

# The Bread of Life



The first part of John 6 records two astounding miracles that form the backdrop to one of Jesus' powerful claims about himself.

Firstly, Jesus feeds more than five thousand people by multiplying five loaves of bread and two small fish (John 6:1–15). The miraculous feeding of the crowd is recorded in all four gospels and mimics the feeding of the Israelite multitudes with manna as Moses led them from Egypt (Ex. 16:35).

Then, Jesus walks on water on the Sea of Galilee and causes the disciples' boat to arrive safely on the opposite shore (John 6:16–24). (Matthew and Mark describe the additional detail of Jesus calming the storm; Matt. 14:32; Mark 4:39.) John's account of Jesus walking on water includes fewer details than the other accounts, but underscores Jesus' authority over all creation.

The next day, the crowd realized that Jesus wasn't in the boat when his disciples sailed away. When they heard he was on the opposite shore, they wondered how he made the seven-mile lake crossing and followed him in boats. Jesus seemed frustrated that the people were more interested in receiving additional loaves of bread from him—and even potentially using him to achieve their own goals of overthrowing Roman rule to set up a kingdom—than in discovering the

unique identity and mission of Jesus. He wanted the crowds to move beyond just consuming the gifts he offered and imagining how they could use his power for their purpose. He called them to understand his identity and character as the one who is uniquely connected with and sent from God the Father and who offers them eternal life and not just perishable bread.

In John 6, Jesus' miracles serve as convincing confirmation of the truth of his claim: "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).

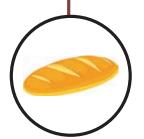
#### **OUTLINE OF JOHN 6**



Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes
JOHN 6:1–15



Miracle of Walking on Water JOHN 6:16–24



Teaching about the Bread of Life JOHN 6:25–59



## **Key Bible Passage**

For this session, read about Jesus' miracles and his teaching on the bread sent from heaven in John 6:1–59.

### **Optional Reading**

Read Exodus 16:1–18 about how the Israelites experienced God's provision of manna during their wilderness journey after leaving slavery in Egypt.

"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

**JOHN 6:35** 





**1.** According to John 6:32–40, how is Jesus as the "bread from heaven" superior to the manna that Israel ate during their wilderness wandering?

**2.** How does Jesus describe and reveal his unique relationship with God the Father in these three sections of his teaching in John 6?

Verses 35–40: \_\_\_\_\_

Verses 43–51: \_\_\_\_

Verses 53–58: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** What power does Jesus say he has in verses 39, 40, 44, and 54? Consider how this is a power that only belongs to God. What does that tell us about the person of Jesus Christ?

# **Life Application Questions**

1. Jews in Jesus' day believed in God, but Jesus was telling them to do something much harder for them: to believe in him as the "I am," the "bread from heaven" (John 6:29, 41–42). Is there a difference between believing in God and believing in Jesus? Was taking that step from believing in God to trusting in Jesus a difficult one for you—or is it still?

**2.** Read John 6:29. Even after becoming a Christian, sometimes believers still feel compelled to find good works to do to earn eternal life in addition to simple belief. Why do you think this is so? Have you felt this way?

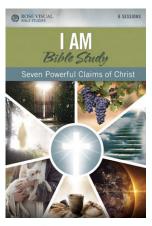
**3.** Jesus said the crowds were more interested in finding bread to eat than they were in discovering why Jesus was performing miracles like multiplying bread and fish. Why are we sometimes more interested in the blessings and gifts Jesus can give us than in who he is?

#### **Prayer**

Our Father, thank you for extending life to us by sending Jesus as our bread into our world. We are humbled that we can enjoy this life with you by faith. Help us to remember that for every problem, need, or challenge that we face, you are present with us and will provide the strength and wisdom we need to continue. Give us the determination to keep finding our strength in you and trusting you to meet every need in this life and the life to come. Amen.

"Lord of all being! Thou alone canst affirm I AM THAT I AM; yet we who are made in Thine image may each one repeat 'I am,' so confessing that we derive from Thee and that our words are but an echo of Thine own. We acknowledge Thee to be the great Original of which we through Thy goodness are grateful if imperfect copies."

-A. W. TOZER





#### I AM Bible Study

In the Gospel of John, Jesus uses "I Am" statements that tell his listeners exactly who he is: the Bread of Life; the Light of the World; the Gate; the Good Shepherd; the Resurrection and the Life; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and the True Vine. These claims infuriated the religious leaders and eventually led to Jesus' crucifixion. This six-session study examines Jesus' extraordinary claims and shows how Jesus provides, protects, guides, saves, and gives everything we need to grow in spiritual maturity.

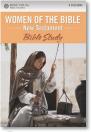
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