JOHN 6

The Bread of Life

loaves on a hillside, a walk across the storm, and a sermon that emptied the synagogue

> *"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.'"*
> JOHN 6:35

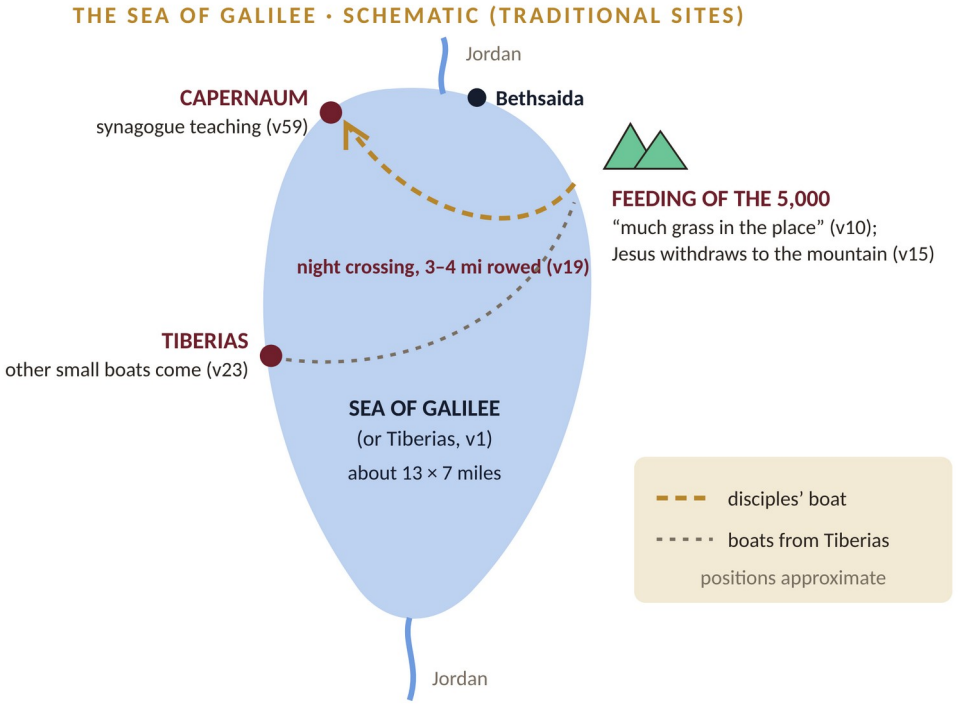
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in John

1. John 5 left Jesus in Jerusalem under a death threat; chapter 6 opens “after these things” back in Galilee, on the far side of the lake.

2. The Passover setting explains the whole chapter.

3. The geography moves around the Sea of Galilee — also called Tiberias, after the city Herod Antipas built on its western shore (v. 1).



Five Loaves in His Hands

A test for Philip, a boy's lunch, five thousand filled — and a crowd that wants a king

JOHN 6:5

Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?"

DAVID GUZIK

No panic, no hurry; little is much in His hands; the disciples distribute.

R.C. SPROUL

Philip flunks the test; no lunch-sharing; the kingdom of God, not of man.

C.H. SPURGEON

Christ always has someone at hand; His subtractions mean additions.

MATTHEW HENRY

The poor are precious to Christ; He does not stint; waste nothing.

σημεῖον
SĒMEION · "SIGN"

John never calls Jesus' miracles "wonders" or "powers"; he calls them signs — acts that point beyond themselves.

“It Is I”

Rowing in the dark, a strong wind — and Jesus walking on the sea

JOHN 6:20

But He said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.”

DAVID GUZIK

Obedience can row into wind; Jesus waited to be welcomed.

R.C. SPROUL

Pulling on the oars; egō eimi — the God of creation is here.

C.H. SPURGEON

An absent Saviour, a roaring sea — and Christ through it at once.

MATTHEW HENRY

When trouble is nigh Christ is nigh; imagined fears add to real ones.

Ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε
EGŌ EIMI · MĒ PHOBEISTHE

Literally “I am; stop being afraid.”

I Am the Bread of Life

Bread that perishes, the work of God, and the will of the Father to lose nothing

JOHN 6:35

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

DAVID GUZIK

Not to do, but to trust; coming is simple; never cast out.

R.C. SPROUL

Given to the Son; perseverance with a vengeance — never lost.

C.H. SPURGEON

High doctrine and broad doctrine: the gift and the open highway.

MATTHEW HENRY

The work of faith is God's work; not done till the resurrection.

ἐσφράγισεν

ESPHRAGISEN · "HAS SET HIS SEAL"

Sphragizō, to mark with a seal — for ownership, security, or to certify that something is genuine.

The manna and the true bread

JOHN 6:27–58	THE MANNA	THE TRUE BREAD
GIVEN BY	"it is not Moses who has given you" v32	"My Father who gives you" v32
COMES FROM	"bread out of heaven" — the sky v31; Exod 16:4	"comes down out of heaven" vv33, 38
GIVEN TO	Israel in the wilderness v31	"gives life to the world" vv33, 51
LASTS	a day's portion, then spoiled Exod 16:4, 20	"endures to eternal life" v27
THE END	"they ate … and they died" vv49, 58	"he who eats … will live forever" vv50–51, 58
WHAT IT IS	food for the body v31	"I am the bread of life" — a Person vv35, 48

"This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died" (v58)

Read across each row: Jesus answers the crowd's appeal to Moses' manna point by point — the true bread has a better Giver, a wider reach, a longer life and a different end.

Drawn by the Father, Fed by the Son

Grumbling in the synagogue, the Father's drawing, and flesh given for the life of the world

JOHN 6:51

"I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

DAVID GUZIK

Alluring, not dragging; eating is faith in His sacrifice.

R.C. SPROUL

Compelled, not wooed; spiritual eating — held without dogmatism.

C.H. SPURGEON

Inability of will; no one goes to heaven kicking against the hand.

MATTHEW HENRY

Cheerful compliance; spiritual, not sacramental; union like digested food.

ἑλκύσῃ

HELKYSĒ · "DRAWS"

Helkō means to pull or haul.

To Whom Shall We Go?

A difficult statement, a great withdrawal, Peter's confession — and a devil among the twelve

JOHN 6:60

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, "This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?"

DAVID GUZIK

Hard to accept, not to understand; Judases still among us.

R.C. SPROUL

Offense taken, not given; the flesh cannot produce spiritual life.

C.H. SPURGEON

Apostasy is contagious; grace has no slaves; have backbone.

MATTHEW HENRY

We like our choice too well to change; the falling star never was one.

Σκληρός ἐστιν ὁ λόγος οὗτος
SKLĒROS ESTIN HO LOGOS HOUTOS · "THIS IS A DIFFICULT STATEMENT"

Sklēros is hard, harsh, rough — the "hard man" of the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:24), the "goads" Saul kicked against (Acts 26:14).

The shrinking crowd



Each band is smaller than the one before: the chapter that begins with five thousand fed ends with twelve — and even there, a betrayer.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The miracle was a sign, and they missed it.

“Sign” appears four times (vv. 2, 14, 26, 30).

2

Little is much in His hands.

A boy’s five barley loaves — the poor man’s bread — fed five thousand men, with twelve baskets left.

3

He walked across the storm with God’s name.

“It is I” is egō eimi, “I am.”

4

The work God wants is faith.

“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent” (v. 29).

More to carry

5

Moses gave bread; the Father gives the Bread.

The manna came for a day and spoiled; the fathers ate and died (v. 49).

6

Verse 37 has two halves, and both are true.

“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me” — and “the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”

7

“Drawn” — the teachers differ.

Sproul hears “compel”; Guzik, with Clarke, “alluring, not dragging”; Henry, “a cheerful compliance.”

8

Eating is believing.

Verse 47 (“he who believes has eternal life”) and verse 54 (“he who eats … has eternal life”) promise the same thing.

Talk it through

1. Jesus asked Philip a question He already knew the answer to, “to test him.” What need in my life looks as impossible as feeding five thousand — and am I counting my money or looking to Him?

2. What “five loaves” — time, talent, story, money — am I holding back because it seems too small to matter?

3. Where am I rowing hard in the dark right now, and what would it mean to hear Him say, “It is I; do not be afraid”?

4. Do I follow Jesus for what He gives or for who He is? What “loaves” keep bringing me back?

5. Jesus says He will “certainly not cast out” anyone who comes. What do I think would make Him turn me away — and what does verse 37 say about that?

CLOSING

John 6 begins with five thousand fed and ends with twelve men and a question. Jesus would not be the bread king the crowd wanted; He gave Himself instead — His flesh for the life of the world. When the hard sayings come and others walk away, Peter's answer is still the only one that works: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the John study page.