

John 6:15-69

“Jesus: The Bread of Life”

Scripture: John 6:15-69

Memory Verse: John 6:35 *“I AM the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”*

Lesson Focus: We will cover most of the rest of John 6, but skip some portions of it. Our emphasis will be on ***clinging*** to Christ alone as the Bread of life for salvation and security. But this requires that we ***let go*** of worldly things and our own efforts to earn salvation so that we can cling tighter and firmer to Jesus Christ.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture: Bread of Life Maze, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Make It Real Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: I AM Crown

Starter Activity: Things We Cling To

As we try and get through most of this long chapter, one common theme that we can ask of the characters is, “What are they clinging to?” Let’s ask ourselves that first:

Q: What are some things that you guys hold onto tight when you are scared or afraid?

Teachers: To get the discussion going consider sharing with them something you clung to tightly when you were their age (i.e. a teddy bear, a doll, etc.).

As people get older, they might not cling to stuffed animals anymore, but they will “cling to” other things when they are afraid or worried:

- Older kids may cling to video games as a “safe” place *
- Young adults may cling to their social media virtual life to avoid being in contact with real people in the real world
- Adults may cling to pictures of themselves when they were young as they are getting older and afraid of age

The point is that we all can cling to things that make us feel safe and comfortable.

Q: What do you think God would have us cling to the tightest? Jesus! And I’m not talking about a stuffy of Jesus that we hold onto like a magic charm, but being in His Word, being in prayer, trusting in Him and obeying Him!

Let’s look at the characters in our study and see what they end up clinging to.

Bible Study:

John 6:15: Jesus had just miraculously fed the 5000 (continuing from last week). The people were so excited about their full bellies that they were ready to make Him their earthly king. But that was not why Jesus came! He came to meet their spiritual needs as He will make very clear so He escapes their attempts to make Him their earthly king.

John 6:16-19: Whoa! Imagine yourself on that boat in the storm trying to just stay alive and then you see some dude walking on the water toward you!

Q: What would you be clinging to at that moment? Maybe a life preserver!

John 6:20-21: But notice what Jesus says: “**It is I.** Do not be afraid!” They welcomed Jesus into the problem and all was well. Jesus would have us look to Him as our superhero Who will take care of us in our troubles. Jesus would have us cling to Himself when we are scared. *

Q: What are some reasons why welcoming Jesus in and clinging to Jesus will help us not be afraid?

A: We remember that He alone is God, that He is good, and that He is in control. Therefore, if you are a child of God, no matter what happens, He has what is best for you (**Romans 8:31**). *

We don’t cling to Jesus as a good luck charm, but as the one true and living God of the universe Who works all things together for good to those who love Him! (**Romans 8:28**)

John 6:22-25: The local people are still seeking Jesus and yet wondering how He got across the lake so fast, for they did not see Him enter the boat with the disciples. Now they have found Him and this leads us into our skit.

Teachers: Transition into the skit (see last page). We will essentially act out John 6:25-35 (with some embellishments). This is the dialogue between Jesus and these Jewish people about Him being the bread of life. Have a leader be Jesus, but have either another leader or kids from class act out the Jewish people.

John 6:35-36: This is the first of seven amazing “I AM” statements that Jesus makes revealing Who He is.

Q: What do you think Jesus means when He says “I AM the bread of life”?

A: Jesus is teaching that just as our bodies need physical food (bread) to survive, our souls need Him, the bread of life, to survive spiritually.

Q: What happens if you don’t eat food? You will eventually starve and die! You need food to stay alive!

Q: In the same way, what do you think happens if you don’t have Jesus?

A: Your soul will also starve and die, both in this life and the next! You will be spiritually dead, because only Jesus Christ and His Spirit can breathe life into your soul and nourish it.

These guys are thinking only about Olive Garden breadsticks right now. They were excited about the free lunch they got before and they want more. Jesus has whet their appetites with the feeding of the 5000, but now He presents them with the more important spiritual truth: That He is essential for life. Without Him, they will starve and die!

John 6:37: Jesus stresses people must be drawn to Him by the Father. But notice it also says people must come to Him. Jesus would have us truly come to Him in faith and trust, believing that He is the God-man. When we do that, He says He will not reject anyone!

Q: What would you say these Jewish guys are “clinging to”?

A: Free meals! Remember they wanted to make Jesus their earthly king. They are clinging to this idea that the Messiah would come and make them fat and rich. They need to let go of their ideas before they can truly come to Jesus on His terms!

John 6:38-40: This section concludes with Jesus contesting what these men and most people throughout the world have always clung to: *working for salvation*.

Q: What do you think God wants more from you? Raise your hand if you think #1 or #2.

- 1) To try your best to be good
- 2) To believe in Jesus

If you think #1, you are thinking like the Jews in this section of Scripture and most people throughout the history of the whole world. * Let’s review what Jesus has said in this section.

Look at **John 6:28-29** again. The people are clinging to the idea that they must work and earn God’s favor (v. 28)

Q: But what does Jesus say the “work of God” is in v. 29?

A: *Believe!*

Look at **John 6:35** again.

Q: What does Jesus say you must do to have your spiritual hunger and thirst satisfied?

A: *Come to Him and believe!*

Look at **John 6:40** again.

Q: What does God want you to do more than anything else? *Believe in Jesus!* Not “be good”. Not “do what is right”. But put your faith and trust in Jesus just as you are!

This is RADICAL! We come to Jesus, the bread of life, empty and humble. Instead of God asking us, “what have you done for me”, He says to us, “Here’s what I’ve done for you.” Our job is to only believe and receive His grace. (**Ephesians 2:8-9**)

This insults people! This requires you to admit that there is NOTHING you bring to the table because you have NOTHING good to offer, being lost in your sin. You must no

longer cling to your own works, your own goodness, or your own power. Rather, LET GO of the idea that you can do anything to impress God. *

John 6:41: It is no surprise that the Jewish people complained. This is the gospel and it is offensive! The gospel humbles and lowers us so that God alone may be exalted!

Teachers: Jesus continues to argue that He is not a side dish, but the ONLY food for our souls in v. 42-65. I would recommend wrapping up the lesson by stressing the responses of the people and the twelve disciples in v. 66-69.

John 6:66: Jesus's challenge to humbly let go of their own works and ideas about Him led many of them to turn their backs on them! Notice Jesus lets them go! He doesn't force anyone to come to Him!

John 6:67-69: Then He turns to the twelve disciples. But they have a different response! They realize that Jesus Christ is their only hope!

Key Point: What is your response? Are you going to cling to your own goodness or are you going to let go and cling to Jesus Christ alone in faith? Like Peter, do you realize that Jesus is your only hope?

I repeat: What does God want from you more than anything else? It is NOT BE GOOD, but it is BELIEVE IN JESUS! When you truly believe and trust in Jesus, then He becomes the One you are living for and He will help you be good!

ABCs of salvation:

- Admit that you are a sinner and have broken God's law (1 John 1:8)
- Believe that Jesus Christ took your sins upon Himself when he died on the cross and that He has taken your punishment upon Himself (John 3:16, Romans 5:8)
- Confess your sin and that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10)

Teachers: If any of your kids respond to this gospel call, please be sure to pray with them and talk about it with their parents afterwards.

Bring It Home

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: The Bread of Life”

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Memory Verse: John 6:35 *“I AM the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”*

Teachers/Parents: Throughout our lesson we asked the kids to consider what the characters are clinging to. We cling to things that make us feel safe and Jesus makes it clear in this section of Scripture that He wants us to let go of things of this world and cling to Him by faith. Discuss with your kids some things that you have clung to throughout your life that the Lord has challenged you to let go of so that you might cling tighter to Him.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) In **John 6:20**, Jesus comforts His disciples with some very simple words. What are some areas where you can feel overwhelmed or afraid in which you can welcome Jesus in and cling to Him for comfort and help?
- 2) **Read Matthew 14:33** which is the final verse of Matthew’s account of Jesus walking on the water (**John 6:15-21**). Notice what it says the disciples did after they received Him in the boat. God alone is deserving of this so who were the disciples beginning to understand Jesus to be? Why is this important?
- 3) **Read John 6:28-29** where Jesus begins to get to the central issue most people have with Him, even today. What were the Jewish people focused on in v. 28? How was Jesus response in v. 29 so completely opposite of what they were thinking?
- 4) In **John 6:35**, Jesus makes the first of seven “I AM” statements that clearly teach His deity and His centrality in salvation. What actions does Jesus stress in this verse? What are practical ways that we can perform these actions?
- 5) **Read John 6:40-41**. What does God want you to do more than anything else? Why do you think this offended the Jews and people still today? (Hint: **Read Hebrews 11:6**)
- 6) **Read John 6:66**. People still today cling to their own goodness and works, or earthly things and reject Jesus. Who is someone in your life that is not walking with Jesus that you can reach out to in love? Pray for them now together.

Jesus and Galilean Jews Script

Act 1: John 6:25-35: The act should begin by having the two people from the crowd approaching Jesus in astonishment.

Person #1: Rabbi, when did you come here and how in the world did you get here?

Jesus: You guys are not here to truly follow me, but you just want another more free breadsticks! Don't merely be working to have your bellies full, but work for that food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you because the Father has approved Him.

Person #2: OK. Well, what work must we do to do the works of God?

Jesus: It's very simple! The work of God is this: that you believe in Him whom He sent!

Person #1: We need more proof! What sign will you do that we may see and believe?

Person #2: Yeah! Who do You think You are? Moses fed a lot more than five thousand. He fed millions of our fathers with the manna from heaven that God gave us through Moses. Are you better than him?

Jesus: I tell you the truth! Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world!

Person #1 and #2 Together: Sir, whatever you say. Just give us this bread, because we're starving!

Jesus: I AM the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst!