

## “The most vital part of doing God’s work”

### John 6: 41-51 NIV

“At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, ‘I am the bread that came down from heaven.’ They said, ‘Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, “I came down from heaven”?’”

“‘Stop grumbling among yourselves,’ Jesus answered. ‘No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: “They will all be taught by God.”’

“‘**Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.** No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die.’”

“‘I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.’”

**Anyone who thinks the world is in its worst shape ever should read through the Bible once.**

**John chapter six reports social protest, political intrigue, and personal ambition at their height. John also relates something extremely rare.**

**The first five chapters of John tell numerous miracles Jesus performed.**

Had Covid19 been rampant in Israel, Jesus could have cured everyone.

**Great crowds of “people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he performed on the sick” (John 6:2).**

**Not only did Jesus heal the sick, starting with a boy’s “sack lunch,” Jesus fed about five thousand hungry people.**



**After all present ate their fill, Jesus asked the disciples to pick up the leftovers.**

**They filled 12 baskets with leftovers.**

**John 6:15 tells how Jesus greatly impressed folks.**

**Most Jews yearned for a valiant leader to free them from Roman (foreign) rule.**

**When they saw Jesus’ extraordinary abilities, they thought “he’s the guy to do it.”**

The people planned to come and forcefully compel Jesus to become their king.

Realizing what they intended, Jesus went into the hills by himself so they couldn’t find him.

**If an overwhelming majority of Americans demanded that he/she be President, how many American politicians would go into seclusion?**

**Jesus came to achieve a mission God sent him to fulfill, not to gratify his own ego.**

**Jesus rejected the kingship of Israel, but he didn’t quit doing miracles.**

Carefully read verses 6:15-24, bone up on some geography, and you realize what a stunning miracle Jesus performed next.

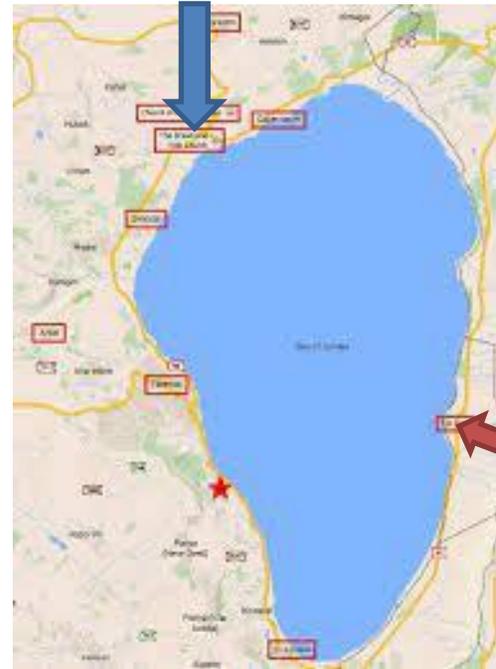
**Jesus likely fed those 5000 people on the eastern shores of Galilee Lake; it’s not a real sea.**

**Then he went up on a mountain to get away from the crowds.**

**Likely eager to get home, his disciples boarded a boat and headed for Capernaum.**

Because Galilee Lake is about 600 feet below sea level, downdrafts suddenly occur making the water dangerously turbulent.

**That night, a fierce tempest commenced.**



**Sea (Lake) of Galilee**  
Map courtesy of mapsforyoufree.blogspot.com  
Location markers by Bob.  
Lake dimensions:  
North to south, 13 miles  
West to east, at widest 7 miles.  
Hippos – red arrow, possible site of feeding 5000.  
Capernaum- blue arrow

**In a raging storm, the twelve rowed for three or four miles and then they saw someone walking toward them in that wild, dark lake.**

**Terror gripped them as if in their worst nightmares.**

**How would you feel, if on a stormy night your boat is near capsizing in the middle of a large lake, and during lightning strikes, you see someone walking toward you on the water?**

**Is there a person alive who wouldn’t be horrified?**

Jesus simply said something akin to:

**“Keep your cool guys, it’s me!”**



On a different occasion, the twelve saw Jesus calm a violent storm on the lake.

They wondered:

**“What kind of man is this that even the winds and sea obey him?” (Matthew 8:27).**

Modern scientists can’t accurately forecast storms, let alone stop or start them.

Usually they predict in terms of percentages like 47% or 51%.

The *John 6* account tells that next day, some of those 5000 Jesus fed, possibly looking for another free meal, headed for Capernaum in their boats.

They knew Jesus didn’t leave their town with the twelve.

When they saw Jesus in Capernaum, they wondered, “How in the world did he get here?”

Two of the Gospel writers (Matthew and John) were with Jesus on these occasions and saw these signs and miracles.

They also witnessed his resurrection.

Except for Judas, all the Apostles risked their lives for Jesus.

They positively believed him to be the Son of God.

No one except the one who created the Universe

could do all these things the disciples recorded.

Jesus came to earth and lived in human form.

The Twelve knew Jesus performed things no other human being ever had or ever would.

In John 6:45, Jesus said:

**“It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.”**

Jesus raised two questions we must answer:

1. Am I listening to God?
2. Am I learning from Jesus?



Note question one:

**Did you listen to God last week?**

Most of us listen to or read daily news reports of evil actions by fancy-titled people in DC, New York City, Shanghai, London, and Hollywood.

**Compared to that in the past week, how much time did you spend listening to God?**

**How do we listen to God?**

**God speaks primarily through Scriptures.**

**“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped...” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17 TEV).**

**Often as I read Scripture, God convicts me personally and privately to alter my behavior. In some of those changes, I resist listening to him.**

**He’s been right every time, and I’m so thankful for His wisdom and foreknowledge.**

**Politicians and newscasters have biases; so do family, friends, and preachers.**

**God always speaks truth.**

**Want to be qualified and equipped for life?**

**Two alerts:**

**A) We listen to God in Scripture; we do not use the Word to prove ourselves right.**

**B) We do not live according to any tradition, reformer, denomination, or church; we look for Jesus and his teachings.**

**Consider an example of how easily human beings can distort God’s Scripture.**

**Note the parable of the sower in Luke 8:4-15. Many translations include a heading title like *Parable of the Sower* in large print italics.**

**At verse 16, they place a new heading:**

***Parable of the Lamp.***

**The original does not have these headings and has no paragraph break here.**

Though most Bible publishers label this section separately, it simply continues the idea of fruitfulness Jesus emphasized in verse 15:

**“But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance,” NASB.**

**After hearing and learning, we bear fruit by telling about God’s goodness, Jesus’ defeat of Satan through resisting temptation, and Jesus’ resurrection victory over death.**

**Jesus continued the “hearing and listening to God” theme in verses 16-18 (NASB).**

**“Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor *anything* secret that will not be known and come to light. So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him *more* shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.”**

**The “hearing and listening to God” theme even goes through verses 19-21;**

**someone told Jesus that his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to talk with him.**

**At that time, his mom and his four brothers thought Jesus was “off his rocker.”**

**Jesus responded sternly: “My mother and my brothers are those who hear (listen to) the word of God and do it.”**

**Do you hear God speaking to you through His Word today?**

**Are you listening to Him?**

**Are you learning from Jesus?**

**Are you making effort to bear fruit by telling the Good News of Christ’s resurrection?**

**The *Book of Revelation* contains letters to seven different first century churches.**

**The first letter was to the church in Ephesus, one of the Roman Empire’s most impressive cities.**

**In these excerpts, note the emphasis on listening:**

**Revelation 2:1-7 NASB**

**“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:**

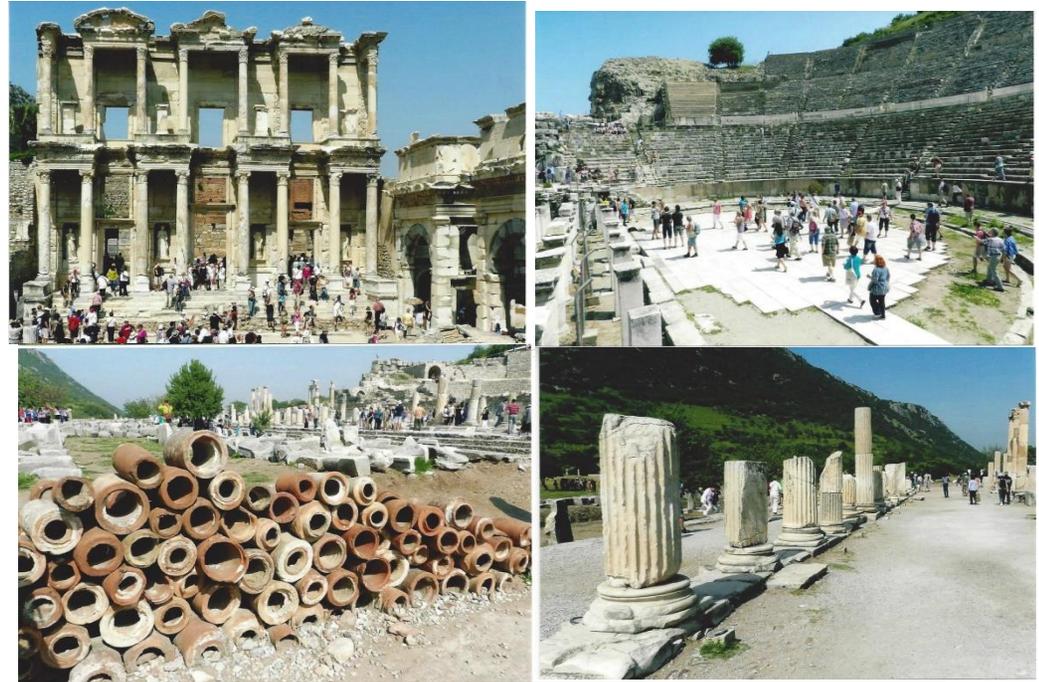
**The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:**

**‘I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance . . . But I have *this* against you, that you have left your**

**first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent . . .**

**He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.**

**To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.”**



Remains of ancient Ephesus (SW Turkey)  
Top left- Library of Celsus, right amphitheater  
Bottom left- ancient water pipes, right-street once filled with stylish shops, shoppers and visitors from all over the world.  
*Blair photos*

**God expects believers to share the Good News that Jesus defeated evil and all evil powers.**

By listening to God and becoming like Jesus in trust, love, and faith, we can share his victory over death.

God’s churches share Jesus’ Good News light.

**People who listen to God live righteously and lovingly; they learn to trust God as Jesus did.**

**God never assigned believers the task of changing the world.**

He sent them to glorify Him through His Son.

***Revelation 9 & 16 are fearsome chapters.***

God sends plagues upon people because they lapse into greed, selfishness, immorality, and worshipping false gods.

***Revelation 16: 9 NASB reads;***

*“They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent, and glorify him.”*

**The questions for us:**

**Will we listen to God our Creator, glorify Him and trust Jesus who died to save us?**

**Or will we keep listening to mortal “experts” who reject God and His ways, but will soon be dead and forgotten as the people who lived and worshipped in Ephesus?  
They are today’s false gods.**

**May God be praised  
through our Lord Jesus Christ  
in you  
and in His church  
throughout the world!**

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