

## Session 7: John 6:22–71

### **SESSION GOALS**

Every session has specific goals—things you want your group to walk away knowing, feeling, and committing to do.

#### **Main Idea**

Instead of turning to sin, we should always turn to Jesus, the Bread of Life, the only source of spiritual nourishment.

#### **Head Change**

To know that Jesus offers us sustained and secured satisfaction in him.

#### **Heart Change**

To feel peace, knowing Jesus is all we need in life.

#### **Life Change**

To believe in Jesus and seek to trust in him with all of our needs and in every circumstance.

### **OPEN**

**What is the best meal you have ever eaten? What made it the best? How did you feel after the meal was over?**

There is nothing quite like eating a well-cooked meal with people we love. But no matter how filling a meal is, we know that we will be hungry again. In this session, Jesus describes himself as the Bread of Life. If you are spiritually hungry, he is what you have been searching for.

### **READ**

John 6:22–71 (If you are pressed for time, you can shorten your reading to John 6:28–40, 52–58, 66–71.)

## **WATCH**

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Dr. Tony Evans's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

**Why does God bless us and give us good gifts?**

**What does Jesus mean when he calls himself the Bread of Life?**

**How should we respond to God's provision?**

Show Session 4: *John 6:22–71* (11 minutes).

## **DISCUSS**

---

Read John 6:22–40.

The crowd who was fed by Jesus, who wanted to make him their king, tracked Jesus across the Sea of Galilee. But they came to Jesus for the wrong reason. **According to Jesus, what was the crowd looking for? What was wrong with their motivations?**

The crowd demanded Jesus perform another sign for them so that they might believe. What they really wanted was more bread, not more teaching. They desired Jesus's blessings more than they wanted Jesus. **Why do you think it can be easier for us to look to Jesus for his blessings rather than seeking to know him?**

As Dr. Evans said, “Whenever the physical good becomes an end unto itself, it becomes idolatry.” God gives us good gifts to show us his character; to remind us of who he is and our need for him. **What physical gifts are you seeking from God? What do you think your response will be to God if he does not give you those things?**

**Note:** To think more about the signs of Jesus in your own life, go to **Go Deeper Section 1** at the end of this study.

Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus describes himself in seven “I am” statements. In verses 35–40, we see the first of these powerful descriptions: “I am the bread of life.” **How does Jesus describe the bread of life? What stands out to you about his illustration?**

During the time of the Exodus, God gave his people bread from heaven called *manna* through his chosen leader, Moses. The crowd thought Jesus was a bread-giver like Moses, offering daily food for hungry people. Jesus says that he is not a bread-giver—he *is* the bread. **How does Jesus compare and contrast himself to manna, the bread from heaven? In what ways is Jesus better than manna?**

**Note:** To learn more manna, go to **Go Deeper Section 2** at the end of this study.

Verse 37 is one of the most hopeful, reassuring verses in all of Scripture. Jesus makes us an incredible promise. When we come to him, he will “certainly not” reject us.

**When are you most likely to think that God will give up on you and cast you aside? What hope does the certainty of salvation in Christ give to you?**

**Note:** To dive deeper into verse 37, go to **Go Deeper Section 3** at the end of this study.

Read John 6:41–58.

After his teaching, the people who were hostile to Jesus began to complain about him. They had known Jesus and his parents. He was just some local kid—how could he be from heaven? Jesus responds by comparing himself to manna again. **According to verses 48–51, in what ways is Jesus like the manna God gave his people in the wilderness? In what ways is Jesus better than the manna in the wilderness?**

The crowd was hungry, and they were not getting the bread they expected. As a result, the hungry people got angry and started arguing. But Jesus didn't give in and feed them. Instead, he continued to point them to the spiritual truth behind his physical miracles. **What is your reaction to Jesus when he doesn't give you what you want? What deeper truth might he be pointing you toward?**

**Note:** To learn more about the Eucharist, go to **Go Deeper Section 4** at the end of this study.

Jesus was blunt with his audience. He was not giving them lunch; he was giving them himself and all of the eternal blessings that come with him. If they just wanted a meal, they were asking for too little. **What have you asked God for recently in your prayers? Do you think you are asking for too much or too little? Why?**

Read John 6:59–71.

The disciples were just as confused with Jesus's teaching as the people in the crowd. Some even left Jesus because they could not understand what he was talking about. **What was the disciples' response to Jesus's teaching on his flesh and blood? In what ways can you relate to their confusion?**

The disciples are similar to us. We can often relate to their questions, concerns, and even failures. Because of our similarities, it is not hard to imagine Jesus speaking to us

when he talks to his disciples. He asks them if his teaching has offended, or scandalized, them. **In what ways has Jesus's teaching been confusing, bothersome, or offensive to you in the past?**

Jesus then lets his disciples know that his teaching concerns spiritual realities. He's not suggesting that his followers be cannibals, but that they bring Jesus's life into themselves or, in other words, believe in him. **In what ways can it be difficult for you to believe in Jesus?**

**Note:** To spend time meditating on Jesus's call to the spiritually hungry, go to **Go Deeper Section 5** at the end of this study.

In John 2:24 we saw that Jesus did not entrust himself to his followers. In verses 64–66 we learn why. Instead of trying to understand Jesus, some of his disciples gave up and abandoned him. **Why do you think people abandon Jesus today?**

In Jesus we find life. Apart from him we find only temporary and fleeting satisfaction. Even so, some of his disciples left him. **What are the things in your life that can seem more important than Jesus? What do you tend to crave more than Jesus?**

**What can you do today to reject those cravings and instead seek Jesus?**

## **LAST WORD**

In his first "I am" statement, Jesus reveals the spiritual blessings we can find in him. Like bread, he is a provision to us from God who will satisfy our deepest cravings. But he is more than a temporary meal. Jesus offers us sustained and secure satisfaction.

He is more and better than any of our temporary physical needs or wants. He will not turn you away. He will never throw you out. He will never regret his decision to love you. The only requirement to receive the Bread of Life is to believe in him.

## **GO DEEPER**

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We've highlighted a place where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.

But you can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting.

### **1. Jesus's Signs in Your Own Life**

After Jesus fed the five thousand, they followed him to get more bread. But they became upset when he tried to offer them himself. Some abandoned Jesus because they didn't receive the blessing they wanted.

If we approach God only for his gifts, we might easily get upset when he doesn't fulfill our wish lists. It may even cause us to abandon him. But God's faithfulness is seen most clearly in what he's already done. Our lives are testaments to his ongoing faithfulness.

Let's think back to the signs of Jesus you have already seen. **What prayers has God answered in your life?**

**What surprise opportunities has God given you and what needs has God met that you have not prayed for?**

**In light of his responses and unexpected provisions, what do you think of God's care for you?**

**How can this truth help you trust God more throughout your week?**

### **2. Manna**

After Israel's exodus from Egypt, they wandered through the wilderness for forty years. Just imagine over a million people wandering through the desert where both water and food were already scarce— they were in a difficult position. But God did not abandon them.

Read Exodus 16:4–8, 14–15.

In John 6, the crowd around Jesus said the manna came from their forefathers. **What was the true source of the manna? What was Moses's role in giving the manna?**

The people had no idea what they were looking at and called it *manna* which literally means, "What is it?" They may have been confused, but manna both kept them from starving and tasted good. Exodus 16:31 describes the taste like "like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." God provided and made his provision sweet.

When Jesus says he is like manna, he is saying that he is God's heavenly provision for our deepest needs. More than that, he adds sweetness to our lives. He both provides and offers ongoing blessing.

**In what ways has Jesus met your needs in your life?**

**How has Jesus added extra "sweetness" to your life?**

Just as manna was given to God's people each morning, God's fresh mercies are delivered to us each morning.

**What new mercies has God delivered to you today?**

**What things in your life are evidence of God's ongoing care for you?**

### **3. "I will certainly not cast out."**

John 6:37 is one of the most hopeful and assuring verses in all of Scripture. Re read it.

We are all too aware of our failures. We have seen how our flaws can offend and drive people away. So how can it be that Jesus will not cast us aside? We may feel as though we have tricked God into loving us or that once he finds out who we truly are, he will hold us away from him at arm's length. We are just waiting on the other shoe to drop before Jesus realizes that he made a mistake in loving us.

But our fear of divine rejection is not founded in the truth.

John 6:37 says no matter your baggage, no matter your history, no matter your present state, no matter your sin, he will not push you away from himself.

**What in your life causes you to doubt God's love for you?**

John 6:37 was the favorite verse of John Bunyan, a seventeenth century Puritan. He wrote an entire book, *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*, diving into the riches of this single verse. If you doubt Jesus's love for you, prayerfully consider what Bunyan wrote:

*"All that the Father gives me shall come to me, and the one who comes to me I will certainly not cast out." John 6:37*

*But I am a great sinner, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I am an old sinner, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I am a hard-hearted sinner, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I am a backsliding sinner, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I have served Satan all my days, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I have sinned against light, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I have sinned against mercy, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

*But I have no good thing to bring with me, say you.*

*"I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.*

Prayerfully wrestle with this truth: Jesus *will not* cast you out. His grace is far greater than our sin and his love far stronger than our doubts.

#### **4. The Eucharist**

Jesus's command in John 6 that people must eat of his flesh and drink of his blood is unusual if not grotesque. It caused many of his Jewish followers to abandon him. But we know that he was speaking metaphorically about spiritual truths in John 6:63–64. So, what does it mean to eat Jesus's flesh and drink his blood?

Throughout the Old Testament God specifically prohibits eating blood or animals "with blood." Read Genesis 9:4.

**What does God specifically forbid his people from eating?**

rightnowmedia.com  
To the ancient Hebrew, blood was a sign and symbol of life. To them, blood carried the essence of a living

creature's being, which belongs to God. Eating blood was symbolic of consuming the life and essence of a creature, which God forbade. To take the blood of another person into yourself was unthinkable to an ancient Jew. It's no surprise, then, that Jesus's disciples had trouble understanding this illustration in John 6.

Now read Luke 22:15–20.

**In what ways is Jesus using the meal to represent his sacrifice for us?**

Jesus came to give his life to us. Today, we recreate the last supper in Holy Communion, or the Eucharist. It is a reminder that we have taken the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus into ourselves. Read Galatians 2:20.

**In what ways is Christ alive in you?**

Because of Jesus in us, we can live by faith in Jesus, rather than by fear of the unseen. **When you are anxious, what would it look like for you to trust in the one who loves you and gave himself up for you?**

## **5. Isaiah 55: Come All Who Are Hungry**

Jesus's invitation for the thirsty and hungry to come to him is more than a simple spiritual metaphor— it's a fulfillment of messianic prophecy. Spend some time reading the messianic call in Isaiah 55.

**What does God promise to the hungry in this chapter?**

**What promises or offerings in this chapter give you hope? What specific assurances do they give to you?**

**What could it look like for you to trust these promises in your everyday life?**

It can be easy to pray only when we need something from God, but this chapter reveals an abundance of truth about God—truth worthy of praise. Pick out a few meaningful truths and promises from this chapter and thank God for them as you go throughout your day. Today, cultivate a habit of praise.

