

Read John 6:41-59

1. Explain the dualism going on in this passage.
2. What are some difficult phrases for you in this passage?
3. How does one "eat" his flesh and "drink" his blood?

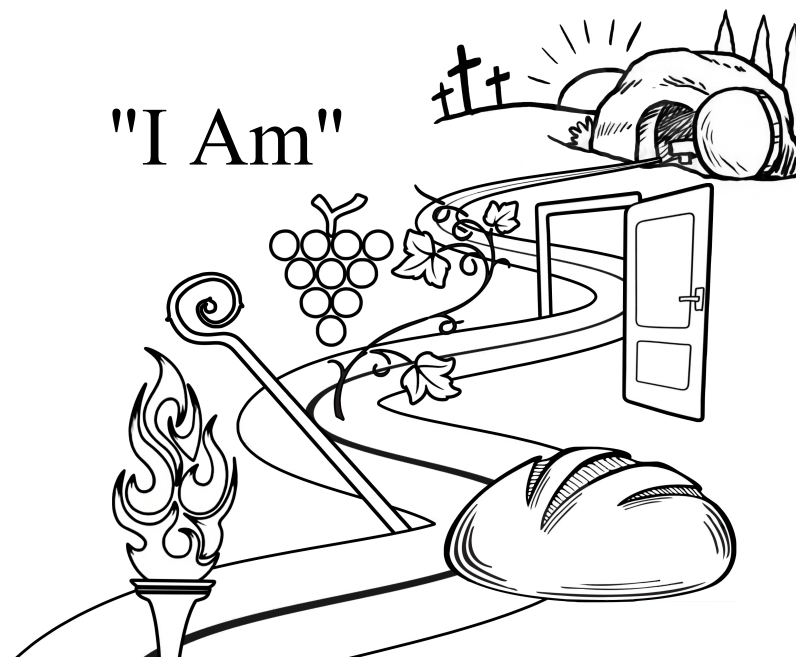
Read John 6:60-71

Note Jesus has many disciples, not simply twelve men.

1. Reflect: both the crowds and multitudes of disciples have witnessed many signs and miracles, and have heard Jesus teach. Note different reactions.
2. How does the Greek meaning of "believe" come into play when observing the varied responses to Jesus.
3. Compare this lesson with chapter 4:

Who's in the crowd?	<i>John 4:5</i>
	<i>John 6:2-3</i>
Jesus' promise	<i>John 4:13-14</i>
	<i>John 6:31-32</i>
Initial response	<i>John 4:15</i>
	<i>John 6:33</i>
"I Am" statement	<i>John 4:25-26</i>
	<i>John 6:35</i>
Final response	<i>John 4:39-42</i>
	<i>John 6:66</i>

[1] WorkingPreacher.org. Ginger Barfield,
Professor Emerita of Biblical Studies and Theology
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University
Columbia, South Carolina. [https://www.workingpreacher.org/
commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-17-2/commentary-
on-john-61-21](https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-17-2/commentary-on-john-61-21)



a study of The Gospel According to John

Summer 2025

Lesson #8

John 6

"Where the Rubber Meets the Road"

REVIEW:

Spend a few minutes reviewing some things John is teaching us about Jesus in the first five chapters of the Gospel. Use lesson #6 for helps.

VOCABULARY:

Flesh (σὰρξ, sarx) body, flesh, carne. Jesus uses this word as a metaphor for himself.

I am (Εγώ εἰμι, Ego eimi) It is I, I am he, I am

Believe (πιστεῦν, pisteuō) More than intellectual assent; it implies a deep trust, reliance, and commitment to something. It also means to entrust, or to have confidence in.

BRIEF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT:

John's sixth chapter is about bread, and it isn't about bread. The chapter begins with Jesus trying to escape the crowds. Matthew's Gospel reveals that Jesus has just learned of John the Baptist's murder by Herod. Consider all the good things this Gospel says about John the Baptist, how he understood his mission, and how he embraced Jesus' mission. Both Matthew and Luke record John the Baptist sending his disciples to ask Jesus if he is really the Messiah, but in John's Gospel, the Baptizer has no doubts.

Concerning Jesus' actions, Matthew's Gospel (14:14) says, "he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them and healed their sick." John claims there were large crowds traveling to Passover in Jerusalem, but were following Jesus because of the "signs" he was performing. Most of the dialogue after the feeding of the 5000 (John 6) focuses on the crowds' belief in signs, but rejection of Jesus' message. They even ask, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" as if they wanted him to teach them how to do signs, as well.

Lastly, Jesus equates bread with his flesh and his blood, in literal terms, however, we need to keep in mind he is speaking metaphorically of his death when he says "the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh," however, only to his disciples does he say, "It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."

Read John 6:1-15; Matt 14:10-14, 21

1. Reflect on Jesus' demeanor at this point; having lost John the Baptist in such a violent manner, only to be baraged by needy crowds.
2. What crowd details are different between Matthew's and John's accounts? Compare Matt 14:14 and John 6:2.
3. What might be the significance of details in verses 12 & 13?
4. Pretend you're Steven Spielberg and imagine what verse 21 would look like, sound like, feel like - emotionally and physically?

Read John 6:16-21

1. Again, what does your imagination add to this story? What does it look like, sound like, feel like?
2. What do you make of verse 21?

Right in the middle of food passages we have a five-sentence story about Jesus walking on water. "In this story it is dark. The disciples are alone three miles out on the lake in a boat. The winds are up. The water is rough. They see Jesus walking on the water. They are SCARED. [...] In what may be one of the boldest Johannine understatements, Jesus simply speaks the 'egō eimi' (verse 20). How often is it, though, that all someone needs is a simple reassurance that, indeed, Jesus the Christ is present. 'Egō eimi.' That presence can get the boat to shore, can calm the grandest of fears."^[1]

Read John 6:22-40

1. What's your sense of what's happening in verses 22-24?
2. What are the crowds interested in, according to the dialogue in verses 25-31?
3. What does Jesus say is doing the "works of God?" vs. 28-29
4. How is the conversation in verses 31-34 similar to that found in John 4:12-15?
5. What are the four statements Jesus makes about himself after his "I am the bread of life" revelation:

vs. 37 _____

vs. 38 _____

vs. 39 _____

vs. 40 _____