

John: The Word Became Flesh - John 6:1-21

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Date: 17 December 2023

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. My name is Jill Vrablik and I have the privilege of serving here on the children's ministry team and this morning I'm going to be reading John 6 1 through 21. 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, 200 denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.

One of his disciples Andrew Simon Peters brother said to him there is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish but what are they for so many? Jesus said have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place so the men sat down at about 5,000 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 12 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 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. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rode 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.

George Washington's impact upon the founding of this nation and the birth of this nation has been commemorated all across our land and we can see that. We who live in Washington state should know that intimately. Our very state is named after George Washington. We also have named a city in our state George because we're so clever and so we have George Washington both of which are named after Mr. Washington. Our very own nation's capital the other Washington is named after him. There are 241 townships named after George Washington. There are 26 cities across this nation that are named after him. There were four forts that are named after him. Five mountains that are named after Washington.

There are three seaports that are named after Washington and numerous parks and bridges that are named after George Washington. If you were to combine George Washington and the Pope, a national leader with a religious leader concept, you would have in the Old Testament it gives you a glimpse of how Israel may have thought about Moses. But that doesn't even compare to how Israel revered in a thought of Moses. It doesn't come close but it gives you a glimpse into how they may have thought. We saw last week in the message that Moses was the last witness. You remember the five witnesses that we spoke of and Moses was the last witness that testified to Christ's deity. We see this in verse 46 of chapter 5. So if you have your Bible with you today we're going to be in John chapter 6. We're going to be beginning our reading in verse 1 and we are going to, though look back in chapter 5 verse 46, we see for if you had believed Moses you would have believed me for he wrote of me. So we concluded chapter 5. John has in his mind concluding chapter 5 with Moses and it's going to be a theme that we are going to see in chapter 6. And here's the theme. I'm going to, there's two parts to the message. There's one part and the second part. The first part that we're going to look at and so the second part is going to, you're going to have to wait for it toward the end of the message to get the second part. But the first part is this.

[5 : 12] John is trying to communicate to the people of Israel to his disciples in this case that Jesus is greater than Moses. And so let's look at how this theme of Jesus being greater than Moses is recorded in chapter 6. Look with me.

Like Moses, we can say it this way, like Moses Jesus had a large crowd that followed him. Look with me in verse chapter 6 verse 2 and a large crowd was following him. That is Jesus. So Moses was the leader of Israel and when Israel escaped Egypt from slavery, a large all of Israel rose and followed Moses out of Egypt, leading approximately one to two million people. Secondly, like Moses, Jesus gathered a crowd who saw signs. Look with me in chapter 2 or verse 2, the second part of it, because why were they following him? Because they had saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. So Jesus was performing miracles on the sick.

People were being healed. So people were following him. But like Moses, Jesus gathered a crowd because they saw signs. Why did the nation of Israel in part follow Moses? Because of the 10 plagues they had just witnessed on all of Egypt.

They had just witnessed that they took the Lord at his word through the mouth of Moses saying, hey, put the blood of the sacrifice animal on the doorposts and on the lintel of your door and your household will be spared. They saw that.

Like Moses, number three, like Moses, Jesus led his followers to a mountain. Look with me in chapter or verse 3. Jesus went up to a mountain where he sat down with his disciples. Well, Moses led the people of Israel to the mountain. After passing through the Red Sea into the wilderness, Israel goes following Moses and they encamp at a mountain. And last or fourthly, Jesus did like Moses, Jesus did the miraculous surrounding the Passover. In verse 4, now Passover, now the Passover, the feast of the Jews was at hand. Well, Passover, where did that start? Passover was this yearly festival celebrating when God rescued his people out of Egypt, when the angel of death passed over the households again because of the, they taking God at his word, putting the blood of the sacrifice lamb on the doorposts and on the lintel. And it was the final plague in Egypt that had occurred before God led them out of Egypt at the hand of Moses. And so that brings us to two more ways that Jesus is greater than Moses. But what I want you to see is all throughout how he concludes chapter 5 and then how John opens chapter 6, you get these things that Jesus has in common with Moses, these themes that are very intentional. So there's two more ways that we're going to take a longer time now looking at with regard to the ways that Jesus is greater than Moses. He's like Moses but he's greater than Moses. And so we're going to look at the end of the passage today and then we're going to fill in the middle in a moment. But look with me in verse 16 because like Moses, Jesus miraculously crosses the sea. In verse 16, the passage that Jill read, we see that when the evening came, the disciples went down to the sea and got into the boat and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark and Jesus had not yet come to them and the sea became rough with the strong wind and was blowing. And when they had rode about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near to 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 land to which they were going. But recall, recall the predicament that Moses was in. And Israel was in rather when they were crossing the sea.

[9 : 55] Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt. Pharaoh's army was nipping at their heels. Ahead of them was the Red Sea. And God told Moses to stretch out his staff toward the sea. And we read in Exodus 14, 21 to 22, I believe we have this on the screen for us today. It says this, that then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land. And the waters were divided. In verse 22, that the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground and the waters being walled up to them on their right hand and onto their left. And God caused a powerful wind for the nation of Israel to walk through the Red Sea with the waters being pushed aside by this great wind and the ground was dry.

What an amazing sight. So here in this passage we see verse 18 and 19, there is a strong wind that is blowing and the disciples are seeking to cross the sea.

And can you imagine? This would be mind-boggling to see Jesus. Why didn't Jesus just go around the sea and meet them on the other side on dry ground?

Why did Jesus choose to walk on water out past the boat to see his disciples? It's the same reason we will see that he feeds the 5,000 and we'll look at that here in a moment. So that the disciples could witness his power and understand that he who he is and he is greater than Moses.

Jesus is walking on this water. They witnessed, if you will, his deity. No man can just walk on water. He has power over creation. Jesus is doing something that is beyond that which is natural and they are confronted with Jesus being far more powerful than they could even fathom. In the midst of the storm they do not fear the storm. Notice in our text they fear the maker of the storm. Oh that I would learn. Oh that we would learn that in the midst of life storms that the fear of the Lord would be more than the storm itself. They saw the power of God that is God's power was demonstrated to them and they were afraid. And Jesus says to them do not be afraid. God contains power and a strength. Their minds could not fathom. Yet those who are in Christ have no reason to fear. I love that there is for those in Christ no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. There's no reason to fear. He has taken the judgment for sin on our behalf for those who believe. For those who are in Christ Christ is not one to fear in the sense of eternal damnation. He is still someone to fear that we would have this more than reverential awe however. I have mentioned to you in the past that sometimes I can be one who is given to worry. I can be anxious about things. And one of the things I was thinking about as I was reflecting on this task is isn't this what happens to me perhaps to you. Circumstances seem greater than God in times. The storm is brewing. Waves are crashing over my boat. Circumstances are outside of my control and I don't like it and I don't even know what to do.

[14:12] And I can begin to worry. I don't have answers. I lack knowing what to do. And I pray that I would look to the one who has control over my circumstances. And wouldn't that just abate my fear? Or you know. You know. And I pray that I would trust the Lord in the midst of my circumstances when I worry. Worry simply communicates to myself, to others, and to the Lord. I don't trust you. I pray that I would take the Lord at His word when He says, do not be anxious about anything.

But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Oh I pray that I would do that more often. And I pray that we would be a church that just says Lord, I trust you with my circumstances. You see what's going on. I trust you. Next. We see that like Jesus or like Moses, Jesus miraculously crosses the sea. And here's our last one that we'll come to for today. Jesus like Moses, Jesus miraculously defeats people. Moses miraculously fed people. God did through Moses' hand.

Moses was tasked to lead the nation of Egypt out of, or take the nation of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness. And the wilderness is a dry desert.

There's limited water, limited food resources, and you've got a million to two million people in tow that are looking to you to say, where's the food?

And you're Moses. And what do you do? And the Lord in His kindness allowed manna to be on the earth's surface in the morning and the nation of Israel would go out and collect only for one day's amount of food. You collect too much and it'll spoil. Just give us this day our daily bread. So we just have today's food in the form of manna. And the Lord was kind to provide that to the nation of Israel. God provided their food. God sent bread from heaven. And now we are in the circumstance where there are people, there's a large crowd of people who are gathering and they need food. So I love this story now. We're going to look at a couple of individuals responses to this circumstance. So verse 5, we're gonna pick up the text in chapter 6, verse 5, lifting up his eyes. Then in the scene a large crowd was coming toward him. Jesus said to Philip, where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat? And he said this to test him for he himself knew what he would do. And Philip answered, 200 denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little, for each of them to get a little. So

[18 : 03] Philip, Jesus said this to him, gave him a question, hey Philip, where are we gonna get enough bread to feed all these folks? And so let's first understand the crowd size. It says later that the crowd is 500 men, so that doesn't take into account women and children. And so this crowd size eclipses around 15, probably to 15 to 20,000 people. So here's 15 to 20,000 people and he asked Philip, hey where are we gonna get all the food and the bread to feed these individuals?

And I love Philip's response because he doesn't answer with where. He comes up with a money amount. He must have looked in the bag of money that they had and there was 200 denarii and he says, not where are we gonna get the food, but Jesus, we have about eight months worth of wages and it's not even gonna give everyone just a bite of bread. That's about all that we got worth.

That's Philip's response to the circumstance. And I love that Jesus did this to, it says, to test Philip. He knew what he was gonna do, but the question was done. It was asked of him to test him, to see if Philip understood that Jesus is greater than Moses. Wouldn't it have been, wouldn't it have been something to hear a response from Philip like this, where are we gonna get the food? And he were to respond back to Jesus, Jesus I don't know, but I know that you can and do. Wouldn't that have been a great response? But he doesn't respond that way and so he doesn't quite yet understand Jesus is greater than Moses. To ensure Philip understood, he went about and did something miraculous.

For him, for Philip to understand just how much greater than Moses he truly is. And to validate his message and to validate his ministry, that's another reason why miracles are done. And regardless, Jesus wants his disciples to fully understand who he is. The miracle that Jesus is about to perform wasn't just for the hungry people, it was for his disciples to understand, I'm greater than Moses. It is also for the disciples, so they may understand the power of Jesus. He comes back to under Denari. In our age of technological advancements, sometimes we act as if we are invincible. This passage is a great reminder that we will always be confronted with problems that are too big for us to solve.

If we think big problems, things like death and disease and war, all the resources in the world cannot solve those problems. Solve death with the resources of this world. It's still going to be battling a thousand. Disease. Stop disease in the world. Good luck. Stop war in this world. Good luck. With all the resources, you cannot solve everything with resources. And they come and Phillips responses, we don't have enough resources. 200 Denari, that's it. Those are the big ones, but let's shrink our problems to personal sizes. We realize how powerless we are. I was in a meeting this week with two Elvar elders, and we were visiting about a few things, and I was confessing to them. I can think of two circumstances that our church is facing here in the upcoming future, and I was thinking, I have no solutions to either of these things that I see coming into the future, and I need God's wisdom. I have no earthly idea how to solve these problems, and no amount of resources necessarily going to solve these problems. We need the Lord. But you face these similar things. Who can stop oneself from getting sick? No amount of vitamins, supplements, water, or essential oils can do that. Who can make one never be misunderstood? No amount of emotional intelligence, social awareness, or anyogram temperament tests can help you from getting misunderstood. It's going to happen. Who can ensure everyone will always like you?

[23 : 01] You are powerless. You're just like Philip. You're just like me. We are powerless, and like Philip, we often and all too often look for human solutions.

When a problem lands on our doorstep, our minds immediately start going to, how am I going to fix it? And all too often we forget the one who is standing right beside us who has answers. Jesus asked Philip the question, so Philip would learn that no problem is a match for Jesus' power. He's greater than Moses. When was the last time you lifted your present unsolvable circumstances to the Lord in prayer, and you confessed, Lord, I don't know, but I know the one who does, and you are Him, and I give this to you. Please help me.

It's a beautiful prayer. Beautiful prayer. But the story continues. Philip perhaps may have failed the test, and so Andrew steps forward. Verse 8, one of the disciples, Andrew, Simon's brother, said to him, there is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, and if we were to stop right there, we think, man, I think he's close. Andrew's got it. He is just brought to Jesus saying, here are seven resources, five loaves of bread, two fish. This is great, and he should have just been quiet. You would think, he's got it. He understands Jesus can make something of this. This is all he has. This is great. Good job, Andrew. And he should have been quiet, but he continues, and we see that this is not necessarily a statement of faith, but unbelief, because he says, but where are they for so many? But Jesus, what are these seven resources for these 15 to 20,000 people? What are they? And so he also is given to despair. We don't have what it takes to provide for them food. This is like when I say something like something, sometimes we just speak too much. I could say, Wendy, I love you so much, and it would mean the world to me if you would clean the kitchen, and after you've cooked us a meal, and that would just be so nice. I should have just stopped, Wendy, I love you so much. This is what just happened with Andrew, poor guy. Just, just, shh, stay less.

And we can be really hard on the disciples, can't we? We can presume we would do better. But because we can be hard on the disciples, haven't the disciples already witnessed Jesus turn water into wine? Haven't they already observed Jesus healing the man who was lame for 38 years? Haven't they witnessed the woman at the well, this woman who he met, and he knew all things about her?

Hasn't Jesus done all these things, even in just the Gospel of John? Haven't we already read these things? Shouldn't they have known? And we can be hard on the disciples. And yet, how many times, and how many times do I, how many times has the Lord provided? How many times has He healed? How many times has He brought peace in the midst of difficulty? How many times has He reconciled the relationship? How many times have I seen and witnessed someone get saved? They believe in Christ? They testify it to the baptism of waters? How many times have we seen this? And then a circumstance that is bigger than our resources show up and we think it's hopeless. What is this resource compared to all of these people?

[27 : 15] I guess we're just gonna have to go hungry. Don't we do that? Don't we do that? It's hopeless. It is not hopeless. Not everyone has to go hungry. Jesus is with you and he's greater than Moses. He's greater than Moses. He is God. When I face a situation that appears impossible, I too look to human resources just like Philip does. And then just like Moses, sometimes I can be given to despair and I think I have no idea. I guess we're gonna have to go hungry.

What good will it do? What difference will it make? Here's a small boy with a lunch. It's hopeless. And it sounds all too familiar for many of us. But look with me in verses 10 through 13. Jesus goes and he says, have the people sit down. Now there is much grass in the place so the men sat down and 5,000 in number. Jesus then took the loaves when he had given thanks and 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 the disciples, gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost. So they gathered them up and filled the 12 baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

Jesus has never yet run into a problem he cannot solve. There's no wine at a wedding. No problem. There's a lame man who has not walked in 38 years. That's no problem. There's an outcast adulterous woman by a well who is without hope and dead in sin. That's no problem. And there will be later in the Gospel of John. There's no life in the tomb and that's no problem. And there's not enough people food to feed 15 to 20,000 people. That's no problem. Yet I seem to believe that the Lord, yet I seem to not believe the Lord for my seemingly impossible circumstances, my unreconciled relationship, my addiction, my wayward children, my feeble heart, my wayward life. Jesus so abundantly cares there's even leftovers for these things. He's so generous that he doesn't provide just enough. He's so generous that there's leftovers greater than what he started with. Jesus is far greater than Moses for he is God.

And this story makes an interesting turn from this point. First of all we read here in verse 14 when the people saw the sign that he had done they said he had just fed all of these 15 to 20,000 people. When they had seen that and all that he said this and here's what the people were saying. This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world. Now who is this? We read in Deuteronomy and I believe this will be on the screen as well. Deuteronomy 18:15. This is Moses speaking back in the Old Testament about the future prophet who will come. This is what Moses says in Deuteronomy 18:15. It says this, the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you from your brothers it is to him you shall listen. To this Moses speaking of a future prophet he says there's gonna be one greater than me he's gonna be speaking and you should listen to him and it's Jesus to whom you speak to so they have the right guy they just have the wrong timing but their thinking is right. Of the many roles that Moses played he was a great liberator of Israel. Moses brought the enslaved Israel out of Egypt to the border of the promised land. Jesus was born into Israel in time of us were in when Israel was once again enslaved. They were under Roman occupation if you will and in every way Jesus is showing to himself to be a greater than Moses. I'm greater than Moses. I'm greater than Moses and so what is the crowd who he just fed think this is the one who Moses has brought and so let's make him king because Moses was this great liberator we're now enslaved he's the one who's gonna lead us out of there he's going to kick Rome out and we're gonna be a nation again and they want to make him a king and so our text read because they perceive him to be the prophet that Moses spoke which is correct so perceiving then verse 15 that they would be were about to come I'm sorry so perceiving then this is Jesus perceiving that they were the crowd about to come and take him by force to make him king Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself here's this person who is proving himself over and over and over again to be greater than Moses and so he must be the one who

Moses talked about this so he is going to be our great liberator let's take him by force and make him our king finally finally we will throw Rome off hit their occupation let's begin the revolt today we do not any longer need to be slaves in our own city Jesus is the prophet who Moses foretold and here is the difficulty they had the right guy Jesus is the one who Moses foretold about but they had the wrong time Jesus first must make payment for sin Jesus first must go to the cross Jesus Jesus first must sacrifice himself to make payment for sin and one day Jesus will return and rule and reign as king he needs no one's help to become king he doesn't need anyone to take him by force and make him king so here's the completion of the big idea Jesus is greater than Moses but here's the second part but he is no man's puppet Jesus is greater than

[34 : 25] Moses but Jesus is no man's puppet the Jewish crowd wanted to take him by force they wanted to make him king but notice their thinking sometimes you just need an illustration they want to make Jesus their king and so they want to impose their will upon Jesus but who's really in control and should this king let's assume kick out Rome and then turn to them and say now obey me bend your need do you still think they want him as king Jesus is no man's puppet whereby we impose our will upon we make him look where he wants to look we we make him give us permission to do things that he has already told us not to do we impose upon him to do our bidding on our timeline whenever we want to and that's a puppet Jesus is no man's puppet and so he understands what he's what is going on and he says I'm out I'm withdrawing but how often do we share the same approach to Jesus as Israel just did how often do we come to Jesus telling him what we want him to do we bargain with him we claim to follow him as long as he does doesn't say something we do not like we want all of the blessings of Israel to secure for us without having to obey or follow him at all we want his peace but we don't want to obey have some said so long as you lead so long as you let me lead my selfish life my self-driven life my self-centered life where I get to choose how I get to spend my time how I get to spend my money then you can be my king Jesus

Jesus you get to be king so long as you're silent about what I put in front of my eyes so long as I get to speak however I want to use my words you can be my king then Jesus you can be my king so long as you remain silent about my sinful relationships I don't care if the other person is not a believer I don't care if I have sex before marriage I don't care that that person is someone else's spouse I don't care if I don't have biblical grounds to remarry you can be my king though so long as you remain silent about that stuff don't meddle Jesus Jesus you can be my king so long as you will provide me now put conditions on Jesus so long as you provide me a godly spouse then you can be my king Jesus you can be my king so long as you provide my dream career then I will follow you you can be my king Jesus you can be my king so long as you heal me Jesus you can be my king so long as you restore my relationship Jesus you can be my king so long as I don't have to abide with you but I want all the blessings from you you know how I know that slips into our thinking it's because of all the individuals I could cite when Jesus failed to meet their expectation and that's exactly what is happening here they have an expectation of Jesus they will make him king but he must do this one thing perhaps we are not altogether different than the first century Jews perhaps we're not that different they wanted a kingdom without a king we want a liber we want all the liberty without a liberator when I well we want all the blessings Jesus can secure without actually having to obey or follow him we want Jesus to fix all of our problems but we won't we don't want to have to follow him we want a puppet king we want someone to resolve and remove opposition in our life and make us a little more comfortable but not have any authority over us but you see

Jesus is greater than Moses he is God and he is no one's puppet and the only way we can come to Jesus is recognizing his Lordship in our life he is God we are not he is the Creator we are his creature his creation he is the only one who could make payment for sin by dying on the cross whereby those who believe in his life death and resurrection can have sin forgiven one day he will return as king we don't get to impose our will upon God he has authority we live under his authority he gets to share with us for our own good this is how you ought to live not because he's a cruel God because he's so gracious to us and he says

Scott telling the truth all the time will be to your benefit Scott living a moral life will be for your benefit he's not trying to restrict me he's trying to share with me how blessings are enjoyed in him we enjoy we joyfully follow Christ and when we do that we not only find that Jesus is greater than Moses but Jesus is greater than anything one could ever imagine he's wonderful he's beautiful there's peace Jesus can satisfy in ways that only God can Jesus is greater than Moses and he is no man's puppet would you pray with me father we thank you for this day we thank you that you have come to give life and life abundantly we thank you that all your ways are true what I forgive us for ways in which perhaps we are like this crowd who desires to impose our will on you and only follow you with conditions Lord we recognize your rightful place as God and King and judge and Lord we we bend our knee we yield to you and say you are God and we are not thank you for the privilege of knowing you thank you for your sacrifice and we desire to live wholly pleasing to you without conditions and as you instruct we love you Lord what a blessing to be yours amen