

Jesus: The Bread of Life

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Pro tip: As you use this digital resource, you can click to each day from this Table of Contents. If you need to quickly navigate back to this page, you can click "Jesus: The Bread of Life" in the bottom left corner of the page.

Before You Start

My heart for this study is that you'd see and experience God's provision in a new and refreshing way. **Everything you need to get started is here, but you might also choose to have a paper Bible or the YouVersion App, and a journal to take notes and reflect on the daily prompts.**

Before you get started, I want to share three tips to help you get the most out of your daily readings.

1. Start with prayer.

Before beginning each lesson, pause and pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you, and enjoy talking to God. There's a reminder and prompt at the start of each day to guide your prayers before you begin reading.

2. Read carefully and slowly.

Don't speed through the text, but choose to engage deeply with it. Many of the Scriptures will be provided in this digital study, but consider following along in your own paper Bible. As you do, you can mark any words or details that seem significant to each passage. You might also look for words, phrases, or themes that are repeated throughout the reading.

3. Close observation is important, so ask questions and be curious.

As you're following along in the text, consider **who's** being mentioned or talking, **what** they're doing or saying, **when** and **where** this is happening, and **why** it's important to the larger story. Also, consider looking at what comes just before or after the verses in question. This will help you gain a better understanding of the context in which these Scriptures have been written.

A few other questions you might ask as you read:

- What can I learn about God, His Kingdom, and the Church through this Scripture?
- What contrasts, comparisons, commands, or conclusions do I see?
- Is there anything I want to learn more about?

I pray that you would choose to **commit** to this study right now. Make a plan for when you'll do your study each day, knowing you'll likely need at least 15–20 minutes to go through the daily lesson. If it's helpful, set a reminder or add a time to your calendar.

And don't do this alone. I've created a video series to accompany this study that's designed to be watched with other people. So gather a group of friends or invite your LifeGroup to follow this study with you.



I've also created this playlist filled with songs that remind me of the key truths and themes we'll explore in this study. You can listen to it now—and throughout the study—as a reminder of what you're learning each day.



Week 1

Now to him who is **able to do immeasurably more** than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory ... **Ephesians 3:20–21 NIV**

Do you know that God is able—even when the facts of your situation look bleak and impossible to improve? Do you know that God is *more* than able?

I believe God wants you to be completely convinced that He is infinity percent able. That's right, infinity. Because God is certainly not 89%, 99.9%, 100%, or even 1,000%—or whatever bigger number you want to attach to a % sign—able. He is infinitely, beyond all our “beyonds,” able.

I hope this study will remind you that following Christ is like going on a road trip or pilgrimage. And this road of faith, like all roads, can have different lengths, heights, and depths. You'll sometimes see glorious views along the way, but many days are ordinary, and some even ominous. This journey might contain dangerous obstacles, adventurous curves, and even occasional potholes. And we must remember that this road is not wide, but narrow.

Thankfully, no matter how challenging and troublesome the journey, you can know for certain that following Jesus means you're traveling with the Light of the World, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Living Hope, the Anchor and Author, the Perfecter and Finisher, and He is with you every step of the way.

A little spoiler: You may not like parts of this study, as you'll encounter the tensions and struggles of faith and how it relates to your own doubts and fears regarding the challenges you're experiencing.

Stay the course! Look to Jesus—the Bread of Life! He is with you through the presence of the Holy Spirit and will guide you to know and trust Him more and more.

My prayer as you spend time studying God's Word through these next four weeks is that you're strengthened in faith, more deeply connected to God's heart, and filled with His peace.

Ultimately, I'm praying and believing you'll hold tightly to the Truth and finish your race strong with Jesus.

Key Thought for Week 1: A tested faith always begins at a crossroads where we must choose to believe or not to believe.



Before you dive into this week's readings, be sure to watch Week 1 of the LifeGroup video study *The Bread of Life*. This provides additional context as well as guided discussion questions for you to talk about with others.



Week 1 Day 1: A Test of Faith

Key Thought for Week 1: A tested faith always begins at a crossroads where we must choose to believe or not to believe.

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:1-15 for full context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:1-6 NIV

Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

James 1:2-4 NIV

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

1 Peter 1:6–9 NIV

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Observe

In John 6:1–6, Jesus asked Philip a question to test him. Jesus already knew how He would provide for the crowd, yet He still made it a priority to invite Philip into the process.

- What do you learn about the crowd of people?
- What do you see or learn about the heart of Jesus?
- Jesus tested the disciples with the question, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” What do you think the “test” was? Why do you think Jesus wanted to test them?
- What key lessons are taught about our faith in James 1:2–4 and 1 Peter 1:6–9? How do these lessons relate to Jesus’ interactions with His disciples and the crowd in John 6:1–15?

Respond

In John 6:10–13, we see how Jesus fed the crowd in a seemingly impossible way—with five loaves of bread and two fish. In the same way Jesus met the needs of the large crowd, He is moving and ready to meet the needs in your life.

- Write down a critical problem you or someone you love is facing right now. It might be a broken relationship, an addiction, a health problem, a financial concern, or some form of spiritual bondage. Then, spend time reflecting on any emotions you have toward this situation.
- What makes this situation feel hopeless or impossible? With only one word, name the miracle you’re praying for.

Pray

Father, thank You for knowing about and caring for all of my needs. Help me to see Your great love sustaining me every day. Strengthen my confidence in You. I know and trust that You’re working out good plans to abundantly meet needs and lighten burdens for me and those around me. Help me to feel Your presence even when I struggle to see the ways You’re moving. In Jesus’ name, amen.



Week 1

Day 2: It's Impossible

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:5-7 NIV

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

Romans 8:6 NIV

The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

Hebrews 11:6 NIV

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Observe

Today's reading is focused on Jesus' interaction with Philip, who was one of the 12 disciples. Philip had been with Jesus and witnessed many of the miracles He had already performed.

- In Philip's reasonable but faithless response, what did he forget?
- Summarize Philip's reply in your own words.
- Give a realistic reason why Philip might have responded in this way.
- How do you think Philip's answer made Jesus feel? What could be discouraging about his response?
- What does Romans 8:6 teach us about the mind controlled by the "flesh"? How was Philip's mind "governed by the flesh" instead of "governed by the Spirit"?

Respond

Yesterday, you identified a critical problem that you or someone you love is currently experiencing. The miracles you're needing and asking for are real, valid, and important. Think about the miracles you're asking for, and then respond to the following questions.

- What does it look like to faithfully believe that God is moving, even when you don't see it?
- How does praying for miracles stretch your faith?
- Do your thoughts drift more in the direction of confident trust in God or toward focusing on the limitations and problems? How can you take your thoughts captive in order to focus more fully on trusting God?

Pray

Faithful Father, I pray the words of David from Psalm 139:

*Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Psalm 139:23-24 NIV

Please help me to seek You more. Direct my steps and renew my mind to believe that You're working in every situation in my life. Please help me to trust You more. In Jesus' name, amen.



"The meeting of need is not dependent on the supply in hand, but on the blessing of the Lord resting on the supply." —Watchman Nee

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:8–9 NIV

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

Psalms 78:11 NIV

They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them.

Psalms 106:7, 13–14, 21 NIV

When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea ...

But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold. In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wilderness they put God to the test. ... They forgot the God who saved them, who had done great things in Egypt ...

Ephesians 3:20 NIV

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us ...

Observe

Today we see another response to Jesus' question and test. This response comes from Andrew, another of the 12 disciples. He had witnessed many of the same miracles as Philip.

- How did Andrew's solution compare to Philip's answer?
- Do you think Andrew's solution was reasonable or ridiculous? Describe his faith.
- What was Andrew possibly remembering?
- Jesus is infinity percent able, meaning He is able to do more than we can ever ask, think, or imagine. What percent "able" do you think Andrew was believing Jesus to be? Why did you choose that percent? Why do you think it was difficult for Andrew to believe Jesus was infinity percent able?

Respond

Andrew's faith led him to propose a crazy solution on how they could feed the large crowd. This can remind us to consider our own tendencies in how we respond to seemingly impossible situations. When we remember who God is, we're able to more faithfully believe that He is infinitely able to provide for everything we need. Let's remember the goodness of God in our lives.

- What is your natural tendency or response when something feels impossible? How will you change the way you approach an "impossible" situation in the future? How will your faith look different as a result?
- Write down something special that God has recently provided. How will you choose to remember this provision? Share your answer with someone as an encouragement to them.
- The boy's seemingly small lunch ended up feeding a crowd of over 5,000 people. What seemingly small thing do you have that you need to give to bless someone in need?

Pray

How good and great You are, gracious Father! As I remember and consider all Your many awesome works, strengthen my confident trust in You. I surrender to You all I am. As the father said in Mark 9:24, "I believe; help my unbelief!" Show me where You're asking me to trust You more. In Jesus' name, amen.



Week 1 Day 4: Sit Down

"The kind of power that I need [in Christ] is completed only through the acceptance of my own helplessness." —Elisabeth Elliot

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:10 NIV

Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there).

Psalms 23 NIV

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalms 46:10 NIV

He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Observe

In today's Scriptures, we get to see a closer look at God's heart through Jesus' words in John 6:10, and David's song in Psalm 23. We also see a common theme in being still and resting in the Lord.

- What do you learn about God's heart from John 6:10 and Psalm 23?
- What stands out to you about the way Jesus led this crowd of people? Why do you think the crowd of people were willing to be led in this way?
- What might Jesus be longing for the crowd of people to ultimately know about Him as He prepares to provide for them?



Respond

Before reflecting on the question below, consider your own relationship with rest and being still. These are common themes we see throughout the Bible. Consider why this is an important element of our faith and relationship with Jesus.

- Why do you think it can be a struggle to be still, keep calm, hold your tongue, and rest in God's loving arms?
- In what area of your life do you need to ask God if it might be time to stop worrying and scheming and simply be still?
- What blessings can stillness before God provide?
- Commit to begin a daily practice of stillness (body, soul, and spirit) and use this time (if only for a few minutes) to know God. Acknowledge His presence with you. Delight in Him. Rest in His love. Listen for His gentle whispers.

Pray

Mighty Father, there is no one like You. Reveal Yourself to me so I can know You more deeply. Thank You for the gift and freedom to rest in You. Teach me to sit down, to be still, and to allow You to gain glory for Yourself and be exalted in every area of my life. In Jesus' name, amen.



For Further Study: A Look at the Israelites

Let's learn from the early days of God's chosen nation, Israel. We'll enter their story just after their miraculous release from 430 years in the bondage of slavery and departure from Egypt, and right before God's mighty parting of the Red Sea.

Note: If you find yourself running short on time, you can come back to this reading later today. It'd be helpful to reflect on this Scripture before moving on to Day 5.

Read

Exodus 14:1-14, for full context, then closely observe the following:

Exodus 14:11-14 NIV

They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Observe

There are a variety of English translations to the ending phrase in Exodus 14:14, but it's the Hebrew word *charash* and it can be translated as: be quiet, rest, be still, hold your tongue.

- Name the emotions the Israelites displayed. What stands out the most to you about the Israelites' reactions? Why?
- How would you describe their faith? Why do you think their faith in God was so weak?
- Name the qualities you see in God's actions.
- What amazes you the most about God in this Exodus passage?

"So today, look for joy. Seek out beauty. ... Model [to others] what it means to live in celebration of God's marvelous life. Look for the miracles that might otherwise go unnoticed each day." —Sally Clarkson

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:11 NIV

Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 NIV

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:5–7 NIV

Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Observe

Gratitude is a spiritual practice that we see throughout the Bible—and a common theme in today's reading. Jesus gives thanks before passing out the food, and Paul encourages the early church to give thanks in all circumstances.

- Why do you think Jesus gave thanks to God before distributing the food?
- What are some possible reasons that God wants us to walk in continual prayer and thanksgiving? How could practicing gratitude grow and stretch our faith?
- According to Philippians 4:5–7, when does God's provision of peace come?

Respond

Our attitude often dictates our ability to express gratitude and thanks. Consider how you've experienced this in your own life.

- Describe what expressing gratitude to God does to your attitude.
- When do you think is the hardest time to give God thanks? Why might that be the best time to begin offering your thanksgiving?
- This year I started a gratitude notebook to write out and thank God for three unique things every day. Plan an intentional way to express your gratitude to God daily.

Pray

Heavenly Father, thank You for everything You're doing in and through my life. I want a spirit of gratitude and to give You thanks in all circumstances. Please show me where I need to give You thanks. In Jesus' name, amen.

For Further Study: A Look at the Israelites

Let's take another look at the Israelites just after God brought them powerfully through the Red Sea and took down their enemies.

Note: *If you find yourself running short on time, you can come back to this reading later today. It'd be helpful to reflect on this Scripture before moving on to Week 2.*

Read

Exodus 15:1-2 NIV

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him."

Observe

- Describe how the Israelites responded to this great victory.
- How does this response compare to their response to God in Exodus 14?
- What were they learning about God?



Week 2

Key Thought for Week 2: God's ability is not limited by our lack of resources. In fact, He goes beyond all our beyonds.

John's Gospel was written primarily to testify and provide evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed God's Son—our Lord and Messiah. Some people embrace this and follow Jesus, while others understand a little—but only in a vague way. They know Jesus is significant, but they do not see Him for who He is, and as a result do not give their whole lives to Him.

Last week we focused on the events and conversations leading up to Jesus' miraculous feeding of the thousands. This week we'll read more about the miracle itself.

Those who witnessed Jesus' miracles saw the impossible become possible. They saw their weaknesses become more than enough for God to provide abundantly. Yet, it seems the miracles, signs, and wonders weren't enough to fully convince everyone who Jesus was—the Bread of Life and God's chosen Messiah.

We have the same opportunity today, not only to know Jesus as our Savior, but also to see God's mighty provision in our lives. And like the crowd in John 6, we'll have to decide whether or not we'll believe.

I pray that this week your faith would grow stronger in believing this truth: "What is impossible with man is possible with God" (Luke 18:27).



Before you dive into this week's readings, be sure to watch Week 2 of the LifeGroup video study *The Bread of Life*. This provides additional context as well as guided discussion questions for you to talk about with others.



Day 1: God of the Impossible

Key Thought for Week 2: God's ability is not limited by our lack of resources. In fact, He goes beyond all our beyonds.

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:5-27 and Numbers 11:4-6, 18-23 for full context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:11-13 NIV

Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

Ephesians 3:20 NIV

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us ...

Philippians 4:19 NIV

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Numbers 11:21-23 NIV

But Moses said, "Here I am among six hundred thousand men on foot, and you say, 'I will give them meat to eat for a whole month!' Would they have enough if flocks and herds were slaughtered for them? Would they have enough if all the fish in the sea were caught for them?" The LORD answered Moses, "Is the LORD's arm too short? Now you will see whether or not what I say will come true for you."

Luke 1:36-37 NIV

"Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

Observe

In today's reading, we witness two miraculous feedings—one from the New Testament with bread and fish for the crowd, and one from the Old Testament with meat for the Israelites in the desert. While these are similar situations and interactions, the faith seen in each story is vastly different.

- List the qualities of God that you see through the great feedings. What are some similarities or differences between these two stories?
- Jesus' mission—His plan for salvation—is represented in His miraculous meal. What symbolism do you see in this story?
- How does John 6:11-13 showcase the truths in Ephesians 3:20?
- Scripture doesn't tell us why they gathered the leftovers or what they did with them. Why do you think gathering the leftovers was important to Jesus? What purpose(s) could the leftovers have served—both spiritually and physically?
- Looking at the passage from Numbers, describe the problems you see with the Israelites. How is this similar to or different from the problems you see with Jesus' disciples?

Respond

As we've read, God is able to do more than we could ever ask, think, imagine, or expect. He's not limited by our lack of resources. Instead, He can use whatever we bring Him to do infinitely more than what we could do on our own. Despite His faithfulness, it's still tempting and easy to fall into "doubt traps," wondering whether He'll actually answer our prayers or move in the ways we're hoping He'll move.

- Name a time when you experienced God doing way more than you expected. How did it grow your faith?
- "God's ability is not limited by our lack of resources." Explain what this statement means to you personally. When have you seen Him use your limited resources to provide more than you could have done on your own?
- God challenged Moses, essentially asking him if he believed God would provide. We also fall into these "doubt traps," just like Moses. How would you answer the question from Numbers 11:23: "*Is the LORD's arm too short?*"
- What "leftover" blessings from God can you pass on to someone? Pray about this and take whatever next step the Holy Spirit shows you.

Pray

Mighty Father, I believe that You are infinity percent able. I look to You as my Healer, my Helper, and my Hope. With Your strength, I can do all things. I ask for Your powerful provision to multiply the seemingly small things I give to You in faith. I wait with grateful confidence, knowing You will work far more good in and through me than I could imagine. In Jesus' name, amen.



Week 2

Day 2: Understanding ... But Not Really

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:14–15 NIV

After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

Luke 9:18–20 NIV

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "God's Messiah."

Mark 6:52 NIV

... for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

1 Corinthians 13:9–12 NIV

For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

Proverbs 3:5–6 NIV

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Observe

At this point in John 6, the crowd has received and witnessed a miraculous meal, but they still aren't quite sure who Jesus is. Think about the ways they might have tried to understand who He was, and what the truth of Him being the promised Messiah could mean for them.

- Who does the crowd think Jesus is? Who do the disciples think Jesus is? Give several ideas each group might have had about Jesus' identity.
- Why was it important for Jesus to eventually remove Himself from the crowd?
- The miracles of Jesus were meant to reveal God's glory and Jesus' identity as our Savior. Why do you think these miracles were not enough to convince everyone who witnessed them?
- Consider the significant doubt in Jesus' close disciples and how their hearts were "hardened." Why do you think their understanding of Jesus' identity was still so dull?

Respond

For the people in the crowd, the promised Messiah was going to be someone who would come to conquer evil and make things right. And while this is exactly what Jesus did, the way He accomplished this was far different than what people had imagined. Imagine how they felt as they witnessed the reality of who Jesus was, compared to the way they really wanted Him to be.

- Reread Proverbs 3:5-6, and explain what these verses mean to you.
- Consider a time when you tried to make the Holy Spirit fit into your plans instead of waiting and yielding to His guidance. What was the outcome of that situation, and what did you learn about yourself and God?
- Who is Christ Jesus to you, both factually and in a personal sense? Take a few moments to think about this and write down your thoughts.

Pray

Holy Father, fill me with Your peace and joy as I believe and follow You. Thank You for revealing Yourself to me, adopting me, and saving me from my sin and eternal death. I choose to trust in You each day with all my heart, in every circumstance. In Jesus' name, amen.

"The secret is Christ in me, not me in a different set of circumstances."
—Elisabeth Elliot

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:16–21 NIV

When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

Matthew 14:25–26 NIV

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

Observe

For the disciples, fear set in quickly when they couldn't clearly understand who it was they were seeing. The Lord was right there with them on the stormy waters. They had just recently been peacefully beside Him on the land. What had changed to turn their peace into fear?

- Give some reasons why seeing Jesus on the water made the disciples react in fear.
- Give some reasons why they didn't recognize Jesus.
- What do you learn about the disciples from this encounter?
- Tomorrow we'll read more about this event in Matthew's Gospel and learn that Peter stepped out of the boat onto the water during this event. John didn't include that part of the story in his account. What are some possible reasons for John leaving it out?



Respond

Dark valleys, strong winds, and rough storms of life can come upon us suddenly, making our hearts race and feet pace. We learn in today's reading that our response matters.

- How do you normally respond to a sudden problem or crisis? How do you think you would have responded if you had been in the boat with the disciples?
- What do you learn about faith and trusting God through today's reading? How could this influence the way you'll respond to a sudden problem or crisis in the future?

Look up and read these empowering and comforting Scriptures: Deuteronomy 31:6; Isaiah 43:1-2; Psalm 46:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:7; and Psalm 23:4.

- Which of these Scriptures do you need to commit to memory for when fear and worry grip you? Write it down somewhere so you can read it daily.

Pray

God of the wind and rain, and of all creation, You are always good and faithful. Thank You for Your patience with my doubts and fears. I place all my concerns onto Your loving shoulders, knowing that You care for me and can provide far more than all I could ask or imagine. In Jesus' name, amen.



Day 4: Why Did You Doubt?

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

Matthew 14:25–33 NIV

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Observe

Fear and doubt entered Peter's heart the moment he diverted his attention from Jesus to the effects of the wind. His weakened faith sent him sinking into the sea.

- Create a list of each of Peter's actions in order of occurrence.
- What stands out to you about Peter's actions in verse 30? (*But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"*) What choice did he make after taking his eyes off Jesus?
- List all the qualities you see in Jesus' actions throughout this reading.
- Why was Peter the only water-walker? What does this show you about his faith? Write down your thoughts about the disciples who stayed in the boat.

Respond

"Doubt" in the Greek language is *distázō*, which means a double stance. It's shifting between two positions, wavering, or hesitating. Doubt is like having uncertainty at a crossroad, unwilling to choose the way to go. To move forward, a decision of faith is needed.

- Think about a current problem you're facing. Are you dealing with any hesitations or doubts about any next steps you need to take?
- Write down any wavering doubts that exist and take them to God in prayer. Like Peter, what steps of faith do you need to take today?
- What stood out to you from today's Bible readings that you don't want to forget?

Pray

Mighty Father, You are my Confidence, my Helper, my Good Shepherd, and my Living Hope. I look to You and call on You for help. You alone make me stand secure. You alone sustain me through each moment. I resist the enemy's lie whispering, "The storm is too great." I trust You to lead and protect me—and all Your children—step by step. In Jesus' name, amen.





Week 2

Day 5: We Are All Seekers

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:22-27 for full context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:25-27 NIV

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

Colossians 3:2 NIV

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Matthew 6:19-21 NIV

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Philippians 3:17-20 NIV

Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ ...

2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Observe

Spend time thinking about the crowd in John 6:22-27. Think about what they've witnessed and how Jesus has already provided for them.

- Describe the effort the crowd put in to search for Jesus. Why do you think the crowd was so eager to find Him?
- Reread Jesus' response to the crowd after they found Him. What do you learn about the crowd's motivation in seeking Him? What were they looking for?
- In your own words, write out what Jesus said about their motivations.
- What did Jesus say He would give the crowd if they sought it?
- What common theme do you see in today's Scriptures? How do you think Jesus' teaching to the crowd connects with the other verses about our focus and seeking Him?

Respond

Let's take a closer look at what it means to "seek first" God's Kingdom. In today's reading we saw different verses that talked about fixing our eyes and minds on things unseen. But how does someone "seek first" God's Kingdom?

To "seek" means to pursue with desire. To seek God "first" is not simply about praying first thing in the morning. First means *before* other things. God and His Kingdom are first in our lives when our hearts are consumed with love for and dependency on Him—and that's why someone who puts God first will often pray *before* eating a meal, or *before* writing an email, or *before* engaging with social media, or *before* responding to a text, or *before* going to sleep. We can choose to "seek first" by praying and seeking God's direction in all things.

- In what ways does your life reflect a person who seeks God and His Kingdom first?
- What are you regularly focused on? Are these priorities related to what will last eternally?
- Take as much time as you need and talk to God *first* about this lesson. When you're ready, write down one next step you believe the Holy Spirit is asking you to take.

Pray

Gracious Father, forgive me when I only seek You to get something from Your hand. I want to know You and Your heart! Purify and renew everything inside me that still lives for the things of this world and has forgotten that it is temporary and quickly passing. Thank You for being the provider of every good thing. You are my great treasure. Your Holy Spirit living in me is the ultimate miracle of all miracles. In Jesus' name, amen.

For Further Study: Miracles of Food and Water

Each of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) include the miracle of Jesus feeding the multitude, and all but Luke record Jesus walking on the water. Read the following passages and see what you can learn from the different details highlighted in each account: **Matthew 14:14–33, Mark 6:31–52, Luke 9:10–17, John 6:8–24**. Then, compare **Psalms 107:4–7, 23–32** to these miracles.





Week 3

Key Thought for Week 3: Christ Jesus—the Bread of Life—abundantly satisfies our immediate and eternal needs.

Christ is more than enough. Do you believe it? Do you know that His grace is more than enough for all the problems you face today?

Will you trust Him to be enough, even when you have been waiting for a breakthrough for over a year—or even a decade?

Will you remain trusting and humble when the situation goes from bad to worse?

Will you pick up your “cross” of pain and suffering and continue to trust and follow God knowing that He is working to perfect your faith, conform you to His image, and bring glory to His name?

Will you trust that Christ’s abundant grace, love, goodness, and merciful presence are with you no matter how dark and empty life feels?

Will you remember that His patience and kindness are so powerful that the hardest heart can be transformed and set free?

Will you see Him as your Bread of Life—the only One who can satisfy and feed your hungry soul?

As we go into our study this week, my prayer for you is that your confidence and hope in Jesus will soar and your intimacy with Him will grow ever deeper day by day.



Before you dive into this week’s readings, be sure to watch Week 3 of the LifeGroup video study *The Bread of Life*. This provides additional context as well as guided discussion questions for you to talk about with others.

Week 3 Day 1: What Must We Do?

Key Thought for Week 3: Christ Jesus—the Bread of Life—abundantly satisfies our immediate and eternal needs.

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:27–29 NIV

“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

Ephesians 2:8–10 NIV

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Observe

It’s easy to fall into the trap of striving and doing the “right things” in an attempt to please God. Jesus gives us a better solution: He says that our work is to believe in Him. “Believing in” means more than simply accepting something as true. Believing in Jesus is to trust in, rely on, and have faith in Him.

- What did Jesus mean when He said to “work for food that endures eternally”? What did Jesus say He would do if they pursued this eternal “food”?
- Why do you think the people responded by asking Jesus for a work list? What was Jesus’ simple answer to their question?
- How do you think the crowd felt about Jesus’ answer?

For a deeper dive into the relationship of faith and works, read and jot down what you learn from the following passages:

- Ephesians 2:8–10
- James 2:14–26
- Romans 3:20–24, 27–31
- Romans 4:2–8, 13–25
- Romans 10:1–4, 9–21

Respond

Consider how you view your own relationship to Jesus and salvation.

- Have you ever tried to earn what Jesus has already freely given you? If so, in what ways and why?
- Describe the grace of God as it relates to your salvation in Christ.
- When is trusting God more difficult for you? How are you actively trusting God right now?

Pray

Lord Jesus, I'm overwhelmed by the grace upon grace that You've lavished upon me. You poured out Your life to forgive and rescue me. You've given me everything I need to live by faith in You. Convict my heart whenever I begin to think and act like my salvation depends on my efforts to be good enough. You are my life, and I live to serve You with the love, joy, and freedom You provide. In Jesus' name, amen.





Day 2: Following the Signs but Not the Savior

"If you're waiting for a sign from heaven, I'm afraid you may be disappointed; God has given us the perfect witness—Jesus Christ, the One He has anointed." —Hess

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:29–31 NIV

Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

Luke 11:14–16 NIV

Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. But some of them said, "By Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.

Psalms 78:11 NIV

They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them.

Exodus 14:29–31 NIV

But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. That day the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

Exodus 15:22–24 NIV

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

Matthew 12:38–40 NIV

Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Observe

It's important to note that Jesus' signs were an important part of authenticating His identity as the Messiah and the message of the Kingdom, but it is only in believing the *message* and *Messenger* that one can be saved—not by believing the *signs*. Remember this as you observe today's Scriptures.

- From John 6:29–31, explain the irony in the groups' response to Jesus. What did this group understand, historically speaking?
- In Luke 11:14–16, some of the crowd accused Jesus of being empowered by a demon, and some wanted to test Him and sought more proof. What do these responses tell you about the hearts of the unbelieving?
- The Israelites, who believed in and worshiped God after the Red Sea miracle, showed their faithlessness only a few days later. What does this say about faith when it's based primarily on miraculous signs?

Respond

The crowds asked Jesus for another sign only one day after He had fed thousands—they still didn't believe. We can often be like this crowd, quickly forgetting what God has done in our lives.

- Take a moment for a heart check: Are you following Christ because of what you hope He will do for you, or because of who He is and what He has already done—on the cross and in your life?
- The crowd demanded proof. Have you ever asked God to prove Himself in some way? How did that go, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Find one way to remember what God has already done for you. You might share with your LifeGroup or a close friend, start an ongoing list of ways you're experiencing His goodness, or express your gratitude through prayer and worship.

Pray

Gracious Father, some people only seek You for the benefits You might give them. Protect me from ingratitude. You are the ultimate Prize, our miraculous gift. I praise and glorify You alone. Protect me from spiritual amnesia by keeping my mind and heart tender and alert to You, and all You've already provided. In Jesus' name, amen.



Week 3 Day 3: Jesus Is the Bread of Life

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:30–40 for full context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:33–35 NIV

"For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "Sir," they said, "always give us this bread." Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

John 6:38–40 NIV

"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

John 3:16–17 NIV

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.



Isaiah 55:1–2 NIV

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.”

Matthew 5:6 NIV

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Observe

In today’s reading, Jesus finally declares and reveals Himself as the true “bread of life.” This was a stunning revelation of the spiritual and prophetic metaphor of bread. Throughout the Bible, bread was a symbol of provision—manna in the wilderness, the bread of the Presence in the Old Testament temple, a key element of Passover, and more. Think about this as you consider Jesus’ declaration about who He is.

- The crowd said to Jesus, “Give us this bread.” What bread do you think they were expecting from Jesus? What does this show about their attitude?
- What does Jesus promise to those who come to Him?
- Jesus knew that those questioning Him still did not believe in Him. Why do you think He chooses not to try to convince them any further?
- What do you learn about the will of God through these passages?

Respond

Bethlehem, the town where Jesus was born, literally means “house of bread” or “city of bread.” God, in His perfect wisdom, sent Christ Jesus as the bread of our salvation, and ordained that He would be born in the City of Bread.

- Why do you think Jesus chose to use bread in the revelation of His identity? What does physical bread symbolize to you?
- Write down at least three ways the Bread of Life has provided for you.
- Jesus is the Bread of Life, Living Water, and so much more! What are some other names we use for God?

Pray

Bread of Life, it’s through You that I experience true life. You sustain me and all creation. You alone deeply satisfy my soul. You know every hair on my head and compassionately intercede for me. Thank You for hearing and responding to my prayers with Your perfect wisdom and love. You are my Peace, my Protector, and my Provider. In Jesus’ name, amen.



Day 4: God's Manna: Bread From Heaven

"The bread of fashion, of riches, or worldly promotion, soon becomes stale. There is no real soul-nourishment in the bread baked in the world's oven. The life-giving bread must come from the life-giving God."

—James Smith, Precept Austin

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

Exodus 16:1-7, 11-26, 32-36 for full context, and then closely observe the following:

Exodus 16:2-3 NIV

In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death."

Exodus 16:11-12 NIV

The LORD said to Moses, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'"

Exodus 16:32-34 NIV

Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the wilderness when I brought you out of Egypt.'" So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omer of manna in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for the generations to come." As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna with the tablets of the covenant law, so that it might be preserved.

Psalms 23:1

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

Nehemiah 9:20-21

"You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen."

Psalm 78:23-25

Yet he gave a command to the skies above and opened the doors of the heavens; he rained down manna for the people to eat, he gave them the grain of heaven. Human beings ate the bread of angels; he sent them all the food they could eat.

Observe

Today's readings in Exodus occur about six weeks after the Israelites have been led out of slavery in Egypt. They've faced their enemies pursuing them and seen an impassable body of water split for them to escape through. Now, their food supply has run low. Keep this context in mind as you consider the following questions.

- Name the attitudes and emotions expressed by the children of Israel in Exodus 16:2-3.
- The hunger the Israelites were experiencing was a legitimate need. What did the Israelites choose to do? What could the Israelites have done instead of complaining to Moses?
- Three times in Exodus 16 God says, "You will know that I am the LORD," or "You will know that it was the LORD ..." (verses 6, 8, 12). What problem does this suggest that they're having?
- What did God tell Moses to do with a portion of the manna? Why was this important?



Respond

As believers in Jesus, we have everything we need. The Lord provided manna for the Israelites, Jesus provided bread for the crowd, and He's still providing for you today. Think about what His provision means for you personally.

- Reread Nehemiah 9:21 and Psalm 23:1. What do these words of hope mean to you?
- Consider the comparison between manna being provided in the wilderness and Jesus' declaration of being the Bread of Life. How do you see a connection between these two things? If it's helpful, you can copy the table below into your journal as a starting point.

Manna	Jesus
Available for everyone	
Provided daily	
Freely given	
Essential for life	
A mystery from heaven	
Tasted sweet	
Brought hope	

Pray

Bread of Heaven, I cling to You—my Salvation and my Sustainer. You comfort me in all my trials. You richly supply my life with Your peace, mercy, and unending love. Because You never leave me, I will never lack. May my life represent Your love and righteousness. May others see the Bread of Life in me. In Jesus' name, amen.



Day 5: Whispers of Doubt: Who Are You Listening To?

"If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father." John 15:24 NIV

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:41-47 and 1 Corinthians 1:20-25 for fuller context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:41-42 NIV

At this the Jews there 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'?"

Mark 6:1-6 NIV

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home." He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith. ...

1 Corinthians 1:25 NIV

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Numbers 13:30-33 NIV

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

Numbers 14:1–4 NIV

That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

Observe

The crowd was murmuring and complaining, and Jesus knew exactly what their low mumblings and whispers of skepticism and disapproval were all about.

- Why do you think that knowing Jesus’ family made it a struggle for the people to believe His words?
- Jesus responded to the crowd’s grumbling by talking about the way of salvation. In your own words, summarize Jesus’ message to them.
- According to 1 Corinthians 1:20–25, what is the problem with relying on people’s logic and “wisdom”?
- In Numbers and Mark, we saw the power of community. What effect did the fearful rumors in Numbers and the united doubt in Mark have on the community?

Respond

In today’s readings, we see the powerful influence others can have on our faith. It can be encouraging and build our faith, or it can cause us to doubt.

- Our attitudes and words can be highly contagious. What voices are you listening to in order to build your faith in this season?
- What voices do you need to silence because they cause you to fear and doubt?
- Explain the impact your words have on people.

Pray

Awesome Father, forgive me when I doubt Your good activity and spread words of fear instead of Your faithfulness. Thank You for the Bible that reveals who You are and builds my faith. I ask You for wisdom to discern whether the words I hear and say are of Your Spirit, or of this world. Thank You for the blessing of Your Church, my spiritual family. May we continually look to You to teach us how to live and speak by deep and abiding faith in You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Week 4

Key Thought for Week 4: It's time to decide. Will you doubt or will you believe?

I prepared this Bible study because I felt compelled to explore Jesus' claim to be the Bread of Life. He was, and is, the provisional answer to both our daily and eternal needs.

The main thing I want you to take away from these lessons is a deep assurance that He has you. You're deeply loved and cared for by the One who created you in His image. He became a man and lived among us as our wonderful Counselor, Good Shepherd, Living Water, Bread of Life, Light of the World, and Prince of Peace. He is the Mighty God, the Great I Am, the First and the Last. He is Lord of lords, and King of kings.

And now this same Christ lives within us through the Holy Spirit. Because of this, we can live by faith and not fear. We no longer have to live from our own strength.

I believe God longs to see His children standing strong and full of faith in Him. And if you're wondering how you can have a stronger faith, I want to assure you that you're doing it right now.

You simply draw near to God. You come sit at His table and feast on His Word, and trust and act on His guidance.

Christ Jesus is faithfully interceding for you (see Romans 8:34), and He has overcome this world.

"I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace. In the world you have tribulation and distress and suffering, but be courageous [be confident, be undaunted, be filled with joy]; I have overcome the world. [My conquest is accomplished, My victory abiding.]"
John 16:33 AMP



Before you dive into this week's readings, be sure to watch Week 4 of the LifeGroup video study *The Bread of Life*. This provides additional context as well as guided discussion questions for you to talk about with others.

Key Thought for Week 4: It's time to decide. Will you doubt or will you believe?

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:48-65 for full context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:48-54 NIV

"I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

Matthew 26:17-18, 26-28

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'" ... While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.



Observe

Even Jesus' followers stumbled over the intensity of Jesus' metaphor when He declared He was the Bread of Life. Jewish law strictly forbids the drinking of blood, and consuming human flesh would also be unthinkable—so it was a shocking concept, and the disciples had to grapple with how literally or figuratively to take His declaration.

- Why do you think Jesus used such a graphic metaphor?
- What promise does Jesus give to those who receive Him as the Living Bread?
- What do you think was going through the disciples' minds as Jesus presented His "Last Supper" meal to them in Matthew 26? Do you think they fully understood His meaning at that point? Why or why not?
- Four separate times in John 6:39–54 Jesus said, "I will raise him up at the last day" regarding those who would believe in Him. What was He referring to? Why do you think He was so eager to stress this?
- Reread John 6:61–63. In your own words, express the message Jesus was trying to get across to the people. What do you think Jesus was feeling when He shared this message?

Respond

Jesus' blood has purified us, bought our forgiveness, and reconciled us to the Father. So all of our efforts and striving to find lasting "food" and "drink" from this world will fail. Instead, we can choose the Bread of Life, which will sustain and satisfy us forever.

- What does Christ's sacrifice say about your worth?
- Spend time lifting your eyes and gazing at your Savior. Allow His love to quiet your heart and speak to your spirit.

Pray

Let's pray through Psalm 63:1–8 NIV together today:

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings. I cling to you; your right hand upholds me.

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. Romans 15:4 NIV

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

Psalm 78:1-55 for full context, then closely observe the following:

Psalm 78:11-20 NIV

They forgot what he [God] had done, the wonders he had shown them. He did miracles in the sight of their ancestors in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan. He divided the sea and led them through; he made the water stand up like a wall. He guided them with the cloud by day and with light from the fire all night. He split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them water as abundant as the seas; he brought streams out of a rocky crag and made water flow down like rivers. But they continued to sin against him, rebelling in the wilderness against the Most High. They willfully put God to the test by demanding the food they craved. They spoke against God; they said, "Can God really spread a table in the wilderness? True, he struck the rock, and water gushed out, streams flowed abundantly, but can he also give us bread? Can he supply meat for his people?"



Psalm 78:32 NIV

In spite of all this, they kept on sinning; in spite of his wonders, they did not believe.

Exodus 17:6–7 NIV

“I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

Observe

Psalm 78 describes the actions, thoughts, and hearts of the Israelites during the Exodus. It’s also a reminder of all the ways God provided for them.

- How is this generation of Israelites described?
- What questions did they ask Moses about God in Psalm 78:19–20?
- Reread Psalm 78:12–55. As you do, write down every account of what God did for the Israelites.
- According to the Scripture, why was God angry with the people? What other emotions does God express?

Respond

The people of Israel witnessed God’s great wonders and miracles on their behalf unlike anything else this world has ever experienced. Despite seeing these miracles, the Israelites were still faithless.

- What do you think was going on with their hearts to make them rebel so much?
- Facing a dire problem can be terrifying. What do you want to remember and trust about God from Psalm 78 to help calm your fears the next time you need it?
- When was the last time you felt like the Lord wasn’t with you? What caused you to doubt? How did you work through it?

Pray

Generous Father, I trust You. I will continue to ask and seek Your face. You can and will continue to prepare and provide for all of my needs. Because You’re with me, I am fully supplied and sustained—my cup overflows. You are Jehovah Jireh—my Provider—my Helper, my Healer, and my Hope. In Jesus’ name, amen.

"Instead of waiting in doubt and disappointment for God to do the one thing we demand of Him, let's take the time to look at everything God has already done." —Julie Ackerman

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

Hebrews 11:6-40 for full context, and then closely observe the following:

Hebrews 11:1-2 NIV

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

Hebrews 12:1-3 NIV

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Romans 14:17 NIV

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit ...

2 Corinthians 5:6-7 NIV

Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. For we live by faith, not by sight.





Observe

The “great cloud of witnesses” mentioned in Hebrews 12 (and listed at length in Hebrews 11) represents our family heritage of faith. These brothers and sisters in Christ are great examples to us as we aim to live by faith today. Faith is an assurance about something that is yet to be fully realized. It’s active. Faith is God-given and rooted in love, but it must be cultivated in order to grow.

- Describe some of the qualities the people of faith displayed. Which faith hero of Hebrews 11 inspires you the most right now, and why?
- Why do you think faith is pleasing to God? Why does our lack of faith displease Him?
- According to Hebrews 12:2, who is Jesus? Why do you think the author used these words to describe who He is?

Respond

Living by faith is how we experience all that Christ generously gives us through His Holy Spirit. In order to fully experience this faith, we must become aware of the distractions around us. Jesus was able to endure the cross because there was a clear and compelling purpose in His suffering that would soon fill Him with great joy—your freedom and salvation.

- What distracts you from keeping your focus on Jesus? What should you focus on instead?
- How does knowing Jesus’ purpose in His suffering encourage you as you face various storms?
- How are you living by faith today? If you’re not, what can you begin to do differently?

Pray

Faithful Father, thank You for giving me faith to stand strong as I look to You. I throw off everything that is hindering my journey with You. Shatter all my doubts and the lies of the evil one as I consider Your Word and all who have gone before me. Remind me of what You have done for me in Christ my Savior, and how You desire to conform me into Your image more than giving me every comfort and ease. Remind me that this world is not my home. In Jesus’ mighty name, amen.

*"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare." **Isaiah 55:1-2 NIV***

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 6:48-71 for full context, then closely observe the following:

John 6:66-71 NIV

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God." Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

Joshua 24:15 NIV

"But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

Hebrews 4:14-16 NIV

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.



Observe

Throughout John 6, many of Jesus' followers rejected Him. Some turned and left, and others grumbled, but the 12 disciples never abandoned Him. When Jesus mentioned how many people had given up on Him and asked how His closest friends were leaning, Peter responded, "We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God." It didn't mean that Peter wouldn't have some fear-driven moments later—like temporarily denying knowing Jesus after His arrest. But after Jesus' resurrection Peter was fully restored, becoming one of the most faith-filled and courageous leaders of the early church.

- Why did many of Jesus' followers reject Him after hearing His words in John 6:25-59?
- According to verses 67-69, why didn't the 12 disciples abandon Jesus?
- Jesus chose His disciples. How do you think this influenced their decision to stay with Him?
- A couple weeks ago we read in Matthew 14 about Peter walking on water ... and sinking. Then we saw in Luke 9 that he boldly affirmed Jesus' true identity as the Messiah. Today we heard another statement of faith from Peter (John 6:68) and talked about what happened to him later. Thinking of all we've learned about Peter in this study, summarize his faith journey.

Respond

Like Peter, our faith is a journey that will ebb and flow in different seasons. Consider your own faith journey as you reflect on today's reading.

- Describe a time when you've been offended but later realized that you simply didn't understand. What did you learn from this?
- Summarize your faith journey. When was your weakest faith moment? Name a time when your faith seemed strongest. What factors played a role in these highs and lows?

Pray

Good and holy Father, thank You for choosing me to be Your beloved child. I am delighted to choose to serve You today with all of my heart. I hunger and thirst for You and Your righteousness. There's nothing that compares with You, and there's no one who rivals You. You are my hiding place and my sweetest song. May Your Holy Spirit fill and strengthen every part of me. May Your Kingdom show up and Your will be done through my life and all Your people today. In Jesus' name, amen.

Pray

Acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence with you and ask Him to guide and teach you. Enjoy talking with God and asking Him questions as you read the Scripture.

Read

John 20:29–31 NIV

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Deuteronomy 2:7 NIV

The LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this vast wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything.

Jeremiah 32:27 NIV

"I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?"

Philippians 4:11–13 NIV

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Daniel 3:17–18, 28 NIV

"If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." ... Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God."

Observe

As we conclude this study, we see the faithfulness of God throughout Scripture. Nothing is too hard, too big, or too powerful for our God.

- What are some common themes or ideas throughout today's Scriptures?
- Write down any insights from today's readings that stand out to you.

Respond

Spend time reflecting on today's passages.

- What do today's Scriptures prompt you to do, or how do they change your perspective?
- What lessons should you go back through and review?

Pray

My Father, yes, You can! No matter what I face, I know You're more than able! I rejoice that no matter what Your children go through, there is nothing that can separate us from Your love. You work everything for our good. And we can accomplish all things because Christ empowers us to be strong overcomers. I ask for unshakable trust in You as I cling to You—my Provider and the Bread of Life. In Jesus' name, amen.

For Further Study: God Is Powerfully Able

Psalm 106, Daniel 3:14–30, Daniel 6:20–27, Romans 8:18–39



Where Do You Go From Here?

I'm thrilled that you've made it through this study of John 6, *Jesus: The Bread of Life*. I pray that you'll always have a growing faith—one that pursues knowing, remembering, and trusting in God's faithfulness. May we keep growing a faith that knows how to be still and rest in the shelter of God's wings (Psalm 36:7). No matter what we face, we can confidently conclude, "Yes, He can!" and "I trust my God completely."



As you wrap up this study, be sure to watch this bonus video where I share my final thoughts. We'll review the key themes of each week, and discuss ways to apply what we've learned to our lives.

I also encourage you to continue your habit of being in God's Word daily. If you enjoyed this study, be sure to check out other resources at www.life.church/sisters or find more related Bible Plans at www.go2.lc/sisters

