

John 6: 1-21

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[0:00] Let's pray again as these little ones go off. Lord God, would you use those serving the youth today at Shoreline Kitts to convey the message of your word and reveal your truth to them.

! We pray for all those children and babies remaining in this room now. We pray for their souls as well, Lord, that you would nourish the souls of the children at Shoreline, that they would each come to trust and know you.

Lord, in your good time, would you grant us as parents diligence and strength and courage and to be brave with these little children, Lord?

Amen. We'll give one more second for people to filter back in. Well, good morning. My name is Matt Landek. I get the pleasure of bringing the word this morning, and it is always wonderful to do that and humbling as well.

I am one of the, bless also you, one of the four elders here at this church. So, welcome if you're new. Welcome if you've never been here, if you're returning. Welcome to our family today.

[1:35] And the Greek word for believe is used 98 times in John's Gospel, and for good reason, too. It's because John wants his readers to believe in Jesus.

Remember our key verse of John, John 20, 31. These things are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, right, doesn't end there, by believing you may have life in his name.

John's book is evangelistic, right, meaning its goal is to seek, to gain, to convert people to following Christ. And there's no arguing the evangelistic nature of the book.

And one particular way that John goes about this proving the evidence that leads to belief comes through this really big, the largest singular focus section of the Gospel, commonly called the Book of Signs.

Which goes from chapter 2, verse 1, to chapter 12, verse 50. And this section recounts seven miraculous signs that Jesus performed, which the Gospel of John includes.

[2:37] Today's text gives us two of these seven signs. For John, these signs are crucial in taking away the belief in Jesus as the Messiah. But for those in this room who have already declared belief in Christ and have chosen to follow him with their lives, why go through these signs?

Why do we even study this? Because they teach all of us, including Christians, something important about what true belief is. Because after initial belief in Christ as Savior comes something more.

And that's actually trusting. That's actually having faith in Christ and living like it. So we can say belief in action. I've got a question for you.

Do you trust Jesus? Do you have faith in him? It kind of seems weird to ask a group of people who claim to be followers of Christ. But I'm not just talking about a once-for-all kind of faith and trust, but a day-to-day, moment-to-moment.

Do you surrender control to him and submit to his will for you? Do you walk through life with peace when going through storms and you don't know how things will work out? Or why they're happening? Or have a good explanation for something?

[3:50] I asked myself this question a few weeks ago before I started studying this passage. Following a course of events that had me thinking, you know, sure, I believe in Jesus as my Savior.

But do I trust him? And what he says that he can do in my life? How deep does my belief go? Practically speaking. Here's a for instance.

Children believe their parents have their best in mind. But they often don't trust us in the moment. They get off track and they lose focus.

They get kind of fuzzy and blurry and they mix things up. Things that really matter, the truth. I'm like that with God at the same time. And maybe you are too. And maybe you are too.

Jesus' pursuit of his disciples was to gain a depth of belief. Because it seemed, for the most part, at this point in John, and seeing any other gospels, that they understood that he was the Messiah.

[4:53] But did they actually trust him? In our text today, Jesus puts their belief to the test. And his goal is to show them that he's worthy of their full trust. He leads all that would follow him as disciples on a journey towards true belief in faith.

According to our verses today, I see this one overarching reason that Jesus is worthy of our trust and faith. Here's our big question. Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith?

Because Jesus provides. If you remember two words from this whole thing, remember... Oops. There's that laser player.

There it is. Jesus provides... I'll stop with the laser. Jesus provides. Let's pray. God, would you open up our eyes and hearts.

Help us to see our desperate state in need for you. Reveal to us today why you are worthy of our faith and trust. That we would grow in you and return to you more of the glory you're worthy of.

[5:58] For your name and your glory. Amen. Let's go verse by verse through this text. John chapter 6. Starting in verses 1 through 4. I'll read from the ESV version.

After this, Jesus went away to the other side of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him. Because they saw the signs he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up to the mountain.

And there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover of the days of the Jews was at hand. Our first four verses set the stage for the first sign miracle.

That is the feeding of the 5,000. Awesome. And although much of what John recorded about Jesus was from his time in Judea and Jerusalem, here we see him in Bethsaida.

Say Bethsaida. That's good. That's what I do with my kids. Usually we do it twice, so get ready. On the northern side of the Sea of Galilee, the common name, though, its given name was named after the emperor Tiberias.

[7:03] That's why we see that Sea of Tiberias. Luke tells us that this event took place after Jesus sent the disciples out, having commissioned them. Maybe you recall in Luke 9, 1 and 2.

To heal, cast out demons, and preach of his kingdom. And so what we see is that the twelve are reunited with their rabbi, with Jesus. Luke says they shared their experiences with him, naturally. And as Jesus is trying to reconnect with his disciples, verse 2 says that he took them and withdrew to Bethsaida. Presumably to be alone with them.

Because large crowds were following him. Of course, this isn't the first time we see these big crowds wanting to be close to this Jesus, this teacher.

He had a large following often. And most of the time, that was okay with him because he wanted to teach them. He wanted to teach them. But right now, it wasn't one of those times.

[8:02] Because he left, the text says that he removed himself in this well. He chose to retreat to the mountain where he sat down with the twelve, trying to separate himself from the masses and their appetite for his signs and wonders.

John 2, 23 and 24 states that their appetite was largely selfish and disingenuous. They were there for the show and not the Messiah. Read down verse 5.

Lifting up his eyes then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, he said to Philip, Where are we to buy bread so that these people may need? Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith?

Here's the first of the five reasons that I see. Because Jesus provides for our basic needs. Jesus provides for our basic needs. Christ's response to the crowd is striking.

They've foiled his plans and spent time with the disciples. Quality time. And they've done it out of self-interest and greed, have they not? But we see his reaction as compassion and thoughtfulness.

[9:06] And not frustration and disdain. He sets aside his own agenda to care for them. Not only does he provide grass for them to sit on, which is reminiscent of the shepherd in Psalm 23.

But he longs to meet their basic need for nutrition. And although John doesn't allude to it, he has just finished nursing their souls through extensive teaching explained by Mark in his gospel. And now he seeks to nourish them physically. And Mark's account of the event. We read in chapter 6, verse 34. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd. And I love this verse. He had compassion on them. Because they were like sheep without the shepherd. Christ is a loving provider who meets basic needs. But how will we feed them?

Is the big question. Well, this is the same question that stumped his team of disciples. Philip, who was a native of Bethsaida, was clearly the best choice for this question.

[10:04] And we see he asked Philip. He would know the nearest and best place to accomplish this monumental task. But Jesus wasn't actually looking for the easy answer about the local organic matzah.

And the best local eats. He said this to test him. For he himself knew what he would do, verse 6 tells us. This is very clearly a test of Philip's faith.

A test of his memory. Does he trust that Jesus can do something supernatural once again? He's been there for these previous signs. Where do his thoughts go when faced with an impossible or hopeless situation such as this one?

At hand. Verse 7 has her answer. Arithmetic. Philip answered him, verse 7. 200 denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.

Oh boy. Oh boy. 200 denarii. I didn't know this myself. Would have been about 8 months wages. So if you make \$100,000, do the math.

[11:11] That's a lot. The disciples didn't have this money, right? And where would they even get food at this hour? In the evening. And in this mountain.

Philip in turn says, right? I've got nothing. And this is a failure of faith by Jesus. He's failed this test. Philip's failed to consider the scope of Christ's abilities and their impact on his situation.

Next comes Andrew has gone on some sort of a reconnaissance mission to scrounge up as much food as he can. Verses 8 and 9. One of his disciples, Andrew, who was signing to Peter's brother, said to him, There's a boy who has five barley loaves and two fish.

But what are they for so many? The disciples can't provide what Jesus is requesting. Which is that they would exhibit faith, not results.

Philip and Andrew both were short-sighted in their faith, weren't they? There's no natural solution to this problem. And they fail to look beyond the situation in front of them. Alright, let's get real.

[12:24] I wonder if you've ever been in a situation where you've wondered how your basic needs would be met. And there's quite a range. Here's a few examples. How can I get my kids to listen to me so I can teach them how to live?

How can I pay this bill or buy this for my house or car? How can I keep this marriage and this relationship afloat? How can I continue on in life with a degree of sanity?

Where will I get my next meal from? Or how can I find a safe, forward place to live? How can I deal with my current mental health state? How can I deal with the stress and trouble with even completing simple tasks?

How will I ever catch up with the things I need to do? How can I stop from feeling so overwhelmed? And it's easy to turn to natural solutions and earthly calculations in our times of need.

Alright, if I make this adjustment, if I move this over here, if I, if I... Alright, so having faith in God and what God can do means relying not on what we can see, but on what we can't see.

[13:42] But remember to be true of God. That He's a compassionate Heavenly Father and Shepherd who longs for the good of us, His sheep. He longs to sustain our bodies and souls.

But it's not always easy, is it? It's not just as easy as making those statements and saying, I'm good. Right? These moments are hard. They're hard. Moments where our basic needs are up in the air are our tests of faith, friends.

Where what we claim and know to be true of God is laid on the line. These are our fill-up moments. Where we must remember who God is and what He's done.

Beyond mere belief, we must trust Him. And we can because He is a provider for our basic needs. Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith? Because He provides for our basic needs.

Let's look at what happens next in our story. Jesus provides in divine ways. If you've read the book of John or have been following us the last few weeks, you've seen that. Jesus is in the business of accomplishing things supernaturally.

[14:50] Similar to the previous three signs, we see an unsettling situation with no apparent fix or path forward. The wedding with no wine.

The paralytic. The official son. With no hope, these situations. The fourth sign is no less miraculous than the previous three.

Christ can provide hope to hopeless situations. Amen? Amen. I said amen. Amen. I love doing that. Jesus provides in divine ways.

Number two. Look at verse 10 with me. Jesus said, Have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down, about 5,000 in number.

Jesus 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. 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, filled 12 baskets with fragment, and the five barley loaves left by those who were eaten.

[15:56] But this scene is incredible. We can think nothing less. We can think nothing less. Jesus has provided 12 baskets of leftover food after feeding upwards of 10,000 to 20,000 people.

Remember, the men alone numbered 5,000. 10,000 to 20,000 people. With food from a single child. The barley loaves were a poor person's food.

And a couple of pickled fish is what commentators say this child had. A poor person's snack. Right? This is a divine miracle. In a dire situation, once again, receives miraculous intervention, and the disciples have a front row seat. They distribute the food which literally came from bottomless baskets.

Literally. Talk about all you can eat. Bottomless baskets. And then proceed to collect the abundance of what thousands of people couldn't finish. Right?

[16:58] Five gloves, two fish. I imagine there was a mixture of emotion here. Of awe and joy and giddiness and laughter. As the crowd ate their fill and the 12 baskets remained as the disciples gathered them back together to see.

Right? And they said, oh, he did it again. He did it again. What a shift in emotion. What a change from desperation to rejoicing. Have you ever experienced divine intervention in ways that you didn't expect or didn't think could happen?

I think we're prone to have an earthly mindset and merely earthly solutions conjured up in our mind to our life situations. And yet, we serve a king who can and does intervene in divine ways.

Divine ways. Maybe Christ has provided peace and calm and assurance with a difficult situation about your family or kids or work, finances, attempts to share the gospel.

Or anything else that you can fill in the blank. Christ is a provider who meets our basic needs many times in divine ways that we cannot foresee.

[18:14] It's a personal example. The other day I woke up feeling overwhelmed with life and anxious about beginning my day. Many of you probably know I struggle with anxiety sometimes.

Not all the time, but sometimes. But when it hits, it feels like it hits hard. And I woke up feeling anxious about beginning my day. And honestly, I don't know that there was really a good reason, but it was crippling to me.

And I didn't see a path forward. My basic need for emotional stability wasn't that. And I didn't see a way that my situation would improve, to be honest.

But I chose to trust and faith that God in His Word could provide what I needed. Because He longed for my good. And He's proven that to me in the past.

Especially in similar situations. And so I was drawn to Philippians 4. My wife, Jules, and I had, I think, talked about this verse the night before.

[19:17] I was drawn to Philippians 4, which told me that I ought to be anxious for nothing. But in everything with prayer and thanksgiving, let my requests be made known to God. And that morning, the thanksgiving piece, it really struck me.

I had to trust God's Word to be true. And that being thankful was part of how God would provide what I needed. To procure the peace of Christ. And the next verse talks about it. And so as I sat there that morning and expressed my thankfulness, I felt my anxiety melt away.

And I felt renewed. And I felt refreshed. A divine provision when my earthly calculations failed to show evidence of a tangible way out of my situation.

Maybe you felt something similar. Christ provides promises and evidence of His compassionate care and provisions in His Word, the Bible. But do you trust it, friend?

Do you have faith in it? When the rubber meets the road, do you live out your belief by trusting that Christ will provide for you? And can you do it in ways that are beyond your comprehension or short-sightedness?

[20:32] Number two. How is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith? Because Jesus provides in divine ways. Divine ways. Number two.

Back to the story. You see the reactions of the crowds after the sign. Verse 14 and 15. When the people saw the sign that He'd done, they said, This is indeed the prophet who's come into the world.

Verse 14. Perceiving then that they were about to come and take up by force, the naked king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself. Third reason.

Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith? Jesus provides in alignment with His kingdom purposes and our hearts. Jesus' goal was to provide the Jews with what He knew they needed.

Not what they thought they needed. He knew they needed to believe in Him, receive spiritual nourishment, and enter into a new way of life. What they thought they needed was a powerful earthly king who could bring relief from the oppressive Roman rule.

[21:40] One commentary says this. There were fierce nationalistic longings among the Jews of that period, and doubtless many of those who saw the miracle felt that Jesus was a divinely accredited leader.

He was just the one to beat them against the Romans. So they set themselves to make Him king. They wanted to use Him to further their own ends. The Jews were awaiting a prophet like Moses, who fed with manna in the wilderness and led the Jews out of bondage in Egypt.

The next prophet, as described in Deuteronomy 18, and that may have been on their minds after witnessing this event, would be greater than Moses.

Jesus fed with the Romans says. Moses fed with, I'm sorry, Jesus fed a multitude from nothing. Can you not then free us from Rome's rule as Moses did from Egypt?

One commentator put it well in saying this. He who is already king has come to open his kingdom to men.

[22:51] But in their blindness, men try to force him to be the kind of king they want. Thus, they fail to get the king they want and also lose the kingdom he offers.

The part of what it means to have faith is trusting that Christ will provide what he knows we need. If we don't have it, we probably don't need it. My wife said that to me recently.

Say, if I don't have it, I probably don't need it. Say, if I don't have it, I probably don't need it. When we pursue the things we think we need, and they aren't really the things we actually need, we become blind to what we actually need and miss opportunities that God has for us.

I don't know. I wonder if we're not that dissimilar from the Jews. Oftentimes, we look towards relief and reprieve, but that's not what God wants for us at that moment.

Sometimes we're focused on earthly kingdoms, not on a spiritual one like he is. He was offering the crowd spiritual nourishment that was lasting and greater than regaining independence and acquiring strength as a nation.

[24:18] But their focus was too narrow to see that. Christ came to establish and grow his kingdom, not theirs, not ours.

But in reality, when we submit to God's purpose for us, as Christians, our desires become his desires for us, don't they? The king and the kingdom subjects in the right situation have the same

goal in mind.

Not opposing ones. Many times we can actually distance ourselves from God when we see a misalignment of our pursuits with his pursuits for us.

I know what's best, and this isn't it, God. This isn't it. Sometimes the challenges of living as a Christian are compounded when we cause undestress and pain, when learning through things like patience, endurance, suffering, high and low emotions, etc.

Because we forget that our growth is for our good. And God provided what we need when we need it. But friend, who longs for our good more than Christ?

[25:38] Who longs for our good more than Christ? We can trust him. Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith? He provides an alignment with his kingdom purposes, not ours.

That's a beautiful truth. Immediately following the fourth miracle, feeding in the 5,000 is John's fifth sign miracle. Jesus walking on water. This sign is covered in three out of four gospels, excluding Luke's.

Let's read the last verses in our text today, 16 through 21. When evening came, the disciples went down to the sea.

God who took hope and started to cross 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 rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat. They were frightened. But he said to them, It is not a thing you're afraid. Then they were glad to take them into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

[26:47] Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith? Because Jesus provides out of his power. After feeding the crowds, the disciples set out the boat, and the hours after the departure, the twelve found themselves still away from shore in a desperate situation.

Although they were expecting Jesus to return to them at some point, certainly they didn't expect it to happen in this way. And at that time, the wee hours of the morning, perhaps around 3 a.m., if not, they wouldn't have been filled with fear.

If they were anticipating this, they would not have been filled with fear. And as they look out onto the sea, they see a figure walking, not on the shore, but on the water.

And they're petrified. It's dark, it's stormy, you're in a sailing boat, and there's someone on the water. But moments later, they hear, It is I, do not be afraid.

Jesus enters the boat, and according to Matthew and John, the storm calms. The boat miraculously lands on the shore. It appears John's focus was intentionally on Jesus, not the twelve disciples.

[28:05] As he doesn't include the details that the other gospel writers do. Most notably, Peter's attempt to walk on water. So accordingly, Jesus will be our focus too, as we look at this section.

What do we see as most important in this time? Christ's power provided his disciples with what they needed, even though it came in an unexpected way and had an unexpected time.

D.A. Carson notes that those amongst John's readers who read the scripture might well remember that the sea often stands for chaos and disorder, and that it is God who controls and stills it.

Psalm 65 says, You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds. God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth, and the farthest, end of the farthest seas, who form the mountains by your power, having armed yourself with strength, who still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations.

Life is filled with frequent storms of various kinds, but unlike hurricanes, there's no storm season in life. Chaos ensues whenever it pleases, and we can be swept into a tumultuous gale before we even see it coming.

[29:34] But how do you respond? Here's the question. How does your heart react? She screams. Maybe you do.

Maybe you do. How does your heart react? Are you fast to recall the powerful words of Christ in the midst of chaos?

In his eye, do not fear. Or do you forget his frequent displays of majestic power? Our past, present, and future are seen in your life and promised in the Bible.

We're quick to turn to our usual comforts, to find shelter. Many times, simply, we find ways of dulling the effects of our storms.

When our faith is tested, we must recall what we know to be true of Christ, our powerful provider, that we might bless the Lord and bring him glory through our ground of faith and not breathe him in the Holy Spirit when we turn to sin and when we turn to other coping mechanisms that cause us to lose our focus and lose our way.

[30:52] There isn't always an immediate answer to a storm, and there isn't always a known end time. And that can be really hard. That can be really hard.

And the passing pleasures of the world will only temporarily give us a false hope and reassurance in our day of difficulty.

We've got to be investing copious amounts of time into our relationship with God, church. Because the state of our faith and trust in God as provider today dictates our response to tomorrow's storm. Let me say that again. The state of our faith and trust in God as provider today dictates our response to tomorrow's storm. If we see him as trustworthy and have established faith based on the firm foundation of God's work, we will live in a storm.

We'll recall his power over life's trials and ability to calm our hearts even in ways that we can't predict and do not expect. But if the storm comes and we struggle or we fall flat on our face, maybe we fail our test of faith, there's grace.

[32:15] And Christ is still powerful. Many times God uses his church to help. Maybe his powerful provision has come through people that you see in this very room.

Shoreline. Walk side by side with each other through life's storms. Don't fear too much to reach out to each other for help.

And don't fear too much to not care for someone who's weathering a storm in their life. God might use you to be the unexpected provision in someone else's life.

Maybe today at the church. Be that person and receive that person. It is I do not fear says Christ. Our rock and our redeemer are refuge and strength. Why is Jesus worthy of our trust and faith? Because Jesus provides out of his power.

[33:25] I pray that the Lord has and will use our time today to deepen your trust and your faith in Christ. That these concepts in this scripture would be a help for you when you encounter tests of faith or one of life's difficult storms.

For those in this room that do not have a personal relationship with Christ, may God use these things to turn you towards him that you might believe in his name and receive life.

Receive life. He is worthy of our trust and faith because he provides for our basic needs in divine ways in alignment with his kingdom purposes and through his power.

The last thing I want to say today is our final answer to this big question. And it's actually the reason that we celebrate communion, which we'll do momentarily.

It's the glue that holds our belief in Christ together and in fact, all of scripture together too. Jesus is worthy of our trust and faith because Jesus provided himself as the Passover lamb.

[34:51] In verse 4 of John 6, it appears that John uses the reference to the Passover feast as a chronological reference for context.

Christ. Yet, its main purpose is likely to remind us readers of Christ's ultimate mission and God's purpose of his covenant people in providing his son.

God's pursuit of his covenant people in providing his son. The Passover holiday commemorates the Hebrews, or the Jews, liberation from slavery in Egypt, and the passing over of the forces of destruction, the sparing of the firstborn of the Israelites when the Lord smoked the land of Egypt on the eve of the Exodus.

The resource says. God provided escape from certain death by having those who would trust in him in faith kill a spotless lamb and paint his blood over their doorposts.

Then the angel of death would pass over their home. He provided a way. So also Jesus Christ became our Passover land by giving himself as a sacrificial lamb so that the Lord might spare you and I from certain death.

[36:20] He provided for our basic needs. Christ provided a way to be spared from God's wrath and certain death than our sin earned us.

Instead, followers of Christ are offered vibrant, purpose-filled life. Here on earth and eternal life forever in heaven. According to God's original design, the garden mandate and given to those who are in right standing in relationship with him.

Christ provided in the supernatural divine way through the unthinkable and seemingly impossible sacrifice of himself.

The shedding of his blood as a covering and breaking of his body as atonement for those who are fully undeserving. That's us. Ephesians 2 tells us we were dead and without hope, unable to save ourselves.

Christ provided a way. Christ provided and aligned it with his kingdom and purposes. Not because of our agenda, goals, or accomplishments, but to show his deep, compassionate, endless love for us and assume his rightful place as king of the members worthy of our praise.

[37:55] Finally, he provided out of his abundant power, conquering death by death and forever bridging the gap between man and God for those who trust in him and his provision through faith.

Jesus provides.