

Who Is Jesus and What Does He Offer?

Session 1: Week of February 5, 2023

I Am The Bread of Life John 6:35-51

Brewster Baptist Church, Brewster, MA

Connecting

***If your group is gathering for the first time:**

1. Introduce yourself, & share: your name (see attached sheet to write down everyone's name to help you remember), what town you live in, & either how you heard about BBC and which worship service you attend.
2. What's your favorite kind of bread (Oatmeal, Italian, Anadama, Rye, Whole Grain etc.)? Any particular reason?
3. As you participate in the *Who Is Jesus and What Does He Offer* series, what's one thing you're looking forward to?

***If you're in an ongoing group:**

1. What's your favorite kind of bread (Oatmeal, Italian, Anadama, Rye, Whole Grain etc.)? Any particular reason?
2. As you participate in the *Who Is Jesus and What Does He Offer* series, what's one thing you're looking forward to?

As a group take turns reading out loud the **Healthy Habits for a Small Group**.

Whether your group is new or ongoing, it's a good idea to regularly remind ourselves of the habits and expectations that help small groups thrive.

Healthy Habits for a Small Group

Come with 100% of yourself. Each of us brings all of who we are to the group—our joys and successes, as well as our fears and failures.

Presume welcome and extend welcome. We all learn most effectively in spaces that welcome us. Know that you are welcome, that you belong, and extend this welcome to others.

No fixing. Offer advice or reflection to another person *only* when invited to do so, but otherwise avoid the temptation to fix, set-straight or counsel another member of the group.

Share the air. Pay attention to how much of the group time you take. Every voice is important, and no single voice ought to dominate.

Speak for Self. A helpful practice is to use “I” statements. This is a time to reflect on your own faith journey and not on someone else or “the world.”

Pay attention to people, not to your electronic devices.

Listen to Silence. Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. Allow silence to be another member of the group.

Observe Confidentiality. This is especially important for trust to develop. What’s said in the group stays in the group.

Believe that it’s possible to emerge from this experience refreshed, surprised, and less burdened than when you came. Expect that our time together can provide for renewal, refreshment, and helpful perspectives for our spiritual journeys.

Bible Study of John 6:35-51

Key Verse: ***“Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”***

John 6:35 (NRSV)

35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; 38 for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

41 Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” 42 They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” 43 Jesus answered them, “Do not complain among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. 46 Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47 Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Repeated words, phrases and images in Bible Study are often important in determining what is being communicated.

Look in John 6:35-51 for references to one of the words or phrases below and write the verse number each time you see it (you may also wish to underline them or note them in your own Bible):

Bread -

Believe -

the will of the Father who sent Jesus -

Coming to Jesus -

Jesus coming down from heaven -

Being raised on the last day -

Eternal life/not die/live forever -

How does this exercise help you to understand the passage better?

Small Group Discussion Questions:

Remember, no one in the group is “*the answer person*,” the questions are for the group to wrestle with and discuss together.

Questions for Discussion or Reflection

1. What do you think Jesus means when he says, “*I am the Bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*”
2. List all the claims Jesus makes in verses 35-40; what does he offer and promise that he will do?

3. What do Jesus' claims say about the will of the Father?
4. Where does Jesus say he comes from (hint - he tells us five times)? Why is where he comes from important?
5. In verses 41-42, what complaint arises in response to Jesus and what he says? How is the word about a prophet in his hometown played out here (see John 4:44)?
6. What's the most important thing you will remember for your life and relationship with Jesus from John 6:35-51?

Praying for Each Other

Are there any joys to celebrate, any burdens we can share?

Who Is Jesus and What Does He Offer: My Small Group

In case we need to contact each other regarding a change or transportation etc.

My Small Group Host

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Bibliography for Who Is Jesus and What Does He Offer? Based on the “I am” sayings of Jesus

In the Church Library

The Gospel of John, Volumes 1 & 2, revised edition, 1975, by William Barclay, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky.

The New Interpreter's Bible, Volume IX, Luke, John, 1995, Gail R. O'Day, Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee.

Books and commentaries on John's Gospel for people who want to deeper:

Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community, Second Edition, by Craig R. Koester, 2003, Fortress Press, Minneapolis. If I could only recommend one book on John's Gospel, it would be Koester's.

John: The Maverick Gospel, Revised Edition by Robert Kysar, 1993, Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky. Kysar is also very insightful. *John Interpretation A Bible Study for Teaching and Preaching* by Gerard Sloyan, 1988, John Knox Press, Atlanta.

Briefer books just on the “I Am” sayings of Christ

Who Is Jesus? Knowing Christ through His “I Am” Sayings, by J.V. Fesko, 2016 Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, MI.

Meeting Jesus – The ‘I Am’ Sayings of Christ by R.C. Sproul, 2019 Banner of Truth Trust, Carlisle, PA.

Jesus in the Present Tense – The I Am Statements of Christ by Warren Wiersbe, 2011, David C. Cook, Colorado Springs, CO.