

Belmont Exeter House Group Notes

w/c 5th February 2023

Come and See – the Bread of Life - John 6:25 - 71

We're working our way through the gospel of John in our Sunday morning services. Our home group studies will pick up the topic from the Sunday before the meeting. This means we won't cover the whole of the Gospel of John in these outlines. Feel free to adapt this content, or to study other passages.

John wrote his gospel so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20 v 30&31). As we study John together, keep that purpose in mind and ask, "How does this passage help me believe that Jesus is the Messiah?"

This study is for the passage from the morning service on 5th Feb. If people aren't able to be at the service then please encourage them to catch up online via YouTube or the talks page on the Belmont Exeter website.

This outline is the bare bones of the study: more thought needs to be given to the way you start and finish the evening, use (or don't use) the questions themselves, and think about the way this passage may affect your own group members. Think about the big ideas and how to apply them to everyday life. Here are three book titles you may find helpful to have available for study leaders through the series.

John for Everyone by Tom Wright, pub. SPCK, (short 'daily' chapters on each section)
The Message of John by Bruce Milne, pub. IVP (more in depth analysis and explanation)
John for You by Josh Moody, pub. Goodbook Co (sermon style & with focus on application)

BIG IDEA: Jesus is the provider of life and is life itself. Taking Him into our lives turns our grumbling and worship.

WAY IN: What causes you to grumble (if you do)? What keeps you from grumbling?

READ: John 6:25 – 71. This is a long section and may be best broken into 4 sections so you can get the flow of the passage. Take each section, read it and try to summarize in a sentence. This could be done in groups or all together. Hopefully, you'll have 4 sentences to sum up the passage.

Suggestion

V25 – 31		<i>Seek the right things from God</i>
V32 – 49		<i>Jesus showed them a sign that reflects the familiar story of the Exodus</i>
V41 – 59		<i>Believing leads to eternal life and is done by taking Jesus into ourselves.</i>
V60 – 71		<i>You can grumble or you can believe</i>

Context

Jesus has arrived on 'the other side of the Lake' after the two miracles of the feeding of 5000, and walking on the water. The people come in search of Jesus and an explanation of how to respond to the miracle of the bread (v28)

DIG IN

1. What part of the text or sermon had the greatest impact on you? Did you learn anything new about Jesus? The Bible? God? *This is an open question to see if there are particular themes to explore which are on the minds of the group.*
2. What elements of this passage link us back to the Exodus event? Why is the Exodus important to Jesus and to those listening?
References to bread from heaven, Moses, manna, forefathers, Passover (6v4), grumbling people. Perhaps you could look back to see where themes occur in Exodus and Numbers, Jesus is pointing us this way to show that he is the one who will bring a new Exodus, who will build a new people and he will do this through his own body. He invites us to recognize who he is and be part of this new people.

3. Jesus links believing with eating. What does He want us to understand and to by this linkage?
To believe in Jesus is all that is needed it is about being dependent on Jesus for everlasting life. Belief is about taking Jesus in to us and he takes us into Him. We who are many are one body because we all share in one bread (1 Corinthians 10 v 16&17).

LIVE IT OUT

1. How are we getting on with 'eating of the bread of life'?
You could explore the disciplines of prayer, worship, bible reading, fellowship...
2. How do you respond when Jesus teaching is difficult to accept, costly or complex? How can we help each other at these moments? How is Peter's response a model for us?
Share about ways in which we can help each other recognise Christ each day. Peter's response is about a person not a teaching. What matters is not what Jesus can do (the miracles) but who Jesus is.
3. On our frontlines, you may find yourself tempted to grumble because God doesn't seem to provide. How could taking Jesus 'into us' in everyday life, transform the situation from grumbling to joy?

PRAYER

Have time for breaking bread together. Come ready to share in a time of communion. As you share in communion you could work through four steps

GIVE THANKS – Jesus gave thanks for God's provision
BREAK – Jesus body was broken in our place
TAKE & EAT – accept the offer of Jesus and take into our lives
GO - pray for each other's frontline responses discussed earlier

Some background details to note:

Looking at repeated themes and words helpful tool to understand the main idea in a passage. Jesus builds his theme through the passage, as he repeats in different ways the ideas of bread coming down from heaven which gives eternal life and leads to raising up and glory.

Isaiah looks towards a feast (Ch55) which is a fulfillment of promise and a hope for the future. Jesus invites people to come and eat. Jesus has previously offered water that will quench our deepest thirst (John 4). Notice the parallel language that John uses (e.g. 6v35 compared with 4v13, 6v34 and 4v15, 6v51 and 4 v 10). Between this event and the dialogue with the woman at the well. He offers something eternal that when accepted will truly satisfy. John pulls these themes together to remind his readers of the importance of receiving and believing as they celebrate communion each week in the early church.