

Series: VII
Passage: John 6:1-15
Sunday: March 19, 2023

John 6:1-15 (ESV)

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

6 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.
² And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.
³ Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. ⁵ Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?” ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. ⁷ Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.” ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, ⁹ “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?” ¹⁰ Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. ¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost.” ¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”

¹⁵ Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

1. What is the biggest crowd you have been responsible for feeding? How much food did it take?

2. In verse 5, what does Jesus suggest that he and his disciples need to do for the great crowd that has gathered around them? Why does this sound crazy to them (verse 7). It may be helpful to research how much two hundred denarii are worth.

3. How might Andrew have felt when he brought the boy and his meager lunch to the attention of Jesus?

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4. Are there things in your life that you consider of little value? What might happen if you bring those things to Jesus?

5. God fed the children of Israel with “bread from heaven.” Revisit Exodus 16 where this story is told. What similarities and differences are there between the story in Exodus and John’s story of Jesus feeding the five thousand?

6. How does the reaction of the crowd in verses 14-15 show that they don’t really understand Jesus’ purpose in the world?

7. In what ways does this sign of Jesus point to his redeeming and saving work?

8. In what ways are we guilty of this today? How do we sometimes try to “seize” Jesus and make him fit into our boxes instead of letting him lead the way?