

# AM John 6 Jesus feeds the 5,000

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[ 0 : 00 ] of John chapter 6, John chapter 6, which you'll find on page 1074, 1074.

John chapter 6. After this, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias, and a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.

Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, Where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat?

He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, There is a boy here who was five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?

[ 1 : 30 ] Jesus said, Have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated, so also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, Gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost.

So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.

Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountains, to the mountain by himself.

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.

[ 2 : 48 ] The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened.

But he said to them, It is I, do not be afraid. Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

On the next day, the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.

Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, not his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum seeking Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, Rabbi, when did you come here? Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

[ 4 : 02 ] Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.

Then they said to him, What must we do to be doing the works of God? Jesus answered them, This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.

So they said to him, Then what sign do you do that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness.

As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jesus then said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true

bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. They said to him, Sir, give us this bread always. Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life.

[ 5 : 15 ] Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me, and yet do not believe.

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

So the Jews grumbled about him because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven.

They said, is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?

How does he now say, I have come down from heaven? Jesus answered them, do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day.

[ 6 : 39 ] It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God.

He has seen the Father. Truly, truly I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life.

Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.

And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? So Jesus said to them, Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

[ 7 : 47 ] Whoever feeds in my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not like the bread the fathers ate and died.

Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever. Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, This is a hard saying. Who can listen to it? But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, Do you take offense of this?

Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

[ 9 : 08 ] But there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him. And he said, This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.

After this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, Do you want to go away as well?

Simon Peter answered him, 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.

Jesus answered them, Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil. He spoke of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, For he, one of the twelve, Was going to betray him.

Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his word. And to... Please turn back in your Bibles to the passage we read. John chapter 6.

[ 10 : 32 ] The feeding of the five thousand. There are two basic questions the writers of the Gospels want us to ask ourselves.

The first question is, Who is Jesus? Who is this man? Who is such a superb teacher?

And who performs such amazing miracles? Who is he? And the second question is, Why did he come?

What was he about? What was his mission? Who is Jesus? And why did he come? In chapter 20 of his Gospel, John tells us that his aim in writing is, That his readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ, The son of God.

And that by believing, They may have life in his name. You see, John wants his readers to see, That Jesus is the promised Messiah.

[ 11 : 56 ] That he is God in human form. That's who Jesus is. But John also wants us to grasp, That Jesus has come on a rescue mission.

He came to secure eternal life, For all who trust him. John wants his readers to believe, In order that they may have life, In Jesus name.

With that in mind, I'd like to look with you this morning, At the miracle, Of the feeding of the 5,000, Here in John chapter 6. Let's consider first of all, The facts of the miracle.

The facts of the miracle. John tells us that Jesus and his disciples, Had gone off to the east side, Of the sea of Galilee. They had been followed, By a large crowd of people, Who were attracted, By the way Jesus, Was healing the sick.

John slips in the fact, That the time of the Passover, Was near. Passover was the festival, Which commemorated, The Israelites rescue, From slavery in Egypt, Hundreds of years before.

[ 13 : 19 ] Since it reminded the Jews, Of the historical events, Which had forged their identity, As a nation under God. Passover, No doubt, Fueled their longing, For the coming, Of the promised Messiah.

Was it possible, That this man Jesus, Was the deliverer, They were waiting for. Jesus and the crowd, Were in a relatively remote place.

The crowd hadn't eaten, For some time, They needed food. And so Jesus turned to Philip, And asked him, Where are we to buy bread, So that these people may eat.

Jesus was testing Philip, Perhaps, Not surprisingly, Philip was overwhelmed, By the scale of the task.

He answered, 200 denarii would not buy enough, For each of them to get a little. A denarius was a day's wage, For a labourer.

[ 14 : 30 ] And so Philip estimated, That it would cost, Well over half a year's wages, To buy enough bread, To satisfy the needs of the crowd.

That kind of money, Was way beyond, The resources of the disciples. By contrast, Philip's fellow disciple, Andrew, Chose to focus, On what food was to hand.

He drew attention, To a boy, Who had five barley loaves, And two fish. But his comment was, What are they, For so many?

Jesus, however, Was not fazed. Although the number of men alone, Was some five thousand, He asked the disciples, To get the people to sit down.

He then gave thanks to God, And taking the loaves, He distributed them to the crowd. I noticed as I read, That it was the loaves specifically, Which Jesus took, And for which he gave thanks.

[ 15 : 44 ] And the five loaves, Miraculously became, A plentiful meal, For the entire company.

So much so, That when everyone had their fill, The leftovers filled, Twelve baskets. The people were so impressed, They concluded, That Jesus, Must be the prophet, Of whom Moses had spoken, When he said, The Lord your God, Will raise up for you, A prophet, From among you, From your brothers, It is to him, You shall listen.

Jesus recognized, There was a risk, That they might try, To make him king, And so he slipped away, On his own. This was, A miracle, Of multiplication, Five loaves, Were multiplied, Many times over, There is no, Biblical support, For interpreting, What happened, In the way, Some liberal scholars, Have suggested, They have argued, That instead of, Multiplying the loaves, What Jesus did, Was somehow, To persuade, The people, To put aside, Their selfishness, And share, What food, They had brought, With them, And when they did that, They found, That there was, Plenty to go round, On that basis, What Jesus did, Would have been, No more than,

An exercise, In persuasion, It wouldn't have been, Much of a miracle, Would it? It wouldn't have, Convinced the people, That perhaps, Jesus, Was, The prophet, All the gospel writers, Regard this, As an amazing miracle, It's the only miracle, That is recorded for us, In all four, Gospels, No, The miracle, Cannot be explained, Away, Jesus did, What no, Ordinary human being, Could do, These, Are the facts, Of the miracle, But let's consider, Secondly, The significance, Of the miracle, The significance, Of the miracle, What, Did the miracle mean, What was the point, Of it?

John, Describes, The miracles, He records, In his gospel, As signs, In other words, They are pointers, To who, Jesus, Is, In multiplying, The loaves, Jesus, Demonstrated, Nothing, Less, Than, Supernatural, Power, When he asked, Philip, How they were going, To feed the crowd, He wasn't looking, For ideas, He was testing, Philip, He wanted to see, How he would react, John makes that point, In verse 6, Jesus said this, To test him, For he himself, Knew, What he would do, Jesus, Had a plan, And he knew, He could carry it through, The miraculous provision, Of bread, Must have reminded,

[ 19 : 19 ] The people, Of how God, Had miraculously, Provided their ancestors, With manna, From heaven, As they, Travelled, Through the desert, On their way, From Egypt, To the promised land, Six mornings a week, Without fail, Manna, Had appeared, On the ground, Now, Equally miraculously, Jesus, Had provided food, In a remote place, Surely, He had to be, More than just a man, John, Wants us to see, That he is the Christ, The Messiah, The Son of God, But the miracle, Tells us, Even more than that, About Jesus, It points to, Why he came, As well as to, Who he is, Jesus makes this, Clear in his comments, On the day after,

He performed the miracle, By this time, He is back in Capernaum, And many of the crowd, Have followed him, Having seen, And enjoyed the food, That he provided, By now, Presumably, They are less excitable, And in a better frame of mind, To hear, What he is to say, Jesus is well aware, That the crowd, Have followed him, For superficial reasons, Look at what he says, In verse 26, Truly, Truly, Truly, I say to you, You are seeking me, Not because you saw signs, But because you ate your fill, Of the loaves, The people aren't so much interested, In who Jesus is, As in the fact that he can meet, Their physical needs, But Jesus has much more to offer,

Verse 27, Do not labor, For the food that perishes, But for the food that endures, To eternal life, Which the Son of Man will give to you, For on him, God the Father, Has set his seal, Jesus is making the point, That he has spiritual food, To give them, He wants them to prioritize, Their spiritual needs, Over their physical needs, But while they, Take that on board, Up to a point, They focus on the nation, On the notion of laboring, Of working, And so they ask in verse 28, What must we do, To be doing the works of God, They naively assume, That they are capable, Of meeting any challenge, God sets them, But Jesus sets them straight,

This is the work of God, He says, That you believe, In him, Whom he has sent, It is not effort, On their part, God is looking for, But trust, In the one he has sent, All God requires, Is faith, Not faith, In the abstract, Not a vague, General belief, That there is a God, It is faith, In the one, He has sent, That people realize, That Jesus means himself, When he speaks, About the one, God has sent, And they point out, How their ancestors, Ate manna, In the wilderness, And ask him, Then, What sign, Do you do, That we may see, And believe you, What work, Do you perform, It is interesting, That they have, Made a connection,

Between the miracle, They have just witnessed, And, The miraculous, Provision of manna, Which sustained, Their ancestors, In the wilderness, But they want, More evidence, Even more evidence, You would think, The miracle, They have just witnessed, Would have been enough, It was enough, For them to begin, To wonder, If Jesus was the prophet, Moses had spoken about, But instead of, Acting on the evidence, They already had, They asked, For more evidence, The problem lies, Not with the evidence, But with them, In response, Jesus says, That, Even better, Even better, Than manna, From heaven, Is the true bread, From heaven, Verse 33, The bread of God,

[ 24 : 29 ] Is he, Who comes down, From heaven, And gives life, To the world, And in case, They haven't, Cotton'd on, He says, In verse 35, I am, The bread of life, Whoever comes to me, Shall not hunger, And whoever believes in me, Shall never thirst, Do you see what's going on here?

Jesus has, Jesus has, Miraculously provided, Provided food, For his hearers, Not just to show, He is God, In human form, But also to highlight, That he himself, Is the spiritual food, The spiritual bread, They need, He has come, Into the world, To give life, To the world, He has come, To satisfy, Men and women's, Deepest needs, Providing, For the physical needs, Of the crowd, The previous day, Was a pointer, To the real work, He had come to do, Which was to meet, The spiritual needs, Of a lost humanity, Physical needs, Like hunger, And thirst, Are real, But we have deeper, And more urgent needs, Than these,

We need to be reconciled, To the God, Who made us, Because we are cut off, From him, On account of our sin, We have forfeited, The life, For which we were created, We are under God's judgment, And we need to be restored, To fellowship with God, It was to do that, That Jesus came, Into this world, That's the significance, Of the miracle, Jesus, Is the son of God, And he came into

the world, To provide us, With, Spiritual food, To give us, The eternal life, We need, Thirdly, Thirdly, Let's think about, The challenge, Of the miracle, The challenge, Of the miracle, Jesus says, In verse 35, I am the bread of life, Whoever comes to me, Shall not hunger, And whoever believes in me, Shall never thirst, He invites his hearers, To come to him, To believe in him, He asks them to accept, Who he is, And why he has come, And on that basis, To commit themselves, To him, Eternal life, Hangs on it, Verse 47, Whoever believes, Has eternal life, Only by believing in him, Can a person, Have peace with God, Now, And enjoy his presence, In the life to come, Forever, Later, Later in the chapter, Jesus speaks, About eating his flesh, And drinking his blood, These expressions, Troubled the Jews, Who first heard Jesus, Say these things, And they've caused controversy, In the church, Down through the ages, But they're simply metaphors, Which mean the same thing, As coming, And believing, They point to the same realities, What they emphasize, Is the need for us, To identify with Jesus, In all that he has done, You know, It has often been pointed out, That, An expression, The New Testament, Frequently uses, Of the Christian, Is, That he or she, Is in Christ, We are so, Identified with him, That we are, In him, And,

[ 29 : 06 ] Eating and drinking, His, Flesh and blood, Reflects, That truth, That we need to identify, With him, Intimately, Jesus challenged, To his hearers, To come to him, And to believe in him, That challenge, Remains the same for us, Do we believe in Jesus, Do we accept, He came to rescue us, From sin, And death, And judgment, Are we persuaded, That he died, For us, The just, In the place, Of the unjust, To bring us to God, That he was delivered, Over to death, For our sin, And rose again, To guarantee, Our acceptance, With God, Even, Even as he, Challenges his hearers, Jesus, Acknowledges, That many, Will not, Come to him, Look at what he says, In verse 36, But I said to you, That you have seen me, And yet, You do not, Believe, Many grumbled about him, Verse 41, Because he said, He was the bread, That came down from heaven, What right did he have, To say that he had come from heaven, They knew exactly, Where he was from, They knew his parents, They ignored, The evidence, Of the miracle, And, Later they, Misunderstood, His metaphorical way of speaking, And they began to argue, Among themselves, As to how Jesus, Could possibly, Give them his flesh, To eat, An obvious question, Is this, Does the Jews, Failure, To believe in Jesus, Does their reaction, Mean that Jesus mission, Is doomed to failure, Not at all, Jesus knows, Jesus knows, His mission, Will meet, With a mixed reaction, The gospel, Always leaves room, For a response, Of faith, In the opening chapters, Of Mark's gospel, We see, How opposition, To Jesus, Quickly grows, The teachers, Of the law, And the Pharisees, Fall out with him, It's not just, The religious leaders, Even his own family, Think he's mad, And come to take charge of him, And it's in that context, That Jesus, Tells the parable, Of the sower, A farmer, Sows seed, With varying success, Some seed, Falls on a well-trodden path, Where birds, Come and eat it up, Some falls on rocky ground, Where there isn't much soil, And so the plants, Soon wither, In the scorching sun, Other seed falls, Among thorns, Which choke the plants, As they grow, It's only some seed, That falls on good ground, And bears lasting fruit, The parable tackles, The issue, Of rejecting Jesus, And his message, And head on, And here Jesus does, The same sort of thing, He recognizes the problem, Verse 36, I said to you, That you have seen me, And yet do not believe, But he then goes on, To reassure his hearers, That however many reject him, There will be those, Who come to him, And believe in him, And believe in him, Why is that? Because in eternity past, God the Father, Has made over to him, A people, Who will believe in him, And he, And he for his part, Has undertaken, To lose none of them, Verse 37, All that the Father gives me, Will come to me, And whoever comes to me, I will never cast out, Jesus mission, Will not be in vain, Its success is underwritten, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, By God, On the one hand, Jesus makes clear, That it's only by God's grace, That anyone, Will come to him, For salvation, Look at verse 44, No one can come to me,

[ 34 : 11 ] Unless the Father, Who sent me, Draws him, But on the other hand, He says in verse 47, Truly, Truly, I say to you, Whoever believes, Has eternal life, Whoever believes, Has eternal life, There's an open invitation, The two things are true, God's grace must, Draws to Jesus, But there is an open invitation, Whoever believes, Has eternal life, And that open invitation, Comes to you, Today, Whoever believes, Has eternal life, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, And you will be saved, You needn't concern yourself, With what God the Father does, That's not your business, All that need concern you,

Is how you respond, To the free invitation, Of the gospel, And if you do believe, You can rest assured, That yours will be, A copper bottom salvation, A salvation, Guaranteed by God the Father, And God the Son, This is the will of my Father, Says Jesus in verse 40, That everyone, Who looks on the Son, And believes in him, Should have eternal life, And I will raise him up, On the last day, In verse 66, Jesus tells us, That many of those, Who were following Jesus, Turned back, And no longer, Walked with him, That prompted Jesus, To ask the core disciples, If they wanted, To go away as well, It was Simon Peter, Who answered, For them, In the well known words, Of verse 68, 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, Peter, For one, Had responded positively, To the challenge, He saw, Who Jesus was, And why he had come, And he had put his faith, In him, Peter did, Have you, That's the challenge, Of this miracle, If you are not, A Christian, There is salvation, In no one else, For there is no other name, Under heaven, Given among men, Whereby we must be saved, But I wonder, If the miracle, Doesn't present, A challenge, To Christians too, Although it's not, Something that is brought out, In Jesus subsequent, Discourse, We noted earlier, How this miracle, Was one of, Multiplication, Jesus took, The five barley loaves, Gave thanks for them, And miraculously, Multiplied them, Multiplied them, He didn't create, The bread, Out of nothing, Rather, He took, What was made available, To him, And multiplied it, It was the disciple, Andrew, Who drew Jesus' attention, To the boys' provisions, But he clearly thought, They were utterly inadequate, What are they? He asked for so many, And so they were, Inadequate, Humanly speaking, But Andrew didn't reckon, With what Jesus could do, With meager resources, Put at his disposal, In Jesus' hands, One boy's lunch, Ended up, Feeding, A vast crowd, That being so, I wonder, If we are not meant to see, How Jesus can take, Our slender resources, And multiply them too, We may feel, We have little, To offer the Lord, Our resources, May be slender, Compared with the needs, Around us, But Jesus, Can multiply, Whatever we give him, We simply don't know, How he can use, [ 39 : 18 ] What is offered to him, For his glory, So do we see, Who Jesus is, Do we recognize, Why he came, And on that basis, Do we believe in him, And commit ourselves, To him, And having done that, Are we putting ourselves, All that we are, And all that we have, In his hands, So that he can use, What resources we have, Put at his disposal, For his glory, For his glory, Shall we pray, Oh Lord, We ask that we might, Recognize, Who Jesus is, And why he came, Help us to believe, In him, Help us to respond, To the invitation, Of the gospel, And help us to live it out, As we give ourselves, To your service, We ask it in Jesus name, Amen.