



# Jesus, the One Who Satisfies the Need

## Lesson 9 John 6:1-24

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### REVIEW

1. Jesus claimed to be equal with God in nature, power and authority.
2. Jesus offered His witness, the witness of John the Baptist, the witness of His works, the witness of the Father and the witness of the Scriptures as proof that His claims were true.

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### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. We will study the fourth sign of John's Gospel, the feeding of the 5,000, and discover what this sign reveals about Jesus Christ and how it applies to our lives.
2. We will study the fifth sign of the Gospel of John, Jesus walking on the water, and gain a greater understanding of its implications in our lives.
3. We will also compare and contrast these two miracles with a) one another and b) the other gospel accounts in order to understand their impact upon the events that will follow.

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### THE FOURTH SIGN: FEEDING OF THE 5,000 MEN (John 6:1-14)

#### A. The significance of this sign

1. It is recorded in all four gospels - **Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:11-17; John 6:1-14**
2. Some of the details in all four gospels are similar and complementary
3. Each includes details that the others do not mention
  - a. "The [Gospel] writers...select and arrange [their stories] according to their individual emphasis and interpretations which presents the particular portrait of Christ they desire to convey. The Gospels present the life of Christ thematically and thus are to be viewed as complementary and supplementary rather than contradictory."<sup>1</sup>
  - b. Some scholars believe John recorded his viewpoint on this miracle "to supplement and provide additional information not recorded in the synoptics."<sup>2</sup>

#### B. The setting for the sign - 6:1-4

**6:1** "After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. **2** And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. **3** And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. **4** And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh."

##### 1. Time

- a. "After these things" indicates a large gap of time - **6:1**
- b. Near the Feast of Passover - **6:4**
  - i. If the feast in John 5:1 is the Feast of Tabernacles, then this miracle takes place approximately six months after the events of John 5 (October to April)
  - ii. If the feast is the Passover Feast, then this miracle takes place approximately one year after the events of John 5 (April to April). This is the third of four Passover Feasts in the Gospel of John - **2:13, 5:1, 6:4, 13:1**

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<sup>1</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 24.

<sup>2</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), 1589.

## 2. Location

- a. Near the Sea of Galilee in the northern part of Galilee. In chapter 5, Jesus is in Jerusalem (Judea), the south - **6:1**
- b. It is a mountainous area - **6:3**
  - i. Matthew called it a desert place - **Matthew 14:13**
  - ii. Luke called it “*a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.*” - **Luke 9:10**

## 3. The people

- a. “*A great multitude*” is following Him because of the miracles He did on those who were diseased. What are the miracles to which John is referring? **6:2**
  - i. The signs in John’s gospel leading up to this miracle - **6:1**
    - a) Turned the water into wine in Cana - **2:1-11**
      - 1) Proved that Jesus had power over nature
      - 2) The Principle of Division of Labor. God asks men to do what they can do (fill the water pots and bear them to the governor of the feast), but God will do what only He can do (change the water into wine).
    - b) Performed other miracles in Jerusalem because many people believed in Him as a result - **2:23**
    - c) Healed the nobleman’s son - **4:46-54**
  - ii. The other gospel accounts also tell us that by the time of this miracle in John 6 Jesus also healed Peter’s mother-in-law of the fever (**Matthew 8:14-17**), calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee (**Mark 4:35-41**) and raised Jarius’ daughter back to life (**Luke 8:40-56**).
  - iii. Matthew’s account of this miracle sheds light on this group of people **Matthew 14:13-14**
    - a) Jesus’ popularity is growing
    - b) His ability to heal the sick is what attracted the crowds
    - c) Jesus healed the sick in their crowd as well - **Matthew 14:14**

## 4. Jesus and his disciples

- a. They were resting - **6:3**
- b. Jesus “*sat with his disciples.*” “*Sat*” is a verb in the “imperfect middle tense” and means “was sitting, a picture of repose.”<sup>3</sup>
- c. Mark’s gospel says that Jesus invited them to this place to rest from their work **Mark 6:31**

## C. The sign - **6:5-15**

**6:5** “When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? **6** And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. **7** Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. **8** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto him, **9** There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?”

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<sup>3</sup> A.T. Robertson, *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 97.

1. Jesus lifted up His eyes and saw the need - 6:5
2. Jesus' question in verse 5 had a three-fold purpose
  - a. To test Philip - 6:6
  - b. To teach from this miracle - 6:6
    - i. He already knew what He was going to do
    - ii. This sign was going to teach a lesson
  - c. To demonstrate His compassion for the people. His question shows that Christ
    - i. Saw the need (they were hungry). The other Gospels tell us it was late in the day, they were in a desert place, and they hadn't eaten all day.
    - ii. Was going to satisfy the need
3. Philip's response to the test, "Two days' wages is not enough for everyone to have a little" - 6:7
4. Andrew's response to the test - 6:8-9
  - a. He knew how much food they had (five barley loaves and two small fishes) - 6:9
  - b. He knew what he had was grossly insufficient, "*What are they among so many?*"
  - c. This is a test of faith, "Don't you know what I am able to do?"
5. The need is met - 6:10-13

**6:10** "And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. **11** And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. **12** When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. **13** Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten."

- a. Jesus told the disciples to have the men sit down (division of labor) - 6:10
- b. The men sat down (obedience)
- c. Jesus is the One who multiplied the food - 6:11
  - i. He took the loaves
  - ii. He gave thanks
  - iii. He gave it to the disciples
- d. The disciples distributed the bread to the people
- e. The same process was repeated for the fish
- f. The people
  - i. Received "*as much as they would.*" "*Would*" means "to desire, to wish."<sup>4</sup>
  - ii. "*Were filled*" - 6:12
- g. Jesus instructed the disciples to "*gather up the fragments that remain*"
- h. The disciples gathered "*twelve baskets*" full of fragments. Compare Philip's response in 6:7, "What we have is simply not enough to meet needs," with Christ's, "It's more than enough." - 6:13

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<sup>4</sup> Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 285, ref. 2309.

6. The response - 6:14-15

**6:14** “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. **15** When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

- a. The men saw the miracle that Jesus did. They knew it was Christ, not the disciples  
6:14
- b. They believed Jesus was “*that Prophet*,” the Messiah - **Deuteronomy 18:14-22**
- c. They wanted to make Him king. They were looking for a Messiah who would rule with a scepter, but Jesus was coming to redeem as a Savior - **6:15**

7. Jesus’ response was to depart to a mountain. Matthew and Mark record that Jesus went further up the mountain to pray. - **Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46**

D. The revelations in this sign

1. Christ is the One who satisfies needs

- a. People have tried to allegorize the meaning of the fragments, but the point of the fragments is to demonstrate the overflowing sufficiency of Christ to meet needs
- b. Some have done the same with the miracle itself, “When did it happen? In the baskets, in the disciples hands or did Jesus do it spontaneously?” The point of the miracle is to demonstrate the overflowing sufficiency of Christ to meet needs.

2. Christ has power over nature (He multiplied the food miraculously)

3. Christ is “*that Prophet*”

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**THE FIFTH SIGN- JESUS WALKS ON WATER (John 6:16-24)**

**6:16** “And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, **17** And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. **18** And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. **19** So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. **20** But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. **21** Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.”

A. The disciples in the sea - 6:16-19

1. According to Matthew’s gospel, Jesus told the disciples to get into the ship while He dispelled the crowds - **Matthew 14:22**
2. They were traveling from area near Bethsaida toward Capernaum - **6:17**
3. It was evening - **6:16**
4. It was dark - **6:17**
5. They were on the sea without Christ
6. A storm arose, which is normal on the Sea of Galilee. “The mountains around this body of water are such that a storm can rise quickly and almost instantaneously turn the calm and peaceful lake into a raging torrent.”<sup>5</sup>
7. They were about three miles into their journey - **6:19**

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<sup>5</sup> Elmer Towns, *John: Believe and Live* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), 61.

8. They saw Jesus
    - a. Walking on the sea
    - b. Drawing nigh to the ship
  9. They were afraid
    - a. This fear is not because of the storm (contrast to different storm in Mark 4:35-41)
    - b. They were fearful because someone was walking on the water - **Matthew 14:26;**  
**Mark 6:49-50**
- B. Jesus came to His disciples - 6:19-21**
1. Jesus was walking on the water
  2. Jesus knew where they were (compare this same storm in Mark 6:48-50)
  3. Jesus talked to them - **6:20**
    - a. *“But”* is a conjunction that implies He sensed their fear
    - b. He identified Himself, *“It is I”*
    - c. He gave them words of encouragement, *“Be not afraid”*
- C. The disciples received Him into the ship - 6:21**
1. They *“willingly received him into the ship.”* The word *“willingly”* is the same word that was used in John 6:11. They wanted, desired and wished for Him to come into the ship.
  2. They were immediately at land. It is a part of this miracle.
- D. John excludes the story of Peter walking on the water. Why would John exclude such an important part of this story? The attention in this story is on Christ’s sufficiency in this storm. Christ walked to them, He joined them in the ship, and they were immediately out of the storm. - Matthew 6:28-31**
- E. The people seek after Jesus - 6:22-24**
- 6:22** “The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone; **23** (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:) **24** When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.”

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## LIFE LESSONS

1. Jesus sees the needs of people. He always does.
2. God wants to use us to meet those needs.
3. What we have in our own hands is little; in the hands of the Savior, it’s more than enough.
4. Jesus knows where you are in the storms.
5. He is able to walk on the water in the storms.
6. He is with you, so don’t be afraid in the storms.
7. Jesus alone can satisfy the needs of people.