

Men's Sunday Night Live
Lesson 6 – John 6:1-71
Finding Identity and Purpose
“The Bread of Life”

The Signs (6:1–21)

The first two signs we see in John, illustrate how one is saved through the Word, by faith, and by grace. The third sign (feeding the 5,000) shows us that salvation satisfies the inner needs of the heart. This miracle also reminds us that, while salvation is of the Lord and received only by grace, God still uses human instruments to take the Gospel message to men. The last four signs in John's Gospel illustrate the results of salvation: Feeding the 5,000 (Salvation brings satisfaction); Stilling the storm (Salvation brings peace); Healing the blind man (Salvation brings light); Raising Lazarus from the dead (Salvation brings life).

The Sermon (6:22–65)

We now see the people, interested in food, following Christ over the sea to Capernaum. He revealed their shallow, carnal motives and their ignorance of what it means to be saved by faith. Just as He graciously fed them the bread, and all they had to do was receive it, so He wanted to give them eternal life, but they instead thought they must work for it. The Jews threw out a challenge to Jesus, “*What sign will you perform now?*” (6:30). They reminded Him of the way Moses brought manna from heaven to feed the Jews; and Jesus used this as the basis for His sermon. Jesus is the Living Word, and He was “made flesh” for us. The Bible is the written Word. Whatever the Bible says about Jesus, it also says about itself. Both are holy, both are Truth, both are Light, both give life, both produce the new birth, both are eternal, both are the power of God.

The Purging (6:66–71)

It is the Word of God, revealing the Person of Christ, that separates the true from the false. The crowd, desiring bread for the body, rejected the Bread of Life for the soul. Peter and ten of the disciples affirmed their faith in Christ. Their faith came by hearing the Word. Judas, however, was a pretender and ultimately would betray Christ.

7. What was the response from the people to Jesus' "Bread of Life sermon"?
(See 6:60-71)

8. Why did many of Jesus' disciples quit following Him after hearing Jesus' sermon?

9. Why didn't the twelve abandon Jesus? (See 6:67-69)

10. How do you think people would respond to a message like this today?

11. Knowing that Judas was going to betray Him, why did Jesus choose him as one of His Twelve apostles?

12. What truth from this chapter would you like to apply to your own life this week?

The Bread of Life

When Jesus called Himself the “Bread of Life,” He was using as an image more than a staple of the diet. He was drawing on a rich symbol of Jewish life.

Bread played an important role in Israel’s worship. During the celebration of Pentecost, two loaves of leavened bread were offered as sacrifices. In the tabernacle, and later in the temple, the Levites placed twelve loaves of unleavened bread, or bread without yeast before the Lord each week to symbolize God’s presence with the twelve tribes of Israel.

Throughout the Exodus, God miraculously sustained His people by sending manna from heaven each morning. It was this manna that Jesus was recalling when He called Himself “*the True Bread from Heaven*” (John 6:32). Symbolically, Jesus is that heavenly manna.

In the event seen in John chapter 6, Jesus had just fed at least 5,000 people. He was indicating that He was God’s provision for the people’s deepest spiritual needs. Just as God had provided for His people coming out of Egypt, so Jesus had provided physical food for the 5,000 and was ready to provide spiritual nourishment and life to all them as well.

Tragically, the people rejected His teaching. Their hearts were hardened in unbelief. Soon many began to turn away. But those who believed like Peter who declared “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (John 6:69), Jesus gave abundant and eternal life.