

Olivet Baptist Church

3500 Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21229

Wednesday Night Bible Study (7:00 pm)

Book of John – Facilitator: Rev. Alex O. Stone

Overall Theme: The (9:32–28:31)

Chapter Review: *Gospel of John*

I. Jesus Objective through His earthly ministry (John 3:13–17)

- ¹³ No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven.
- ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
- ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

CURRENT FOCUS: Jesus Revelation in Galilee 6:1-7:9

Christ Feeds 5,000 [parallel text Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:31–44; Luke 9:11–17]

6 After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is *the Sea of Tiberias*. ² Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased. ³ And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

⁴ Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” ⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. ⁷ Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.”

⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, ⁹ “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said, “Make the people 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 *them* to the

disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.” ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

Christ Walks on the Water

Matt. 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–52

¹⁵ Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. ¹⁶ Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. ¹⁸ Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. ¹⁹ So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. ²⁰ But He said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” ²¹ Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

“I Am the Bread of Life”

²² On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—²³ however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—²⁴ when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. ²⁵ And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?”

²⁶ Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

²⁷ Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” ²⁸ Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” ²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

³⁰ Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘*He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*’” ³² Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.” ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

⁴¹ The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.” ⁴² And they said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” ⁴³ Jesus therefore answered and said to them, “Do not murmur among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, ‘*And they shall all be taught by God.*’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the

Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. ⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

⁵² The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?” ⁵³ Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

⁵⁹ These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Rejection by Many Followers

⁶⁰ Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard *this*, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?” ⁶¹ When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² *What* then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? ⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. ⁶⁵ And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.” ⁶⁶ From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Confession by Peter

⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?” ⁷¹ He spoke of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.¹

Commentary:

C. JESUS’ REVELATION IN GALILEE (6:1–7:9)

1. JESUS’ SIGNS ON THE LAND AND THE LAKE (6:1–21).

a. Jesus’ feeding of the 5,000 (6:1–15)

The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 is the only sign recorded in all ² four Gospels (besides Jesus’ resurrection). This fact alone points to its importance. The significance of the sign was expounded by the Lord in a long discourse (vv. 22–71). The miracle was spectacular, and it caused a peak in the people’s messianic expectations. But in its aftermath many of His followers no longer followed Him (v. 66).

John 6:1–2. Though **some time after this** is indefinite, it can be learned from the Synoptics that Herod Antipas had killed John the Baptist (Mark 6:14–29; cf. John 3:24), the disciples had preached throughout Galilee (Mark 6:7–13, 30–31), multitudes of people were curious about Jesus, and Herod Antipas was seeking Jesus (Luke 9:7–9). So, *the time between the events in John 5 and 6 was probably six months*. From verses 1–2 it seems that Jesus had gone to the northeast side of **the Sea of Galilee** with His disciples for rest. This lake was also called **the Sea of Tiberias** (cf. 21:1), named for a town on the lake’s west shore built by Herod Antipas. But a **crowd** gathered even in this “solitary” (cf. Matt. 14:13; Mark 6:32) and “remote place” (Matt. 14:15).

¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Jn 6:1–71). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 293). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

John 6:3–4. The mention of **the hillside** or “the mountain” (NASB) may indicate an intended parallel to Moses’ experience on Mount Sinai (cf. vv. 31–32). The notice that **the Jewish Passover feast was near** is theological and only secondarily chronological. The people were thinking in terms of blood, flesh, lambs, and unleavened bread. They longed for a new Moses who would deliver them from Roman bondage.

Since this was the second Passover John mentioned (cf. 2:13, 23), and since he mentioned at least one other Passover (13:1 [5:1 refers to an unnamed feast of the Jews]), Jesus’ ministry extended for about three years. The events in chapter 6, then, took place about one year before He was crucified.

John 6:5–6. Jesus’ question **to Philip—Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?**—was not for information but was part of His program of educating the disciples. Philip was from Bethsaida (1:44) which was the closest town, and he would know the local resources.

The answer to Jesus’ question was that it was impossible, humanly speaking, for thousands of people to get bread late in the day from the little neighboring villages. John wrote, as he thought back on the incident, that Jesus was asking this **to test** Philip. God tests people to refine their faith, never to tempt them to do evil (cf. Gen. 22:1–18; James 1:2, 13–15; 1 Peter 1:7).

John 6:7. The amount needed was a large sum of money: literally, “200 denarii.” One denarius was the wage for a day’s work; this would have been **eight months’ wages**. Even if the bread had been available, the disciples did not have nearly that much money. The disciples were supported by people who responded to Jesus’ ministry (cf. Mark 6:7–13).

John 6:8–9. **Andrew**, in contrast with Philip, had gone into the crowd to determine its resources (cf. Jesus’ command, “Go and see”; Mark 6:38). All he could come up with was a little boy’s lunch. Man’s inability set the stage for a

manifestation of Jesus' compassion and power. The **barley loaves** recall the Prophet Elisha's feeding of 100 men with 20 barley loaves (2 Kings 4:42–44). But here was One far greater than Elisha.

John 6:10–11. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus made the “sheep” (Mark 6:34) **sit down** in green pastures (cf. Ps. 23:2). According to Mark 6:40, the people were seated in groups of 50 and 100. This made the crowd easy to count and the food easy to distribute. **Five thousand** men were there, plus women and children (Matt. 14:21). Thus, probably more than 10,000 people were fed.

Since the area was desolate and the time was Passover, **Jesus** was like Moses with the people in the wilderness who needed a miraculous feeding. The miracle itself was not described by John. **Jesus ... gave thanks**, but no eucharistic implications are obvious as many argue in this chapter. Among devout Jews the giving of thanks was the norm before and after meals. As Jesus **distributed** the food (with the aid of the disciples [Mark 6:41]), the miraculous multiplication took place.

John 6:12–13. The words, **when they³ had all had enough to eat**, show that John intended to stress that a miracle took place. Some scholars try to explain away the miracle by saying that this was merely a sacramental or symbolic meal. Others say the “miracle” was in the people's sharing. But these rationalizations are far from the clear meaning of John's words.

The disciples' gathering of the **12 baskets** of fragments was part of their education, to show them that He is more than adequate for their needs. Later He appealed to their spiritual stupidity (cf. Mark 8:17–21). *Even though the disciples were closer to Jesus than the crowds, they too were in spiritual blindness* (Mark 6:52).

John 6:14–15. Seeing this **miraculous sign** (*sēmeion*), the people recalled Moses' prediction that a **Prophet** like him would arise (Deut. 18:15). Moses had fed the

³ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 293–294). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

people. Moses had led them out of bondage. *Jesus had fed the people. Jesus could lead the people out of the hated Roman bondage.*

The people saw His sign, but they did not perceive its meaning. They wanted to seize Him **and make Him King**. This marks the highpoint of Jesus' popularity and a great temptation for Him. Could He have the kingdom without the Cross? No. Jesus' kingdom would be given to Him by the Father (cf. Ps. 2:7–12; Dan. 7:13–14). It will not come from this world (John 18:36). The path of the Father's will lies in another direction. Before He can be the reigning ⁴ Lion of Judah, He must be the Lamb who bears the sin of the world (1:29).

b. His walking on the water (6:16–21).

John 6:16–17. According to Mark 6:45, Jesus compelled His disciples to get **into the boat** and go to Bethsaida while He dismissed the crowds. From Bethsaida they went on toward **Capernaum**. Both villages are at the north end of the Sea of Galilee. **His disciples went down to the lake**, for the land is hilly and high on the east side. As they got out on the lake, the sun went down and the wind picked up. Jesus was up in the hills praying while watching them in their toil (Mark 6:45–48).

John 6:18–19. The west **wind**, which often picks up at evening, caught them in the open water. They were headed directly into it and found themselves making little progress. They were “straining at the oars” (Mark 6:48).

The Sea of Galilee is notable for its sudden and severe storms. **They had rowed three or three and a half miles**, so they were in the middle of the lake. **They were terrified** to see a figure **walking on the water**. They thought it was a ghost (Mark 6:49). Rational explanations have included the idea that Jesus was walking on the sand by the shore or floating on a large beam or log, but neither notion does

⁴ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 294). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

justice to the text. This occurred in the “**fourth watch**” of the night, that is, between 3 and 6 o’clock in the morning (Matt. 14:25; Mark 6:48).

John 6:20–21. The clause **It is I** is literally “I Am,” and was used by Jesus (in 8:58) with strong theological meaning. In this setting it seems to mean only that Jesus was identifying Himself.

When the disciples recognized Him, they welcomed **Him into the boat**. By the words **and immediately the boat reached the shore** another miracle is probably intended. **The two signs on the land and the lake** reveal Jesus as the Provider of a “bread” which gives life (as the next section will expound) and *as the Savior who intercedes for and protects His own*. He intervenes in their times of troubles and brings them to safety.

2. HIS THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE (6:22–71).

John 6:22–25. **The crowd** who had been fed were still on the eastern **shore** of the sea. They saw Jesus compel **His disciples** to get into the **one boat** which was there. But since **Jesus** did not get into the boat, the crowd supposed that He had stayed in the area.

After some time, they **realized** He was no longer **there**. **Some boats from Tiberias landed**, so the people decided to seek Jesus in the **Capernaum** region and **got into the boats**. The people’s question, **When did You get here?** introduces His long discourse in Capernaum (v. 59). Jesus did not explain how or when He crossed the lake, for His walking on the water was a private sign for the disciples only.

John 6:26. **Jesus** began with the solemn words, **I tell you the truth** (cf. comments on 1:51). Jesus spoke these words four times in this discourse **5** (6:26, 32, 47, 53). This drew attention to the importance of what He was about to teach. He rebuked them for their materialistic motivation and their lack of spiritual perception. They **saw miraculous signs**, but *to them it was only an easy meal. They failed to see what it signified.*

John 6:27. When Jesus said, **Do not work for food that spoils**, He was not condoning laziness. Rather He was saying that people should expend their efforts for what will last forever. *“Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God”* (Matt. 4:4). Physical **food** is short-lived but spiritual **food** leads to **eternal life**. **The Son of Man** (who has access to heaven [John 3:13]) **will give** people this spiritual food, which is ultimately Christ Himself (6:53). **God the Father** Himself authenticated Jesus’ claim that He is true heavenly “food.”

John 6:28. The people recognized that Jesus was saying God had a requirement for them. They would do God’s requirement if He would inform them what it was. They believed that they could please **God** and thus obtain eternal life by doing good **works** (cf. Rom. 10:2–4).

John 6:29. Jesus’ response to their question was a flat contradiction of their thinking. They could not please God by doing good works. There is only one **work of God**, that **is**, one thing God requires. They need to put their trust **in the One** the Father **has sent**.⁶ Because of their sin people cannot please God by doing good works for salvation (Eph. 2:8–9; Titus 3:5). God demands that people recognize their inability to save themselves and receive His gift (Rom. 6:23).

⁵ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 294–295). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁶ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 295). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

John 6:30–31. In response the people demanded a **miraculous sign** (*sēmeion*; cf. “Jews demand miraculous signs” [1 Cor. 1:22]). They thought God’s order is **see** and **believe**. But the divine order is believe and see (cf. John 11:40). They did not have faith or spiritual perception, but they understood that Jesus was proclaiming something new.

His coming was claimed as an advance over Moses. They reasoned, “If You are more than Moses, do more than Moses.” *The crowd that asked for a sign from Jesus must have felt that the feeding of the 5,000 did not compare with Moses’ gift of bread from heaven.* They remembered the divine gift of **manna** (Ex. 16; Num. 11:7).

They thought Jesus’ feeding was less significant because manna fed the whole nation for 40 years. But they missed two things. **First**, many of the Israelites who were fed 40 years did not believe. *The important thing is not the magnitude of the sign but the perception of its significance* (cf. Luke 16:29–31). **Second**, both Moses and Jesus were authenticated by God’s signs; therefore, both should be listened to and believed.

John 6:32. In a solemn revelation (**I tell you the truth**; cf. vv. 26, 47, 53) **Jesus corrected their ideas in three ways.**

(1) The Father, **not Moses**, gave the manna.

(2) The **Father**, was still giving “manna” then, not merely in the past.

(3) The true Bread from heaven is Jesus, not the manna.

Thus, the supposed superiorities of Moses and his sign vanish. Manna was food for the body, and it was useful. But **Jesus is God’s full provision for people in their whole existence.** Jesus repeatedly said He had come down from heaven (vv. 32–33, 38, 41–42, 50–51, 58).

John 6:33. God is the Source of all life. The Son has life in Himself (1:4; 5:26) and He has come to give real and lasting life to people. Sin cuts them off from God, who is Life, and they die spiritually and physically. Christ has come **down from heaven to give life to the world.** Jesus is thus **the genuine Bread of God.**

John 6:34. As yet, the crowd did not perceive that Jesus is the genuine **Bread** which He had been describing. Like the woman at the well (4:15), they asked for **this** better food. And they wanted it continually (**from now on**), not like the manna which lasted for 40 years.

John 6:35. **I am the Bread of Life.** *This corrected two more errors in their thinking:*
(1) The food of which He spoke refers to a Person, not a commodity.
(2) And once someone is in right relationship to Jesus, he finds a satisfaction which is everlasting, not temporal.

This “I am” statement is the first in a series of momentous “I am”⁷ revelations (cf. 8:12; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5). “Bread of Life” means bread which provides life. Jesus is man’s necessary “food.” In Western culture, bread is often optional, but it was an essential staple then. Jesus promised, **He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty.** The “nevers” are emphatic in Greek.

John 6:36. Jesus then rebuked the crowd for their lack of faith. They had the great privilege of seeing Him and yet they did **not believe**. Seeing does not necessarily lead to believing (cf. v. 30).

John 6:37. Jesus then gave the ultimate explanation of their lack of faith: **the Father** works sovereignly in people’s lives. There is an election of God which is the Father’s gift to the Son. The Son has no concern that His work will be ineffective, for the Father will enable people to come to Jesus. Jesus has confidence. **But people may have confidence also.** (Cf. *the crippled man’s response to Jesus’ question*, “Do you want to get well?” [5:6–9]) *One who comes to Jesus for salvation will by no means be driven away* (cf. 6:39).

⁷ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 295–296). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

John 6:38–39. Jesus then repeated His claim about His heavenly origin. The reason He **came down from heaven** was **to do the will of the Father who sent Him**. The Father's **will** is **that** those whom He gives to the Son will not suffer a single loss and **all** will be raised to life in the resurrection (cf. vv. 40, 44, 54). This passage is strong in affirming the eternal security of the believer.

John 6:40. This verse repeats and reinforces the ideas of the previous verses. One who **looks** and **believes** on Jesus for salvation has his destiny secure. The divine decree has insured it (cf. Rom. 8:28–30). He has **eternal life** (John 6:47, 50–51, 54, 58) and **will** be raised **at the last day** (cf. vv. 39, 44, 54).

John 6:41–42. **The Jews**, hostile unbelievers, grumbled because of Jesus' proclamation of His heavenly origin. Like their ancestors in the wilderness, these Jews murmured (Ex. 15:24; 16:2, 7, 12; 17:3; Num. 11:1; 14:2, 27). Their thinking was seemingly logical: one **whose** parents are known could not be **from heaven** (cf. Mark 6:3; Luke 4:22). *They were ignorant of His true origin and full nature.* They said He was **the son of Joseph**, but they did not know of the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation. He had come **down** from heaven because He is the *Logos* (John 1:1, 14).

John 6:43–44. **Jesus** made no attempt to correct their ignorance other than to rebuke their **grumbling** and to point them to the drawing and teaching ministry of God. They are not in a position to judge Him. Without God's help any assessment of God's Messenger will be faulty. **No one can come to Jesus** or believe on Him without divine help. People are so ensnared in the quicksand of sin and unbelief that **unless** God **draws** them (cf. v. 65), they are hopeless.

This drawing of God is not limited to a few. Jesus said, "I ... will draw all men to Myself" (12:32). This does not mean that all will be saved but that Greeks (i.e., Gentiles; 12:20) as well as Jews will be saved. Those who will be saved will also be resurrected (cf. 6:39–40).

John 6:45. In support of this doctrine of salvation by God's grace, Jesus cited the Old Testament. The quotation, **They will all be taught by God**, is from **the Prophets**, probably Isaiah 54:13, though Jeremiah 31:34 has the same thought. This "teaching" *of God refers to His inner work that disposes people to accept the truth about Jesus and respond to Him*. **Everyone who listens to and learns from God will come to and believe in Jesus.**

John 6:46. Yet this secret teaching of God is not a mystical connection of people with God directly. Knowing **God** comes only through Jesus, the *Logos* of God (cf. 1:18). As one is confronted by Him and hears His words and sees His deeds, **the Father** works within him.

John 6:47–48. These two verses summarize Jesus' teaching in the debate. **I tell you the truth** occurs here for the third of four times in this passage (cf. vv. 26, 32, 53). **He who believes** is in Greek a participial construction in the present tense, meaning that a believer is characterized by his continuing trust. He **has everlasting life**, which is a present and abiding⁸ possession. Jesus then repeated His affirmation, **I am the Bread of Life** (see comments on v. 35).

John 6:49–50. **Manna** met only a limited need. It provided temporary physical life. The Israelites came to loathe it, and ultimately **they died**. Jesus is a **Bread** of a different kind. He is **from heaven** and gives life. A person who eats of that Bread will **not die**.

John 6:51. Since Jesus is the **Bread** of Life, what does "eating" **this Bread** mean? Many commentators assume that Jesus was talking about the Lord's Supper. This passage may well illuminate the meaning of the Lord's Supper, in relation to Christ's death. But since the Last Supper occurred one year later than the

⁸ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 296). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

incidents recorded in this chapter, eating His flesh and drinking His blood should not be thought of as sacramentalism.

“Eating” **the living** Bread is a figure of speech meaning to believe on Him, like the figures of coming to Him (v. 35), listening to Him, (v. 45), and seeing Him (v. 40). To eat of this Bread is to **live forever** (cf. vv. 40, 47, 50, 54, 58). Jesus’ revelation about the Bread was then advanced in that not only is the Father giving the Bread (Jesus), but also Jesus is giving Himself: **This Bread is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world**. Salvation is by the sacrificial death of the Lamb of God (1:29). By His death, life came to the world.

John 6:52. As often happens, Jesus’ teaching was not understood (cf. 2:20; 3:4; 4:15; 6:32–34). A violent argument started in the crowd regarding what He meant. Their perception remained at a materialistic level. They wondered, **How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?**

John 6:53–54. This revelation by **Jesus** is marked out as important by the fourth use of the phrase, **I tell you the truth** (cf. vv. 26, 32, 47). Sacramental interpretations appeal to the words **eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood** as evidence that Jesus was speaking of the eucharist. As stated earlier, the basic objection to this approach is historical: Jesus did not institute the Communion service until a year later.

Drinking “His blood” is another bold figure of speech. The Jews knew the command, “You must not eat ... any blood” (Lev. 3:17; cf. Lev. 17:10–14). *And yet blood was the means of atonement. It is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life* (Lev. 17:11). Jesus’ hearers must have been shocked and puzzled by His enigmatic words. But the puzzle is unlocked by understanding that Jesus was speaking of His making atonement by His death and giving life to those who personally appropriate Him (cf. John 6:63). **Faith in Christ’s death brings eternal life** (cf. vv. 40, 47, 50–51) and (later) bodily resurrection (cf. vv. 39–40, 44).

John 6:55. Just as good food and drink sustain physical life, so Jesus, the **real** (reliable) spiritual **food** and **drink**, sustains His followers spiritually. His **flesh** and **blood** give eternal life to those who receive Him.

John 6:56–57. One who partakes of Christ enjoys a mutual abiding relationship with Christ. He **remains** (*menei*) **in** Christ, and Christ remains **in him**. *Menō*⁹ is one of the most important theological terms in John’s Gospel (cf. comments on 1:38).

The Father “remains” in the Son (14:10), the Spirit “remains” on Jesus (1:32), and believers “remain” in Jesus and He in them (6:56; 15:4). The implications of this “remaining” are many. A believer enjoys intimacy with and security in Jesus. Just as He has His life from **the Father**, so believers have life **because of** Jesus.

John 6:58–59. Jesus gave this discourse on the **Bread of Life in the synagogue in Capernaum**. He often spoke in Jewish synagogues, where men had opportunities to give expositions and exhortations (Mark 6:1–6; Luke 4:16–28; Acts 13:15–42).

The services were not as formal as those of traditional American churches; “laymen” usually spoke. The conclusion to Jesus’ exposition and exhortation, based on the **manna** incident from Exodus 16, repeats the major themes: Moses’ bread did not give lasting life (salvation does not come by the Law); God has given the genuine life-giving **Bread ... from heaven**; those who trust Jesus have eternal life.

John 6:60. As the people began to understand His teaching, they found it to be totally unacceptable. Besides the hostile Jewish leaders, **many of** the Galilean **disciples** turned away from Him. The popular enthusiasm for Jesus as a political Messiah (v. 15) was then over. They saw that He was not going to deliver them from Rome. He might be a great Healer, but His words were **a hard** (i.e., harsh) **teaching**. **Who** could **accept it**, that is, obey it? How could they personally appropriate Him?

⁹ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 297). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

John 6:61–62. Jesus knew His audience (cf. 1:47; 2:24–25; 6:15). **Aware that they were grumbling** (cf. v. 41), He asked what was so offensive to **them**. (**Offend** in Gr. is *skandalizei*.) *Paul wrote that the crucified Messiah was a “stumbling block” (skandalon) to the Jews* (1 Cor. 1:23). The Ascension of **the Son of Man** is also an offense. But His glorification is His heavenly vindication. **He was crucified in weakness but He was raised in power** (1 Cor. 15:43).

John 6:63. After His Ascension Jesus gave the Holy Spirit (7:38–39; Acts 1:8–9). **The Holy Spirit**, poured out in the world, **gives life** (salvation) to those who believe. *Without the Holy Spirit, man (flesh) is utterly unable to understand Jesus’ person and His works* (John 3:6; 1 Cor. 2:14).

Though the crowds assessed Jesus’ words as “hard” (John 6:60), actually His **words ... are spirit and ... life**. That is, by the work of the Holy Spirit in an individual, Jesus’ words provide spiritual life.

John 6:64. The life Jesus gives must be received by faith. The words do not work automatically. From the start Jesus knew **which** followers were believers and which ones were unbelievers. This is another evidence of His supernatural knowledge (cf. 1:47; 2:24–25; 6:15).

John 6:65. Jesus had taught that divine enablement was necessary for people to **come to** faith (v. 44). The apostasy here (v. 66) should not be surprising. Believers who remain with Jesus evidence the Father’s secret work. The unbelieving crowds are evidence that “the flesh ¹⁰ counts for nothing” (v. 63).

John 6:66. His rejecting their desire to make Him their political king; His demand for personal faith; His teaching on atonement; His stress on total human inability and on salvation as a work of God—all these proved to be unpalatable for **many**

¹⁰ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 297–298). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

people. They gave up being **His disciples** (“disciples” here refers to followers in general, not to the 12 Apostles; this is evident in v. 67).

John 6:67. **You do not want to leave too, do you?** He framed this question to encourage their weak faith. **The Twelve** were affected by the apostasy of the many, and **Jesus** used that occasion to refine their faith. They did not fully understand His words either and would not until after the Resurrection (20:9).

John 6:68–69. **Peter**, as a spokesman, gave his confession of faith. The path may be difficult, but he was convinced that Jesus’ **words** lead to life. No one else has the gift of **eternal life**. “We have believed and have known” is a better translation of the Greek perfect tenses (NIV: **We believe and know**).

Peter was confident of the apostles’ commitment to Jesus as **the Holy One of God**. This title is unusual (a demon addressed Jesus that way; Mark 1:24). It suggests Jesus’ transcendence (“the Holy One”) and His representation of the Father (“of God”); thus it is another way of confessing Him as Messiah. Peter knew this by a special work of the Father (cf. Matt. 16:17).

John 6:70–71. Jesus then asked, **Have I not chosen you, the Twelve?** John’s Gospel does not record Jesus’ choice of the Twelve. He assumed his readers knew¹¹ the Synoptics or common church tradition (cf. Mark 3:13–19). This choice was not election to salvation, but was Jesus’ call to them to serve Him. **Yet**, He said, **one of you is a devil!** In the light of John 13:2, 27, *Satan’s working in Judas was tantamount to Judas being the devil.*

In 6:70 the Greek does not have the indefinite article “a,” so it could be translated “one of you is Satan (devil).” Jesus’ knowledge of **Judas** (who was called Judas Iscariot because his father was **Simon Iscariot**) was still another example of His omniscience (cf. 1:47; 2:24–25; 6:15, 61). **Later** in the Upper Room, Jesus again

¹¹ Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 298). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

said **one of the Twelve** would **betray Him** (13:21). John called Judas “the traitor” (18:5). The disciples later could reflect on this prophecy of His and be strengthened in their faith. **Judas was a tragic figure, *influenced by Satan; yet he was responsible for his own evil choices.***