

Jesus met them where they were and said, "Even though you don't have faith to see what I can do with the little given to Me, I will use you anyways – make the people sit down"

Jesus easily could have spoken a word and baskets of fish and bread appear in the midst of the multitude –

Jesus could have made the fish and the bread fall on laps of the people as they were sitting down

He could have even filled the stomachs of the people up with fish and bread

But He chose to use the disciples in order to teach them and to give them the opportunity to serve them.

Now, the other gospels tell us that Jesus tells the disciples to sit them in groups.

Here John also provides us with the size of the crowd. 5k men – that means that with woman and children, there could have easily been 15k to 20k people. Possibly more.

Now, John is the only one of the four gospels that mentions that there was green grass.

This tells me that he was an eyewitness to this event –

And I also believe that he includes this because he was pointing to Jesus as their Messiah, as their Shepherd

Psalm 23 – The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want.

He makes me to lie in green pastures -

Remember, Jesus had compassion on them because they had no shepherd – Here is showing them that He is their Shepherd.

**11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed [them] to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.**

Notice the order – very important

Jesus distributed first to the disciples and the disciples to those who were sitting.

I see a valuable lesson here in verse 11

And that is to give to others what Jesus has given to us.

This is the pattern for correct ministry

People get burned out in ministry because they take it upon themselves to give, give give and they don't bother to receive from Him.

If we want to really learn how to minister to people, then we need to learn to come to Jesus first, and as He hands us the bread, we then turn around and pass it out to those around us.

We have to receive in order to give

Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 10:8

Freely you have received, freely give.

If you want to be useful to the Master, you need to eat at His table.

If you want to be helpful to others around you, you better be getting your words from Jesus.

We need to spend time with the Lord each day.

He sustains us as He gives to us.

Don't forget, the disciples were tired, they were hungry but as they gave the multitude – they were strengthened and they were fed at the same time.

And notice, everyone got as much as they wanted.

As much as they wanted

As much as they wanted

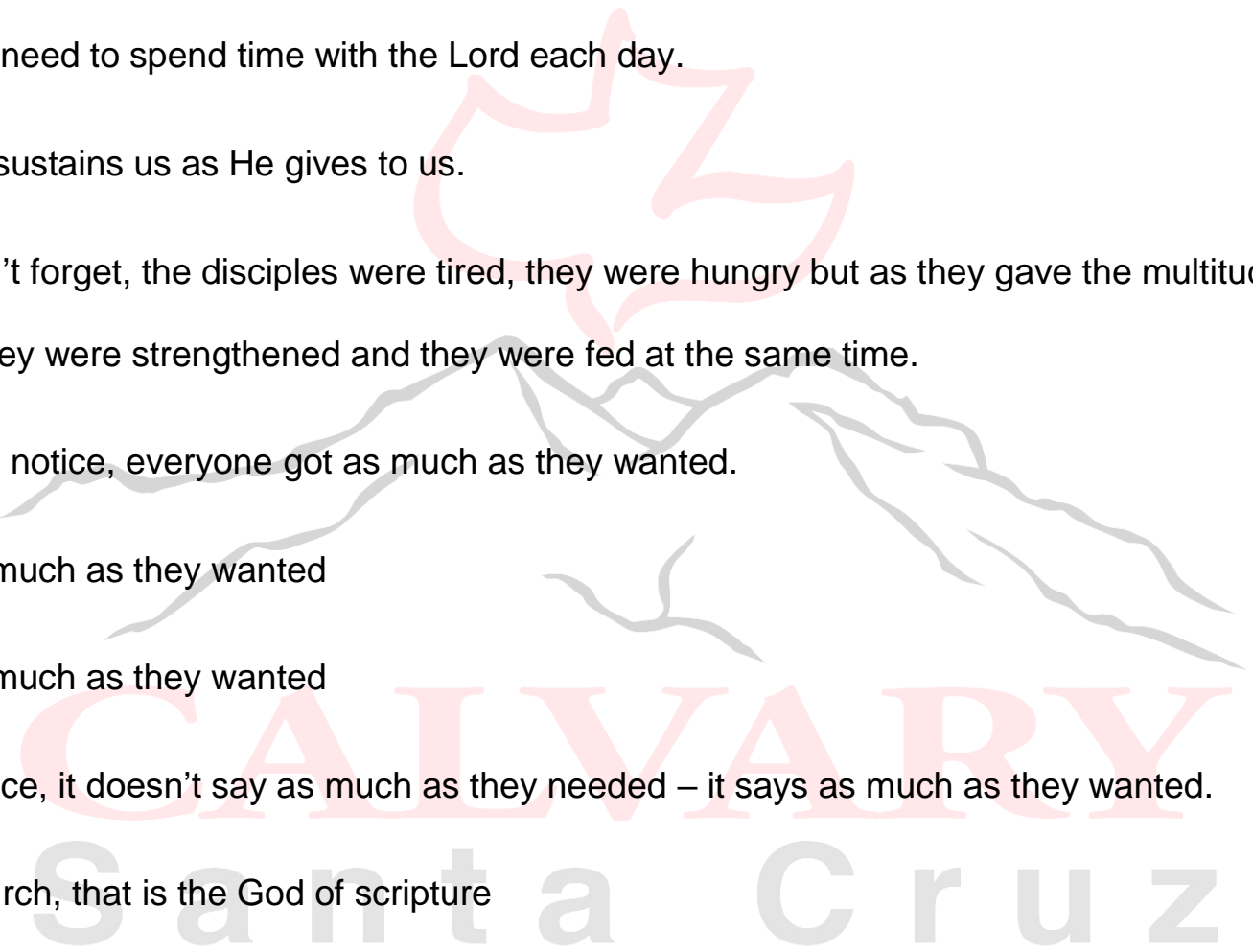
Notice, it doesn't say as much as they needed – it says as much as they wanted.

Church, that is the God of scripture

That is our God – as much as they wanted

There is no lacking at Jesus' table

Turn to Psalm 34





**[Psa 34:8-10 NKJV] 8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD [is] good; Blessed [is] the man [who] trusts in Him! 9 Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! [There is] no want to those who fear Him. 10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good [thing].**

When we come to Jesus, in a way, we will want more and more , yet in another way, we will be totally satisfied.

**12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." 13 Therefore they gathered [them] up, and filled **twelve baskets** with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.**

So not only did the multitude eat as much as they wanted – there were left overs.

You have 15k-20k people eating – you start with 5 barley loaves and you have left overs.

How did that happen?

Jesus

And they had 12 baskets left over.

Why 12?

If you read bible commentaries or what certain scholars write, they will say that there were 12 baskets because the people needed to see that Jesus was going to meet the needs of the 12 tribes of Israel.

It may be the reason –

BTW - How many disciples were there? 12

I think that Jesus was just saving Himself some work and those baskets were lunch for the next day.

He not only met their needs that day and the needs of the multitudes.

He also met their future needs.

**14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."**

**[Deu 18:15 NKJV] 15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,**

As a result of what Jesus did, the people were going to make Jesus their King

However, they were ready to make Jesus their king based on His ability to provide their physical needs.

As long as He gave them what they wanted – they were willing to support Jesus.

In their eyes, He would do everything that an earthly King would do.

Defeat Rome – sustain them, bring them prosperity

Once the miracles stop – we will see the same people turn on Jesus.

Church, our love for Christ is not based upon if our prosperity – our love for Christ is based upon who He is – He is our Lord and our God.

Amen

Let's pray...

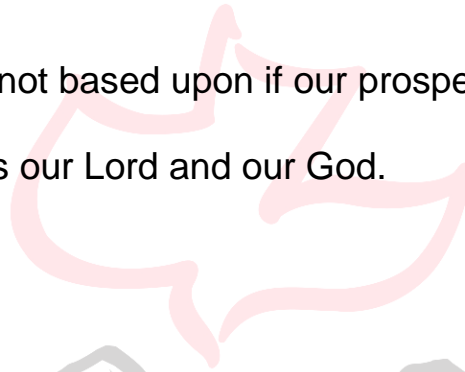
To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.



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Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Our text this morning – is more than Jesus feeding the 5000

It is about placing our trust in Him

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24'

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

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