

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN

STUDENT LESSON

THE BREAD
OF LIFE

Open it

1. What is your favorite way to eat bread?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read John 6:22–71.

2. Why were the crowds looking for Jesus?
3. What comparison does Jesus make between Himself and the Old Testament?
4. What “promises” does Jesus make?
5. What is Jesus talking about in verse 51?
6. Why did the people find Jesus' teaching hard to accept?
7. Why did the 12 disciples not leave Jesus?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Full-Filled

Read John 5:22–36.

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays for a couple reasons. First, because it always falls near my birthday. Second, because it's a holiday where we eat great food (and a **LOT** of it!). Every year I get excited as November approaches and my anticipation builds for Thanksgiving to come. But, you know what I love the **MOST** about Thanksgiving? While it marks the end of Fall, it also marks the beginning of the Christmas season, which is “the most wonderful time of the year.” Just like Thanksgiving is great in and of itself, but also signifies the beginning of something else, Jesus is claiming to be **THE** something greater that was coming after. Check it out.

Jesus makes a connection between Himself and the “sign” that their fathers had during the Exodus many, many years ago. As the nation of Israel wandered in the wilderness after leaving Egypt, God provided manna for them to eat on their journey. Imagine how impossible it would have been for such a large group of people to find enough food for everyone to eat while they traveled in the wilderness—no fields to grow crops, no vineyards to grow fruit. Just them and the wilderness. God's provision of the manna effectively saved Israel from starving!

Well, Jesus says that **unlike** the manna God provided to the Israelites or the bread that Jesus fed the 5,000, Jesus claims to be **the true bread** from heaven. The Israelites ate their fill of manna each day, but soon had to gather more. The crowd got hungry again shortly after Jesus gave them bread and fish. Jesus says that unlike how ordinary bread temporarily fills us, those who will come to Him won't hunger or thirst again.

In other words, Jesus is claiming that the manna and the bread pointed to Him! He is the fulfillment of those things. It's only in Jesus that when we look to Him to satisfy the hunger not of our stomachs, but the hunger of our souls, we will truly and totally be satisfied. We'll never have to look for “bread” again!

8. **Why do you think God (Jesus included, since He is God) uses physical examples (bread and manna) to point to spiritual needs and spiritual provisions?**

9. **The crowds had just been fed by Jesus in the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 and yet they ask Him for another sign to confirm that God sent Him. Jesus basically tells them they have been given the sign already. What “signs” do we have that tell us that Jesus is sent from heaven by God?**

10. **What do you think Jesus means when He says, “whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst”?**

Day 4 — Today's Theme: Fore-Taste

Read John 6:51–59.

You have to imagine the confusion the people must have had at this conversation. I mean, it started out with talking about bread that would leave you filled and satisfied, and now it seems like Jesus is saying that people are supposed to eat Him? The people must have been thinking to themselves, “My **goodness!** This conversation, this teaching, has taken a strange and unexpected turn!” Jesus says, “Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise Him up on the last day.” It’s these kinds of statements that are leaving the people asking questions like, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”

I think the answer lies in what Jesus says in verses 51 and 58. In verse 51, Jesus tells the people that the bread that He will give for the life of the world is His flesh. Which, according to verse 58 is a different kind of bread. In other words, it seems like Jesus is saying that the bread He offers is different from the bread their fathers ate in the wilderness. This bread Jesus is referring to isn’t a bread that you literally eat, but is a “bread” that will satisfy their souls.

The things that Jesus is saying is a “fore-taste,” if you will, of what is to come—that His body would be offered up and broken on the cross, and that all those who will partake of His sacrifice will find eternal life.

13. How would you explain these verses for someone who might point to them and say, “See? Jesus is crazy because He said you have to be cannibals to be a Christian”?

14. What do you think it really means to “eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood”? How does this bread satisfy our souls?

Day 5 — Today's Theme: The "Bread" That's Hard to Swallow

Read John 6:60–71.

Christianity isn't always easy. Sometimes following Jesus calls us to really difficult things, and there are even some teachings found in the Bible that are really hard to understand. Even Peter says that some of Paul's writings are hard to understand (2 Peter 3:15–16). Well, this is one of those things!

As a matter of fact, this was one of those messages that Jesus shared that caused a lot of people to think twice about following Him. As a result, many of those people left Him (v. 66). It'd sure be nice if everything Jesus taught and did was super easy to grasp, easy to understand, and easy to follow. But that's simply not the case. The question will be, what will you do when you are confronted with something in the Bible that you don't quite understand or, maybe even, that you don't really like?

While this teaching was hard for those people, it's really important to Jesus. He didn't back down on what He said just because He saw a lot of people leaving. If He weren't 100% sure that what He said was the truth, then He might have called out and tried to water it down a little bit and make it easier to grasp. But He didn't do that.

I think that's why Peter answered Jesus after He asked His 12 disciples, "Do you want to go away as well?" and Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

Sure, sometimes Jesus' teachings may be hard to grasp and at times even seem impossible to understand, but where else will you turn? Where else will you go? Who else offers what Jesus does?

15. Do you find the things Jesus talked about in this passage hard to understand and follow?

What things have you found difficult to grasp and follow in the Bible?

16. How should we wrestle with and deal with the things we don't understand or find difficult to believe?