

Chapter 6

1-7 - If anyone knew where to get food, it would have been Philip because he was from Bethsaida, a town about nine miles away. Jesus was testing Philip to strengthen his faith. By asking for a human solution (knowing that there was none), Jesus highlighted the powerful and miraculous act that he was about to perform.

When Jesus asked Philip where they could buy a great amount of bread, Philip started assessing the probable cost. Jesus wanted to teach him that financial resources are not the most important ones. We can, at times, limit what God does in us by assuming what is and is not possible. Is there some impossible task that you believe God wants you to do? Don't let your estimate of what can't be done keep you from taking on the task. As we will see from this story, God can do the miraculous, and we should trust him to provide the resources.

8-9 – Here, the disciples are contrasted with the young boy, who offered what he had. The disciples certainly had more resources than the boy, but they knew they didn't have enough, so they didn't give anything at all. The boy gave what little he had, and it made all the difference. If we offer nothing to God, we could say that God will have nothing to use. However, God can take what little we have and turn it into something great.

In performing his miracles, Jesus usually preferred to work through people. Here he took what a young boy offered and used it to accomplish one of the most spectacular miracles recorded in the Gospels. Age is no barrier to Christ. So...Never think you are too young or old to be of service to him. Let's see what happened...

10-13 - There is a lesson in those leftovers. God gives in abundance. God takes whatever we can offer him in time, ability, or resources and He multiplies its effectiveness beyond our wildest expectations. If you take the first step in making yourself available to God, I guarantee you that God will show you how greatly you can be used to advance the work of his Kingdom.

14-15 - Now, this exclamation by the people is very important. “The Prophet” they are referring to is the one Moses prophesied about in Deuteronomy 18 which says, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell the people everything I command him. I will personally deal with anyone who will not listen to the messages this prophet proclaims on my behalf.”

In chapter 7 of the New Testament Book of Acts, which follows John’s Gospel here, the first Christian Martyr, Stephen uses this very same Scripture from Deuteronomy to support his claim that Jesus Christ – the Prophet whom Moses foretold would come – is God’s Son, the Messiah and Savior of God’s people. The coming of Jesus Christ to earth was not an afterthought, but part of God’s original plan. How cool is that?

16-21 - When Jesus came to the disciples during a storm, walking on the water (three and a half miles from shore), he told them not to be afraid. The terrified disciples probably thought they were seeing a ghost, but if they had taken a moment to think about all they had already seen Jesus do, they could have accepted this miracle.

Faith is a mind-set that expects God to act. When we act on the expectation that God will help us in our time of need, we can overcome our fears. We often face spiritual and emotional storms and we feel

tossed about like a small boat on a big lake. In spite of terrifying circumstances, if we trust our lives to Christ for his safekeeping, he will give us peace in any storm.

22-26 - Jesus criticized the people who followed him only for physical or temporal benefits, and not for the satisfying of their spiritual hunger.

27-29 - Many sincere seekers of God are puzzled about what God wants them to do. The religions of the world are humankind's attempts to answer this question. But Jesus' reply is brief and simple: We must believe on him whom God has sent. Satisfying God does not come from the work we do, but from in whom we believe. The first step is accepting that Jesus is who he claims to be.

30-31 – As the Hebrew people made their way from their slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land, God provided food for them each day. Manna was a substance found on the ground each morning and it sustained the people on their journey. Manna in Hebrew means “What is it?”

32-35 - People eat bread to satisfy physical hunger and to sustain physical life. We can satisfy spiritual hunger and sustain spiritual life only by a right relationship with Jesus Christ. No wonder he called himself the bread of life. But bread must be eaten to sustain life, and Christ must be invited into our daily walk to sustain spiritual life.

36-40 - Jesus said he would not lose even one person whom the Father had given him. Thus, anyone who makes a sincere commitment to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior is secure in God's promise of eternal life. Christ will not let his people be overcome by Satan and lose their

salvation. Those who put their faith in Christ will be resurrected from physical death to eternal life with God when Christ comes again.

41-42 - The religious leaders grumbled because they could not accept Jesus' claim of divinity. They saw him only as a carpenter from Nazareth. They refused to believe that Jesus was God's divine Son, and they could not tolerate his message.

Many people today reject Christ because they say they cannot believe he is the Son of God. But perhaps what they can't accept are the demands that Christ makes for their loyalty and obedience. I only say this because that was the case for me personally for many years of my young adult life!

43-44 - God, not people, plays the most active role in salvation. When someone chooses to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, he or she does so only in response to the urging of God's Holy Spirit. God does the urging; then we decide whether or not to believe. Thus, no one can believe in Jesus without God's help.

45-46 - Jesus was alluding to an Old Testament view of the messianic Kingdom in which all people are taught directly by God. He was stressing the importance of not merely hearing, but learning. We are taught by God through the Bible, our experiences, the thoughts the Holy Spirit brings, and our relationships with other Christians. In Jesus' millennial reign, we will be taught by Christ himself.