

The Gospel of John (6:22-71)

A House Church Outline



1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
 - Sing a few songs of praise to God

2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.

4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

- **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Desire of Ages (DA)*, p. 383-394
- "When Christ forbade the people to declare Him king, He knew that a turning point in His history was reached. Multitudes who desired to exalt Him to the throne today would turn from Him tomorrow. The disappointment of their selfish ambition would turn their love to hatred, and their praise to curses. Yet knowing this, He took no measures to avert the crisis. From the first He had held out to His followers no hope of earthly rewards.... **If men could have had the world with Christ, multitudes would have proffered Him their allegiance; but such service He could not accept.** Of those **now connected with Him there were many who had been attracted by the hope of a worldly kingdom. These must be undeceived.** The deep spiritual teaching in the miracle of the loaves had not been comprehended. This was to be made plain. And this new revelation would bring with it a closer test" (DA 383.1).
- Vs 22: "After a time He went to the synagogue, and there those who had come from Bethsaida found Him. They learned from His disciples how He had crossed the sea. The fury of the storm, and the many hours of fruitless rowing against adverse winds, the appearance of Christ walking upon the water, the fears thus aroused, His reassuring words, the adventure of Peter and its result, with the sudden stilling of the tempest and landing of the boat, were all faithfully recounted to the wondering crowd. **Not content with this, however, many gathered about Jesus, questioning, 'Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?' They hoped to receive from His own lips a further account of the miracle. Jesus did not gratify their curiosity"** (DA 384.2).
- Vs 26: "They did not seek Him from any worthy motive; but as they had been fed with the loaves, **they hoped still to receive temporal benefit by attaching themselves to Him"** (DA 384.3).

- Vs 27: **“Seek not merely for material benefit.** Let it not be the chief effort to provide for the life that now is, but seek for spiritual food, even that wisdom which will endure unto everlasting life” (Ibid)
- Vs 28: “They had been performing many and burdensome works in order to recommend themselves to God; and they were ready to hear of any new observance by which they could secure greater merit. **Their question meant, What shall we do that we may deserve heaven? What is the price we are required to pay in order to obtain the life to come?”** (DA 385.1)
- Vs 29: **“The price of heaven is Jesus.** The way to heaven is through faith in ‘the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ John 1:29” (DA 385.2).
- Vs 30-31: **“Jesus had recently provided the people miraculously with bread, but, doubting His Messiahship, they now declared that Moses had done an even greater miracle in giving their fathers bread ‘from heaven.’** Furthermore, they apparently implied that Moses’ miracle was to be repeated by the true Messiah; in their view Jesus had not brought bread from heaven, but had only multiplied simple barley loaves and fish that were already at hand. They must have reasoned that if Jesus was truly the Messiah, He would perform at least as great a miracle as they believed Moses had” (SDA Bible Commentary)
- Vs 32: **“The giver of the manna was standing among them.** It was Christ Himself who had led the Hebrews through the wilderness, and had daily fed them with the bread from heaven. **That food was a type of the real bread from heaven”** (DA 385.5)
- Vs 34-35: “Still thinking that it was temporal food to which Jesus referred, some of His hearers exclaimed, ‘Lord, evermore give us this bread.’ Jesus then spoke plainly: ‘I am the bread of life’” (DA 386.1).
- Vs 35: “The rabbis themselves had a saying, that the eating of bread, in its spiritual significance, was the study of the law and the practice of good works; and it was often said that at the Messiah's coming all Israel would be fed. The teaching of the prophets made plain the deep spiritual lesson in the miracle of the loaves. This lesson Christ was seeking to open to His hearers in the synagogue.... Only the day before, the great multitude, when faint and weary, had been fed by the bread which He had given. **As from that bread they had received physical strength and refreshment, so from Christ they might receive spiritual strength unto eternal life”** (DA 386.2).
- Vs 37-39: “Again Christ appealed to those stubborn hearts. ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in nowise cast out.’ **All who received Him in faith, He said, should have eternal life. Not one could be lost.** No need for Pharisees and Sadducees to dispute concerning the future life. No longer need men mourn in hopeless grief over their dead. ‘This is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day’” (DA 386.4).
- Vs 41-42: “The leaders of the people were offended.... They tried to arouse prejudice by referring scornfully to the lowly origin of Jesus. **They contemptuously alluded to His life as a Galilean laborer, and to His family as being poor and lowly. The claims of this uneducated carpenter, they said, were unworthy of their attention.** And on account of His mysterious birth they insinuated that He was of doubtful parentage, thus representing the human circumstances of His birth as a blot upon His history” (DA 387.1).
- Vs 44: “The prejudice of the Pharisees lay deeper than their questions would indicate; it had its root in the perversity of their hearts. Every word and act of Jesus aroused antagonism in them; for the spirit which they cherished could find in Him no answering chord.... **None will ever come to Christ, save those who respond to the drawing of the Father's love. But God is drawing all hearts unto Him, and only those who resist His drawing will refuse to come to Christ”** (DA 387.3).

- Vs 45: “This scripture [Isa. 54:13] the Jews appropriated to themselves. It was their boast that God was their teacher. But Jesus showed how vain is this claim; for He said, ‘Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me.’ **Only through Christ could they receive a knowledge of the Father**” (DA 387.5).
- Vs 47: “Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and **the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal**” (DA 388.1).
- Vs 48-51: “The people had referred Christ to the manna which their fathers ate in the wilderness, as if the furnishing of that food was a greater miracle than Jesus had performed; but He shows how meager was that gift when compared with the blessings He had come to bestow. **The manna could sustain only this earthly existence; it did not prevent the approach of death, nor insure immortality; but the bread of heaven would nourish the soul unto everlasting life.** The Saviour said, “I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. **To this figure Christ now adds another. Only through dying could He impart life to men, and in the words that follow He points to His death as the means of salvation. He says, ‘The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world’**” (DA 388.2).
- Vs 52: “To some extent they comprehended the meaning of Jesus, but they were not willing to acknowledge it. By misconstruing His words, they hoped to prejudice the people against Him” (DA 389.1).
- Vs 53-54: “To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins, and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in, that we are to become partakers of His nature. **What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul. Food cannot benefit us unless we eat it, unless it becomes a part of our being. So Christ is of no value to us if we do not know Him as a personal Saviour. A theoretical knowledge will do us no good. We must feed upon Him, receive Him into the heart, so that His life becomes our life.** His love, His grace, must be assimilated” (DA 389.3).
- Vs 57: “As the Son of God lived by faith in the Father, so are we to live by faith in Christ. So fully was Jesus surrendered to the will of God that the Father alone appeared in His life. **Although tempted in all points like as we are, He stood before the world untainted by the evil that surrounded Him. Thus we also are to overcome as Christ overcame**” (DA 389.4).
- Vs 60: “The unbelieving Jews refused to see any except the most literal meaning in the Saviour's words. **By the ritual law they were forbidden to taste blood, and they now construed Christ's language into a sacrilegious speech,** and disputed over it among themselves. Many even of the disciples said, ‘This is an hard saying; who can hear it?’ (DA 390.1).
- Vs 63: “**The life of Christ that gives life to the world is in His word.** It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea, and raised the dead; and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ, and the Saviour desired to fix the faith of His followers on the word. **When His visible presence should be withdrawn, the word must be their source of power.** Like their Master, they were to live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4” (DA 390.3)
- “Christ had spoken a sacred, eternal truth regarding the relation between Himself and His followers. He knew the character of those who claimed to be His disciples, and His words tested their faith. He declared that they were to believe and act upon His

teaching. **All who received Him would partake of His nature, and be conformed to His character. This involved the relinquishment of their cherished ambitions. It required the complete surrender of themselves to Jesus**" (DA 391.2).

- **"The test was too great.** The enthusiasm of those who had sought to take Him by force and make Him king grew cold. **This discourse in the synagogue, they declared, had opened their eyes. Now they were undeceived. In their minds His words were a direct confession that He was not the Messiah, and that no earthly rewards were to be realized from connection with Him. They had welcomed His miracle-working power; they were eager to be freed from disease and suffering; but they would not come into sympathy with His self-sacrificing life.** They cared not for the mysterious spiritual kingdom of which He spoke. The insincere, the selfish, who had sought Him, no longer desired Him. If He would not devote His power and influence to obtaining their freedom from the Romans, they would have nothing to do with Him" (DA 391.3).
- Vs 66: "By the public rebuke of their unbelief these disciples were still further alienated from Jesus. They were greatly displeased, and wishing to wound the Saviour and gratify the malice of the Pharisees, they turned their backs upon Him, and left Him with disdain. They had made their choice,—had taken the form without the spirit, the husk without the kernel. **Their decision was never afterward reversed; for they walked no more with Jesus**" (DA 392.1).
- "Praise and flattery would be pleasing to their ears; but the truth is unwelcome; they cannot hear it. **When the crowds follow, and the multitudes are fed, and the shouts of triumph are heard, their voices are loud in praise; but when the searching of God's Spirit reveals their sin, and bids them leave it, they turn their backs upon the truth, and walk no more with Jesus**" (DA 392.3)
- Vs 67: "Without attempting to hinder those who were leaving Him, Jesus turned to the twelve and said, 'Will ye also go away?' Peter replied by asking, 'Lord, to whom shall we go?' 'Thou hast the words of eternal life,' he added. 'And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God' While the Saviour was forsaken by many who had witnessed His wonderful works, Peter expressed the faith of the disciples,—'Thou art that Christ.' The very thought of losing this anchor of their souls filled them with fear and pain. To be destitute of a Saviour was to be adrift on a dark and stormy sea" (DA 393.3)
- "When Jesus presented the testing truth that caused so many of His disciples to turn back, He knew what would be the result of His words; but He had a purpose of mercy to fulfill. He foresaw that in the hour of temptation every one of His beloved disciples would be severely tested. His agony in Gethsemane, His betrayal and crucifixion, would be to them a most trying ordeal. **Had no previous test been given, many who were actuated by merely selfish motives would have been connected with them. When their Lord was condemned in the judgment hall; when the multitude who had hailed Him as their king hissed at Him and reviled Him; when the jeering crowd cried, 'Crucify Him!'—when their worldly ambitions were disappointed, these self-seeking ones would, by renouncing their allegiance to Jesus, have brought upon the disciples a bitter, heart-burdening sorrow,** in addition to their grief and disappointment in the ruin of their fondest hopes. **In that hour of darkness, the example of those who turned from Him might have carried others with them. But Jesus brought about this crisis while by His personal presence He could still strengthen the faith of His true followers**" (DA 394)
- *Read John 6:22-71. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*
- **Discussion Questions** (use only a few). *The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*

- What do you think people generally seek from Jesus?
- What may happen if He does not supply those things?
- Why do you think they asked for a miraculous sign in order to believe (vs 30), even though they had seen Jesus feed the 5000 the previous day?
- What do you think was the deeper spiritual meaning of the miracle of feeding the 5000?
- Contrast and compare the Bread of Life that Jesus offers, with the manna given by Moses in the wilderness?
- What do you think Jesus meant by the words, “No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him”? (vs 44)
- What do you think eating Christ’s flesh and drinking His blood practically means in the Christian experience?
- Why are some teachings of Christ ‘hard sayings?’
- Somehow the 12 disciples saw beyond this hard saying. What do you think kept the Twelve from leaving Jesus at this point?
- The previous day the crowds loved Jesus, and were even willing to make Him king (John 5:14-15). Then a day later, He shows that He did not come to set up an earthly kingdom but to invite people into relationship with Him. This then turns the fickle crowd away from Him permanently (John 6:66). Why do you think Jesus did this, knowing that He would lose so many followers?
- What does this story tell us about God?
- What does it tell us about people?
- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
 - What ‘hard sayings’ of Jesus have you struggled with in the past / are you currently struggling with?
 - Illustrate from your own experience how Christ’s words [vs 63], as found in the Bible, have brought meaning and life to your journey?
 - Share how you are currently feeding on the Bread of Life? (in other words, how is your devotional life at the moment)
 - What struggling Christian could use your encouragement this week as he/she continues to follow Jesus?
 - I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group’s secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. “I will share with 2 young people this week how I feed on the Bread of Life (how I do my daily devotions) and encourage them in their journey of knowing Jesus.”

6. Share (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today’s lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

7. Closing prayer

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