

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

## JOHN 6.22-40



T. M. Moore

*A Scriptorium Study*

*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,*

*He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

The Gospel of John: John 6.22-40  
Copyright 2017 T. M. and Susie Moore  
Susie Moore, Editing and Finishing  
The Fellowship of Ailbe  
[www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org)

*Except as indicated, Scripture taken from the New King James Version. © Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All psalms for singing adapted from The Ailbe Psalter. All quotations from Church Fathers from Ancient Christian Commentary Series IV a and b: John, edited by Joel C. Elowsky, General Editor Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006. Verse translation of John by T. M. Moore.*

## Introduction to *John 6.22-40*

Jesus will not be manipulated by people who are seeking them merely for their own selfish and material ends. He is on a mission from God, to bring eternal life to all who see and believe in Him. Those who hope to use Jesus for their own ends will be sorely disappointed.

The crowd Jesus fed in the grassy field sought Him out across the Sea of Galilee, but for all the wrong reasons. Jesus knew this, so He made sure to tell these people that unless they were seeking the Bread from Heaven, which God had sent to earth for their salvation, they would get nowhere with Him.

Jesus is the Bread of life, the gift of God Who gives us everlasting life. But we must see Him for Who He is, and believe in His Word if we know this precious gift from God.

We're pleased to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

Please visit our website, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org), to discover the many other resources available to serve your needs. The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Visit our website also to subscribe to our worldview study *ReVision*, our devotional newsletter *Crosfjgell*.

If you find these studies, or any of our other resources helpful, we hope you will consider making a contribution to help support our work. You can do so by using the donate button at the website or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

T. M. Moore, Principal  
[tmmoore@ailbe.org](mailto:tmmoore@ailbe.org)

## 1 Seeking Jesus

*Read and meditate on John 6.22-24.*

The people had seen Jesus' disciples departing for Capernaum, but Jesus wasn't with them. Since no other boat was available at the time, they were puzzled about where Jesus was. They knew He must be with His disciples, but the rest was a mystery. Undaunted, they set off to find Him.

*<sup>22</sup>The next day, when the people standing on the other side, who knew that they were gone, observed that only one boat had been there, and Jesus had not entered it, to share the trip with His disciples – <sup>23</sup>but there came boats from Tiberias unto that same place where, when Jesus thanks had given, they ate the bread – <sup>24</sup>the people did not hesitate to sail off to Capernaum, and went in vessels, seeking Him.*

- John 6.22-24

*Reflect*

1. Jesus, we recall, had gone back up the mountain to pray (v. 15). That evening, the disciples sailed for Capernaum (v. 17) in the sight of the people (v. 22). Does it strike you as odd that Jesus and His disciples would leave this huge crowd without telling them where they were going? Why or why not? Complete this prayer: *Lord, You understood Your mission, and what You had to do to fulfill it. Help me to understand my own calling, and how today I might...*
2. John adds the detail that other boats had arrived from Tiberias, either overnight or early in the morning. Doubtless the word had reached them about Jesus' feeding the thousands, and they were coming to have a look for themselves. Jesus' good works always attracted people looking for something from Him. Should local churches adopt this as a pattern for their own ministries? What might be some examples of this? *What about our church, Lord? How can our church do good in our community, and what can I do to...*
3. Do you wonder why no one thought to go up on the mountain, to see if Jesus was there? They'd seen Him go up there, and they'd watched as the disciples left without Him. Why do you suppose they assumed that He must have been with His disciples, rather than still alone on that mountain? What does this suggest about how people saw Jesus and His disciples? Is this how they see us? *Lord, Your disciples were closely associated with You. What about me? I want people to see me as...*
4. It's not likely that *all* that vast multitude "got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus." We don't know who made this voyage, or how many. Some must have set off on foot around the lake, while others probably just went home. But given what we've seen thus far, what were they "seeking" who went after Jesus to Capernaum? Is there a sense in which the Gospel must be presented in ways that appeal to people's self-interest? Explain. *Lord, You are in the business of caring and meeting needs. I'm Your follower, so I should...*
5. Jesus did not seem to be concerned with attracting large numbers of followers. He didn't linger with the multitude, or try to organize them into some movement. He sought out His disciples, and continued His work with them. As Robert Coleman observed in his excellent book, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Jesus understood the importance of working with a few men, rather than trying to assemble large numbers of

followers. Is this the way we today seek to bring the Kingdom of God to our communities? Explain. Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“The day following, the people who had stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there except the one that his disciples entered. They also saw that Jesus had not gone with his disciples into the boat but that his disciples were alone when they left. And why is John so exact about this? Why didn’t he simply say that the multitude had crossed over on the next day? He wants to teach us that Jesus allowed the multitudes, if not openly, at least indirectly to infer what had taken place.... What else could they do but suspect that he had crossed the sea on foot? For he could not have gone over in a ship since there was only one ship there—that in which his disciples had entered.” *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

Chrysostom may be right about this, but I’m not so sure. My sense is that the people didn’t think through the matter of *how* Jesus had crossed the sea. They didn’t really care; what they wanted was simply to be where He was, and they deduced from what they knew of Him, that He must be with His disciples. Do people deduce about us that we must be with Jesus?

*Closing Prayer*

The LORD *is* my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside the still waters.  
He restores my soul;  
He leads me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name’s sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
For You *are* with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 23.1-4

**Psalm 23.1-4** (*The Gift of Love: Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire*)

Because the Lord my Shepherd is, I shall not want, for I am His!  
He makes me lie in pastures full; I rest in Him by waters still.

My soul He quickens and will bless; He leads in paths of righteousness.  
Though I may walk in death’s dark vale, I shall not fear – He will not fail!

## 2 Rightly Seeking

Read and meditate on John 6.25, 26.

When the people finally caught up with Jesus, they wanted to know when He had arrived. But He knew that was not what was on their hearts most of all, and He got right down to business with them.

*<sup>25</sup>They found Him then,  
and asked Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?”  
<sup>26</sup>But Jesus answered them and said, “Now bear  
Me, for I say to you, you seek Me, not  
because you saw the signs, although these ought  
to have been the reason. No, you ate the bread  
I freely gave you, and were filled. <sup>27</sup>Instead  
of seeking food that perishes, you should  
work for the food that lasts, that is, the good  
food, which the Son of Man will give to you,  
which gives eternal life. The Father, Who  
has set His seal on Him will make it so.”*

- John 6.25, 26

Reflect

1. The people address Jesus as *Rabbi*. We’ve seen that this means “Teacher.” What does this suggest about how much they have understood about what Jesus has been teaching? Is this necessarily a *bad* thing? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Lord, I realize that it can take time for people to understand fully Who You are and what this means for them. Give me patience, so that...*

2. Jesus did not answer the people’s question. Why not? Was He just rude? He turned their question back on them, because, as we’ve seen, Jesus knows what is in every person (Jn. 2.24, 25). Why was Jesus so abrupt with these people? *It’s not always easy to discern the thoughts and intentions of people’s heart, Lord. As I’m talking with others about You, help me...*

3. In verse 26, Jesus exposed the improper motives of the people. Why were they seeking Jesus? Were they looking *through* “the signs” He had done, to see Jesus for Who He is, or where they stuck on the signs only? What does this suggest about the hearts of people? *We’re all basically self-seeking and self-serving Lord, but please, do not let me...*

4. Notice how, in verse 27, Jesus deftly connects their *ulterior* motive for seeking Him with His own mission to them. He makes a bridge from their self-interest to His purpose. Suggest some ways you might do this with people in your Personal Mission Field. *Help me to keep focused on You and the gift of eternal life, Lord, as I’m...*

5. Meditate on Ephesians 1.13, 14. What “seal” had God set on Jesus? What was Jesus promising to give these people? In what sense was this “food”? Do we who know Jesus still need to “labor” for this “food” (cf. Phil. 2.12)? How? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

Summary

“So he who had fled to the mountain mixes and converses with the multitude. Only a little while before they would have kept him and made him king.... But after the sacrament of the miracle, he begins to teach ... and fills their souls with his word whose bodies he had just satisfied with bread—provided they take it in. And if they do not, let that be taken up which they do not receive so that the fragments may not be lost.” *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

Jesus interprets the feeding of the multitude as a *sign*, indicating that He had been sealed with God's Spirit to offer the gift of everlasting life to the people. He met their temporal need, but meeting the temporal need was only a pointer to the greater "food" He could provide. How should churches try to connect doing good in their communities with the Good News of the Kingdom?

*Closing Prayer*

What shall I render to the LORD  
For all His benefits toward me?  
I will take up the cup of salvation,  
And call upon the name of the LORD.  
I will pay my vows to the LORD  
Now in the presence of all His people.  
Precious in the sight of the LORD  
Is the death of His saints.  
O LORD, truly I *am* Your servant;  
I *am* Your servant, the son of Your maidservant;  
You have loosed my bonds.  
I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
And will call upon the name of the LORD.

Psalm 116.12-17

**Psalm 116.7-14** (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God Who Reigns Above*)  
Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.  
My weeping eyes, my stumbling fee, He has redeemed forever.  
Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,  
And dwell with them forever.

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.  
What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?  
Salvation's cup I lift above and call upon the God of love  
And pay my vows most truly.

### 3 Still Don't Get It

Read and meditate on John 6.28-31.

Jesus has just told these people that they had to work to enjoy the works of God, the food that endures to everlasting life. We note that Jesus *does not* discourage them from thinking about works and salvation.

<sup>28</sup>They said, "What shall we do, where shall we go that we may work the works of God?" <sup>29</sup>But He replied, "God's work is to believe in Me, Whom He has sent." <sup>30</sup>They said to Him therefore, "What sign or wonder will You then perform, that we may see it, and believe in You?" <sup>31</sup>Our ancient fathers, as they traveled through the desert, ate the manna, sent from heaven."

- John 6.28-31

Reflect

1. The people rightly understood that to enjoy the works of God, they had to *do* something. But isn't salvation – the food that endures to everlasting life – a gift of grace? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Thank You, Lord, for the gift of salvation, and for enabling me to...*
2. How did Jesus answer their question? In what sense is believing in Jesus a "work"? How do you interpret the phrase "of God" here? Is this a work people can do on their own (cf. Jn. 6.63 and Gal. 4.6)? Do we still need to urge them to do it? Explain. *Lord, when I tell someone they must believe in You, what I mean is...*
3. Can you see how, in verse 30, the people are trying to use Jesus' words to manipulate Him for their own ends? Do people still do this today? How can we know when we might be doing this? *Lord, guard me against ever trying to...*
4. The people are saying to Jesus, "Hey, seeing is believing." Jesus is saying to the people, "Believing is seeing." What's the difference? *I believe, Lord, help me to...*
5. The spokespersons for this crowd try to use Scripture to get their way with Jesus. Remind you of anyone else who tried to twist Scripture to get Jesus to do his bidding (cf. Matt. 4.5, 6)? The purpose of Scripture is to focus us on Jesus, not to focus Jesus on us. Explain. Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

Summary

"Why do you make ready your teeth and stomach? Believe, and you have eaten. Faith is, indeed, distinguished from works, as the apostle says, 'that a person is justified by faith without works.' And there are works that seem to be good ... because they are not referred to that end from which they are good. 'For the end of the law is Christ, unto justice to everyone who believes.' Therefore, he did not wish to separate faith from work, but he said that faith itself is a work. For this is the faith that works by love. He did not say, 'This is your work' but 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent,' so that he who takes glory may take glory in the Lord." *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

The work of God is to believe in Him Whom He has sent. This is a work *of God* because it is both what He requires, as well as a work only He can do. Do you thank the Lord daily for His work in your life?

*Closing Prayer*

I will bless the LORD at all times;  
His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.  
My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;  
The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad.  
Oh, magnify the LORD with me,  
And let us exalt His name together.  
I sought the LORD, and He heard me,  
And delivered me from all my fears.  
They looked to Him and were radiant,  
And their faces were not ashamed.  
This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard *him*,  
And saved him out of all his troubles.  
The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him,  
And delivers them.  
Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good;  
Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him!

Psalm 34.1-8

**Psalm 34.1-9, 3** (*Alleluia [Lowe]: Mighty God, While Angels Bless You*)

I will bless the Lord at all times; I shall praise Him evermore!  
My soul makes its boast in Jesus – Him we gladly all adore!  
Magnify the Name of Jesus!  
Let us lift His Name in praise!

When I sought the Lord, He answered, and from fear delivered me.  
Those who look to Him are radiant; shamed their face shall never be.  
Magnify the Name of Jesus!  
Let us lift His Name in praise!

When I cried to God, He heard me, and from trouble rescued me.  
‘Round their camp His angel lingers that they may delivered be.  
Magnify the Name of Jesus!  
Let us lift His Name in praise!

Taste and see how good is Jesus; blessed are all who in Him hide.  
None shall lack for any blessing who in Christ will e’er confide.  
Magnify the Name of Jesus!  
Let us lift His Name in praise!

## 4 Yeah! Give Us *That* Bread!

*Read and meditate on John 6.32-34.*

The people are apparently trying to make Jesus into another Moses, whom they understood to be Israel's "savior" in the wilderness, by giving them food every day. Another sign these people completely missed. They just can't seem to get their minds off *bread*.

<sup>32</sup>But Jesus said to them, "This bread is given not by the hand of Moses; the true bread

My Father gives to you from heav'n instead.

<sup>33</sup>The bread of God is He Who has come down from heav'n, and gives life to the world around.

<sup>34</sup>They said to Him, "Lord, give us this good bread always!"

- John 6.32-34

*Reflect*

1. In verse 32, Jesus indicates that the people misunderstood the role of Moses in relation to Israel during the wilderness journey. Instead of looking *merely* to Moses, the people should have been looking at God's work *through* Moses, which then would have pointed to the coming of Christ (cf. Jn. 5.46). Why is it important always to be looking for God's work in Jesus when we're reading Scripture? Complete this prayer: *Lord, teach me to see You throughout Your Word, so that...*

2. The manna Israel received in the wilderness was but a token of the "true bread from heaven" which the Father provides. As the Father gave Israel manna in the wilderness, Jesus had given these people bread by the sea. The manna was supposed to point them beyond Moses to God. The bread by the sea... *Lord, all day long You surround me with good gifts from the Father. Help me to see these gifts for what they are, and to see through them to...*

3. What is the "bread of God" and what does it accomplish? Again, Jesus is meeting these people at the point of their self-interest. To what might we liken Jesus, to reach people at the point of their self-interest today? *Grant me wisdom and grace, Lord, to be able to explain You so that...*

4. It's obvious the people are still thinking in terms of bread to eat, like they'd eaten the day before (v. 34). But Jesus said the bread from heaven was *He* (literally, *He who descends* – two words in the Greek). Are they just not listening? Why is it sometimes so hard for people to hear the truth about Jesus? Should we just give up on them? Explain. *I need patience and courage, Lord, to...*

5. Some people want to come to Jesus so that He can *do* for them "always" (vv. 34). What is Jesus looking for from those who come to Him? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

*Summary*

"He calls this the 'true bread,' not because the miracle of the manna was false but because it was a type and not the very truth itself. But in mentioning Moses, Jesus does not compare himself with him, for the Jews did not as yet prefer him to Moses, of whom they still had a higher opinion. So that after saying, 'Moses did not give,' he does not say 'I give' but says that the Father, and not Moses, gives. When they heard this, the people replied, 'Give us this bread to eat.' They still thought that it was something material, and they yet expected to satisfy their appetites, and so they quickly ran to him. And what does Christ do? Leading them on little by little, he says, 'The bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.'" *John Chrysostom (344-407AD)*

*The Gospel of John: John 6.22-40*

Jesus is patient with this self-serving crowd. He doesn't dismiss them, but works to lead them to higher levels of understanding about Himself and His relationship to Moses and the Father. What can you learn from Jesus about being patient with the unbelieving people in your Personal Mission Field?

*Closing Prayer*

The fool hath said in his heart,

*There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works,  
there is none that doeth good.*

The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men,  
to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy:  
*there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?  
who eat up my people as they eat bread,  
and call not upon the LORD.

There were they in great fear:  
for God *is* in the generation of the righteous.

Psalm 14.1-5

**Psalm 14.4, 5** (*St. Anne: O God, Our Help in Ages Past*)

None understands, none seeks the Lord; they all have turned aside.  
Deception leads them from God's Word who have His grace denied.

The workers of iniquity consume God's sheep like bread;  
They trust not in the Lord, and He shall fill their hearts with dread.

## 5 Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Read and meditate on John 6.35-38.

You can't make it any clearer than Jesus did here. The bread they *should* be seeking is the heavenly bread that endures to everlasting life, and that Bread is Jesus. Wow!

*<sup>35</sup>And Jesus said to them instead,  
"I am the Bread of Life. Whoever to  
Me comes shall hunger never more. He who  
believes in Me shall never thirst. <sup>36</sup>I said  
to you that you have seen Me clearly, yet  
you still do not believe. <sup>37</sup>All whom to Me  
the Father gives will come to Me, and he  
who comes to Me, I will not turn away.  
<sup>38</sup>From heav'n have I come down to you today,  
and not to do My own will, but the will  
of Him Who sent me."*

- John 6.35-38

*Reflect*

1. How is Jesus using the ideas of *hunger* and *thirst* here? Why are these appropriate ways of thinking about the *spiritual* needs of people? Complete the following prayer: *Lord, do I hunger and thirst for You as I should? Help me to find You to be just what I need each day to...*
2. How should we understand the phrase "comes to Me"? Comes to Jesus for what? How? *Today, Lord Jesus, I come to You for...*
3. Jesus offers Himself to the people in terms of a promise of never hungering and thirsting again. Meditate on 2 Peter 1.4. How do the promises of God work in leading you to come to Jesus more consistently and more deeply? *Let me know Your promises, Lord, and help me to show those promises today to...*
4. Jesus rebuked the crowd for its failure to believe in Him (v. 36). What were they supposed to believe? What are people supposed to believe today, who want the Bread that endures to everlasting life? *Lord, I believe that You...*
5. Jesus came to do the will of the Father, not the will of the people or their religious leaders (v. 38). How can we know what the will of God is for our lives? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

*Summary*

"The expression 'that the Father gives me' shows that it is no accident whether a person believes or not. It shows that belief is not the work of human reasoning but requires a revelation from on high and a mind devout enough to receive the revelation. 'Whoever then,' our Lord says, 'comes to me, shall be saved,' meaning they shall be greatly cared for. For to save such as these I took up flesh and the form of a servant." *John Chrysostom (344-404 AD)*

The people had rowed and sailed all day to "come" to Jesus. But had they really come to Him? Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

Bless God in the congregations,

The Lord, from the fountain of Israel.  
There *is* little Benjamin, their leader,  
The princes of Judah *and* their company,  
The princes of Zebulun *and* the princes of Naphtali.  
Your God has commanded your strength;  
Strengthen, O God, what You have done for us.  
Because of Your temple at Jerusalem,  
Kings will bring presents to You.  
Rebuke the beasts of the reeds,  
The herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples,  
*Till everyone* submits himself with pieces of silver.  
Scatter the peoples *who* delight in war.  
Envoys will come out of Egypt;  
Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God.  
Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth;  
Oh, sing praises to the Lord,  
Selah  
To Him who rides on the heaven of heavens, *which were* of old!  
Indeed, He sends out His voice, a mighty voice.  
Ascribe strength to God;  
His excellence *is* over Israel,  
And His strength *is* in the clouds.  
O God, You are more awesome than Your holy places.  
The God of Israel *is* He who gives strength and power to *His* people.  
Blessed be God!

Psalm 68.26-35

**Psalm 68.26-35, 32, 33** (*O Store God: How Great Thou Art*)

Bless God in all His holy congregations,  
Even the Lord, the Fountainhead of grace;  
He calls His people forth from all the nations  
And gathers them before His glorious face.  
Sing to the Lord, O kingdoms of the earth!  
Ancient of Days – praise Him on high!  
Behold, He speaks; His Word is going forth;  
Ancient of Days – praise Him on high!

To You, O God, are strength and exaltation,  
You fill the skies and dwell in holy awe!  
To us You give strength, pow'r, and full salvation,  
Blessed be Your Name, our strong, majestic God!  
Sing to the Lord, O kingdoms of the earth!  
Ancient of Days – praise Him on high!  
Behold, He speaks; His Word is going forth;  
Ancient of Days – praise Him on high!

## 6 The Will of God

Read and meditate on John 6.39, 40.

Jesus has consistently pointed to the Father, Who sent Him. The Father has work to do, which only He can do, and He does that work according to His will. Jesus proclaims the will of the Father to the people, setting bread and Moses to the side, to deal with their real and ultimate need.

*<sup>39</sup>And My Father's will is this: of all those He has given Me, I should lose nothing, but they all will be raised up on the last day. <sup>40</sup>The will of Him Who sent Me is that every one of them Who sees the Son, and who believes in Him, may have eternal life, and all of them will I raise up on the last day."*

- John 6.39, 40

Reflect

1. These people can fuss and scheme about getting bread from Jesus all they want. But He is determined that they should know the *Father's* will, and be submissive to that. What is the will of God, according to Jesus? Complete the following brief prayer: *Lord, let me know and live within Your will today, so that...*
2. The will of God may be summarized in six verbs: given, sees, believes, have, lose, raise. Write a sentence for each of these verbs, explaining the will of God. What is God's role in this? What is ours? *Let me see You more clearly, Lord, so that I might...*
3. Based on what Jesus says here, what is the great hope of all who see Jesus and believe in Him? How should that hope function to strengthen and sustain us each day? How does it strengthen you? *Fill my heart and mind with the hope that is to come, Lord, and let me...*
4. Jesus shows that the Gospel is rooted in eternity past, and passes through time to eternity future. Explain. All of human time is provided for the purpose of fulfilling the will of God. Is this how you approach the time of your life? Explain. *Thank You, Father, for the gift of time. Help me to number my days well (Ps. 90.12) so that...*
5. How should the phrase, "lose nothing," encourage us in our walk with and work for the Lord? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

"Faith, so to speak, is the attempt generated in time; the final result is the attainment of the promise secured for eternity. Now the Lord himself has most clearly revealed the equality of salvation when he said, '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.' As far as possible in this world, which is what he means by the last day—and which is preserved till the time that it shall end—we believe that we are made perfect. Wherefore he says, 'The one who believes on the Son has everlasting life.' If then, those who have believed have life, what remains beyond the possession of eternal life? Nothing is lacking in faith as it is perfect and complete in itself." *Clement of Alexandria (150-215AD)*

The purpose of human history is to serve as a staging-ground for the will and grace of God. Before history began, God planned it out. Once it began, He conducted it toward Christ and our redemption. And when history is over, then we will be raised to everlasting life with Him. Give thanks and praise to God for His

good and perfect will!

*Closing Prayer*

Those who trust in the LORD

*Are* like Mount Zion,

*Which* cannot be moved, but abides forever.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,

So the LORD surrounds His people

From this time forth and forever.

For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest

On the land allotted to the righteous,

Lest the righteous reach out their hands to iniquity.

Do good, O LORD, to *those who are* good,

And to *those who are* upright in their hearts.

Psalm 125.1-4

**Psalm 125.1, 2** (*St. Gertrude: Onward, Christian Soldiers*)

All who trust in Jesus, strong as Zion stand!

Naught shall ever move them from their promised land!

Like the hills surrounding safe Jerusalem,

Christ surrounds His Church and holds her in His mighty Hand!

All who trust in Jesus, strong as Zion stand!

Naught shall ever move them from their promised land!

## 7 Heavenly Bread

*Read and meditate on John 6.22-40.*

Jesus is becoming increasingly direct with people. His signs are now public and spectacular. His teaching is straight to the point of God's will and man's salvation. He exposes the sins and false motives of people, even as He invites them to come to Him for salvation.

<sup>22</sup>The next day, when the people standing on the other side, who knew that they were gone, observed that only one boat had been there, and Jesus had not entered it, to share the trip with His disciples – <sup>23</sup>but there came boats from Tiberius unto that same place where, when Jesus thanks had given, they ate the bread – <sup>24</sup>the people did not hesitate to sail off to Capernaum, and went in vessels, seeking Him. <sup>25</sup>They found Him then, and asked Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?” <sup>26</sup>But Jesus answered them and said, “Now hear Me, for I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, although these ought to have been the reason. No, you ate the bread I freely gave you, and were filled. <sup>27</sup>Instead of seeking food that perishes, you should work for the food that lasts, that is, the good food, which the Son of Man will give to you, which gives eternal life. The Father, Who has set His seal on Him will make it so.” <sup>28</sup>They said, “What shall we do, where shall we go that we may work the works of God?” <sup>29</sup>But He replied, “God's work is to believe in Me, Whom He has sent.” <sup>30</sup>They said to Him therefore, “What sign or wonder will You then perform, that we may see it, and believe in You?” <sup>31</sup>Our ancient fathers, as they traveled through the desert, ate the manna, sent from heaven.” <sup>32</sup>But Jesus said to them, “This bread is given not by the hand of Moses; the true bread My Father gives to you from heav'n instead. <sup>33</sup>The bread of God is He Who has come down from heav'n, and gives life to the world around. <sup>34</sup>They said to Him, “Lord, give us this good bread always!” <sup>35</sup>And Jesus said to them instead, “I am the Bread of Life. Whoever to Me comes shall hunger never more. He who believes in Me shall never thirst. <sup>36</sup>I said

to you that you have seen Me clearly, yet you still do not believe. <sup>37</sup>All whom the Father gives will come to Me, and he who comes to Me, I will not turn away. <sup>38</sup>From heav'n have I come down to you today, and not to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent me. <sup>39</sup>And My Father's will is this: of all those He has given Me, I should lose nothing, but they all will be raised up on the last day. <sup>40</sup>The will of Him Who sent Me is that every one of them Who sees the Son, and who believes in Him, may have eternal life, and all of them will I raise up on the last day."

- John 6.22-40

#### Reflect

1. Jesus carefully blends the works He did with the message He proclaimed. We see that very clearly in this passage. How should this counsel a local church in thinking about its ministry? Complete this prayer: *Lord, let the things that I do and the things that I talk about...*
2. Salvation and works are not separate from one another. We simply need to keep them in perspective, remembering all the while, that it is God Who is at work within us, to will and do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2.13). Summarize what Jesus taught in this passage about the works we must do with respect to the bread that endures to everlasting life. *Lord, let my works and my words always...*
3. We can't fool Jesus about our motives for following Him. As those who look to Jesus, we will either seek the will of the Father in all things, or our own will. How can we tell which we're committed to at any time? *Lord, grant me faith to trust in you and wisdom to...*
4. Eating, being hungry, and being thirsty: Jesus associates these with human desires and God's will, putting Himself right in the middle. What kind of hunger and thirst does Jesus satisfy? How should we expect to *feed* on this Bread of Life? *Let me find Your Word a source of great satisfaction and nourishment, Lord, so that...*
5. It's likely that the people who heard Jesus talking about being raised on the last day had no idea what He meant by this. He would demonstrate this, however, in due course. But Jesus was already focusing on that glorious event, and it's a good thing He was. Why? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

#### Summary

"The Father then brings to the Son, by knowledge and God-befitting contemplation, those to whom he decreed the divine grace. The Son receives and revives them, and engrafting his own good into those who are of their own nature apt to decay and shedding on them as a spark of fire the life-giving power of the Spirit, re-forms them throughout unto immortality. But when you hear that the Father brings them and that the Son gives the power of renewed living to those that run to him, do

not go off into absurd fancies, as though each were supposed to do individually and severally what belongs appropriately by nature to each. The Father is co-worker with the Son, and likewise the Son with the Father, and our salvation and recuperation from death to life is the work, so to say, of the whole Holy Trinity.” *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

How many ways can you identify in your own life that the Father has given you to Jesus, and He holds on to you, so that He does not lose you, and is even now giving you the blessings of everlasting life? Give thanks and praise to God for them all!

*Closing Prayer*

Praise the LORD!  
Sing to the LORD a new song,  
*And* His praise in the assembly of saints.  
Let Israel rejoice in their Maker;  
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.  
Let them praise His name with the dance;  
Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.  
For the LORD takes pleasure in His people;  
He will beautify the humble with salvation.  
Let the saints be joyful in glory;  
Let them sing aloud on their beds.  
Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,  
And a two-edged sword in their hand...

Psalm 149.1-6

**Psalm 149** (*Toulon: I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*)

Sing to the Lord a glorious song and new!  
Praise Him you people, to Whom praise is due!  
Let us rejoice, let us be glad in Him  
Who has created us and cleansed our sin.

Praise Him with dance, with tambourine and lyre!  
To be so praised is God's one great desire.  
Lord, beautify Your holy ones with grace;  
Show us the mercy of Your saving face.

Sing to the Lord, exult with great delight!  
Sing on your beds with joy to God by night!  
Sing praise and take His Word into your hand;  
Publish His grace and wrath in every land!

*The Gospel of John: John 6.22-40*

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. How would you suggest a believer should prepare every day to do the good works and speak the good words of our Lord?
2. What might be some cues suggesting that you were becoming more self-focused than Jesus-focused in your walk with Him?
3. How would you describe the sovereignty of God in your salvation?
4. Explain what it means to *see*, *believe*, and *come* to Jesus.
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from John 6.22.40? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*Items for prayer:*

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org) to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

Thank you.