

I AM THE WAY OF LIFE
Next Steps Devotional Guide — John 6:22-71
May 11, 2025 — Mother's Day
Sermon Series > The Gospel of John
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1. Have you ever been in a panic to find someone? If so, what was that like for you? Read John 6:22-26 in your Bible.
2. In Jesus's day, food or bread was treasured because most people were so poor they either didn't have it or very little. According to the Wilmington Commerce Department there are over 1,000 restaurants in the Wilmington area and over 40 different grocery stores. Food is as plentiful in Wilmington as cars on our roads. So, how do you think we can relate to this story or a shortage of food and bread?
3. Read John 6:17-29 in your Bible. If you ate spiritually on the same level you eat physically, how healthy would you be and why?
4. Read Romans 11:6 in your sermon outline. God says salvation is a gift. We cannot buy, earn, work for it or pay for it. What difference do you think it would make if we could earn salvation, buy it, pay for it or work for it?
5. Read John 6:30-33 in your Bible. Based on this passage, the Jews believed Jesus was going to give them real manna as God had done in the wilderness. They believed that when Solomon's Temple was being destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, that within the Ark of the Covenant, where the Ten Commandments were, the Moses had put a jar containing manna in it. To protect this, the prophet Jeremiah took that jar and hid it. They believed that when the real genuine Messiah came, he would know where Jeremiah had hid this jar with the manna in it and would then give it to the Jews of his day. So, the Jews were asking Jesus to prove He was the Messiah by showing them the jar with manna in it.
 - (a) What are you demanding Jesus do to prove He is who He claims to be? Or, what have you in the past doubted about God and why?
 - (b) Have you ever wanted Jesus to do a sign or miracle for you? If so, what was it and why?
 - (c) Have you ever prayed, "God, if You will do this for me I will _____.? Why?
6. We looked at several Biblical principles to apply to our lives from John 6:22-71.
 - (a) Believe is not a single one time act, but a lifetime continued act. Read in your Bible John 6:29. Jesus uses the word "believe" in this passage. It is the Greek New Testament word [πιστεύω, pisteuo]. It is what we call in Greek grammar a present subjunctive verb, which denotes not a one time action but a continued or repeated action. A better translation would be, "This is the work of God that you keep on believing in Him whom He has sent."
 - (b) Second, belief is not so much in how we trust, but in Who we trust. Read John 6:27 in your Bible. Jesus used the term "seal," something Rome used to authenticate a document. Jesus said that He has God's seal on Him as the true Messiah we can trust. What seal do you think Jesus was referring to in this verse?
 - (c) Third, salvation is all of God and none of us.
4. step. What does this tell you about why people were following Jesus? Why do you follow Jesus?
3. Read John 6:1-4 in your sermon outline. Setting is important to John in telling his Gospel. Jesus and His disciples are exhausted. Jesus is grieving the news of John the Baptizer's execution by King Herod. The disciples have returned from teaching, preaching and healing. Everyone wants some R&R. So, they go to Bethsaida by boat, to go to the hills to get away. The people see them and follow them around the Sea of Galilee for 9 miles and beat them there. We see two reactions:
 - (a) The disciples' test of faith here with this caused their reaction to be irritation. Read Luke 9:12 — "Jesus, send these people away." When is a time in your life you wanted some needed R&R, but the others kept interrupting your attempt to get it? How did you respond and why?
 - (b) Jesus passed His test of faith with this. His reaction was compassion. Read Mark 6:34. Jesus saw this as an illustration to teach His disciples a valuable lesson. Meaning — the disciples saw this as an unwelcome interruption. Jesus wanted them to see this as appointment times with God. Now, go back and look again at that irritating unwelcome interruption you mentioned above. Is there a way for you to see this as an appointment time with God? If so, how? What would you do differently today if you could?
4. To help us all get the lessons in this story, contemporary examples were used. The first lesson of faith in this story is called the yardstick lesson. This miracle teaches us not to measure a problem or challenge according to our own ability. Read John 6:5 and John 1:44 in your sermon notes.
 - (a) Philip was from Bethsaida. So, Jesus turned to him since they were near Philip's hometown to pose this question. Philip looks out and see 15—20,000 hungry people and it had to be overwhelming for

him to attempt to figure out where they could get enough bread to feed this many people. It teaches us that God is going to send into our lives problems, circumstances, difficulties and opportunities that don't measure up with our abilities on purpose. When has Jesus done this to you?

- (b) What are some impossible situations you are facing right now?
- (c) Read John 6:6 in your sermon notes. If Jesus already knew what He was going to do, what does that tell you about Jesus with your own impossible situation?
5. We looked at some reasons God puts us in impossible situations:
 - (a) To stretch our undeveloped faith. Read Hebrews 11:1, 6 in your sermon outline. Most of us like to think we are people of faith, but would God say you are? Why or why not? If not, why?
 - (b) To strengthen our eternal hope. Read Romans 15:13 in your sermon outline. When facing an impossible situation, God always has something greater for us that impacts eternity in terms of hope. How has God done that in your life?
 - (c) To show us His incredible love. Read Ephesians 2:4-5 in your sermon outline. How is putting you in an impossible situation show you God's incredible love? Now read 1 Corinthians 13:13 in your sermon outline. How does this one verse relate to these 3 points?
6. Read John 6:7 in your sermon notes as well as the explanation of the cost it would take to feed all these people. Philip was measuring the solution by his own abilities alone. When do you do this and why? Why not measure it by God's abilities?
7. We saw a second lesson of faith we can learn from this story. The lesson of the scales. Read John 6:8-9 in your sermon notes. This story teaches us that little in the hands of Jesus becomes much.
 - (a) Philip looked at the situation and said, "This is impossible because it would cost too much. When have you thought or said the same thing with a need God put before you?
 - (b) Andrew looked at the situation and said, "This is impossible because we have too little. When have you thought or said the same thing with a need God put before you?
 - (c) But they looked at it from every angle possible but they didn't see what God wanted to do. They forgot to look at it from His angle, from His power. Philip looked at the crowd and not at Christ. And Andrew looked at the loaves and not at the Lord. Both missed the truth. How can you apply the lesson of faith from this to your own life?
 - (d) We can understand their concern. Read the explanation in your sermon notes describing the bread and the fish. 5 pieces of bread the size of silver dollars and fish the size of sardines.
 - (i) When you look at Philip you have to ask yourself this question, "What have I decided in my life is too big for God to accomplish? What is that for you and why?
 - (ii) Then you look at Andrew and there's another question. What have I decided in myself is too little for God to work with?
 - (iii) Do you ever say this? — "When I get more _____ then I'm going to _____." What is that for you and why? The secret is: you will never have enough on your own. The lesson throughout the Bible again and again and again is to start with what little you have and watch what God can do. Why is this true?
 - (iv) You were given examples from the Old Testament such as Moses, Jeremiah, Gideon and David that reveal God's pattern —start with what you have and watch what God will do. Read those passages. What is God saying to you?
 - (e) You were given 5 obstacles the disciples gave as to why there was no solution for this impossible situation. Read those in your sermon notes with the supporting verses. What obstacles do you give to God as to why you can't do what He wants you to do?
 - (f) Then we saw a second pattern from God in this story. (a) God reduces our resources. (b) God magnifies our need and (c) Someone finally trusts God with what little they have. (d) God uses the little we have to show how great He is. Why do you think God applies this second pattern to us? When has He done this to you and how did you react?
8. Read John 6:10 in your sermon notes. The people and the disciples may have had a heightened sense of anticipation with this move by Jesus. Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel at this and why? What do you honestly anticipate the Lord to do in and through you?
9. Read John 6:11 in your sermon notes. Have you ever given thanks to God when it seemed like there wasn't enough? If so, when was it and what were the results? Jesus teaches that when it comes to an impossible situation, instead of complaining about what we do not have, thank God for what we do have. Do you tend to complain or give thanks to God when facing a huge situation with so little?
10. Read Mark 6:41 in your sermon notes. Jesus worked this miracle through the hands-of His disciples in incredible power. This is one of the simplest lessons ever: Begin with what little you have, you give it all to Jesus Christ and He does the rest. How does this impact your life right now?

11. Read Matthew 14:20 in your sermon notes and the explanation for the word translated as “satisfied.” What does this tell you Jesus did with so little?
12. The third major lesson we learn from this is this: The lesson of the spreadsheet. Every encounter with a problem or challenge can bring an increase. This is the Excel Spreadsheet of the Christian faith. Read John 6:12-13 in your sermon notes.
 - (a) There was so much bread and fish left over, it filled 12 baskets FULL — one for each disciple. Why do you think there was not 13 — one for Jesus?
 - (b) Read John 6:14 in your sermon notes and Deuteronomy 18:15 &18 in your Bible. The people are ready to attempt to force Jesus to become their king. Why do you think that Jesus feeding them would motivate them to attempt to initiate this move?
 - (c) Read John 6:15. Besides giving the “church answer,” why do you think Jesus withdrew to the mountains by Himself to be alone?
13. We concluded with two summary statements: Our resource for ministry and success is Christ, not ourselves. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7 in your Bible. What does this say to you and why? Elizabeth Elliott wrote, “If the only thing you have to offer God is a broken heart, then offer him your broken heart. God can use that too!” Why do you think and why?
14. Second summary statement: Our effectiveness in ministry is through cooperative effort, not singular. Read 1 Peter 4:10-11 in your Bible. When it comes to stepping out in faith, are you a feeler, a realist or a “faither?” Why? Do you tend to flunk Faith 101 or pass? Why?