

# Open it

1. What is your favorite way to eat bread?

## **Daily Devotions**

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read John 6:22-71.

- 2. Why were the crowds looking for Jesus?
- 3. What comparison does Jesus make between Himself and the Old Testament?
- 4. What "promises" does Jesus make?
- 5. What is Jesus talking about in verse 51?
- 6. Why did the people find Jesus' teaching hard to accept?
- 7. Why did the 12 disciples not leave Jesus?

## Day 2 — Today's Theme: Full-Filled

to spiritual needs and spiritual provisions?

#### Read John 5:22-36.

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays for a couple reasons. First, because it always falls near my birthday. Second, because it's a holiday where we eat great food (and a **LOT** of it!). Every year I get excited as November approaches and my anticipation builds for Thanksgiving to come. But, you know what I love the MOST about Thanksgiving? While it marks the end of Fall, it also marks the beginning of the Christmas season, which is "the most wonderful time of the year." Just like Thanksgiving is great in and of itself, but also signifies the beginning of something else, Jesus is claiming to be THE something greater that was coming after. Check it out.

Jesus makes a connection between Himself and the "sign" that their fathers had during the Exodus many, many years ago. As the nation of Israel wandered in the wilderness after leaving Egypt, God provided manna for them to eat on their journey. Imagine how impossible it would have been for such a large group of people to find enough food for everyone to eat while they traveled in the wilderness—no fields to grow crops, no vineyards to grow fruit. Just them and the wilderness. God's provision of the manna effectively saved Israel from starving!

Well, Jesus says that **unlike** the manna God provided to the Israelites or the bread that Jesus fed the 5,000, Jesus claims to be **the true bread** from heaven. The Israelites at their fill of manna each day, but soon had to gather more. The crowd got hungry again shortly after Jesus gave them bread and fish. Jesus says that unlike how ordinary bread temporarily fills us, those who will come to Him won't hunger or thirst again.

In other words, Jesus is claiming that the manna and the bread pointed to Him! He is the fulfillment of those things. It's only in Jesus that when we look to Him to satisfy the hunger not of our stomachs, but the hunger of our souls, we will truly and totally be satisfied. We'll never have to look for "bread" again!

8. Why do you think God (Jesus included, since He is God) uses physical examples (bread and manna) to point

9.	The crowds had just been fed by Jesus in the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 and yet they ask Him for another sign to confirm that God sent Him. Jesus basically tells them they have been given the sign already. What "signs" do we have that tell us that Jesus is sent from heaven by God?

10. What do you think Jesus means when He says, "whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst"?

## Day 3 — Today's Theme: Sure and Secure

#### Read John 6:37-51.

Growing up I remember "giving my life to the Lord" multiple times. Most of those times came after a season where I had really not been walking closely with the Lord and I felt convicted by that. But all of that led to a rather weak confidence in my faith. I viewed the security of my salvation so much through the lens of my own actions and worthiness. It's no wonder that I frequently felt unworthy and would assume I wasn't saved and needed to be saved again!

But Jesus shares a message here that's very different from the one I believed in as a kid. The message that Jesus shares is one that offers a great amount of assurance and security for those who believe. What is His message?

First, Jesus says that whoever comes to Him is welcome. He won't turn anyone away who truly seeks Him. He might call you out if you're seeking Him for the wrong reasons like He did with the crowds He's talking to, but if you're truly seeking Jesus, He'll never turn you away.

Second, He'll keep you secure until the end. Jesus says that anyone the Father gives Him He will keep to the end and raise them up on the last day. In other words, if you belong to Jesus, He's going to keep you secure and look after you. Kind of like with my son: he runs all over the place, but as his dad, I look after him and keep him safe.

Third, Jesus says that the only ones who actually come to Him are those that the Father has drawn to Jesus. That might be a tough pill to swallow, especially when we place such an emphasis on our own personal decision to follow Christ. Yes, we all have made a decision to follow Jesus. But apart from God drawing you to Himself, you would never have made that decision in the first place.

Finally, Jesus says that anyone who comes to Him has eternal life and Jesus will raise Him up on the last day!

I find great assurance in these truths that Jesus taught because they aren't ultimately dependent on me, they're dependent on God! I am thankful God has drawn me to Himself and Jesus holds me secure until the end. This increases my **confidence** in my salvation and the **security** of my faith more than if it all rested on me!

11. What do you think it means that Jesus will "raise" us up on the "last day"? What is the "end" or the "last day"?

12. How do these statements that Jesus made give us greater confidence? How might they actually be scary and difficult to trust?

## Day 4 — Today's Theme: Fore-Taste

#### Read John 6:51-59.

You have to imagine the confusion the people must have had at this conversation. I mean, it started out with talking about bread that would leave you filled and satisfied, and now it seems like Jesus is saying that people are supposed to eat Him? The people must have been thinking to themselves, "My **goodness!** This conversation, this teaching, has taken a strange and unexpected turn!" Jesus says, "Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise Him up on the last day." It's these kinds of statements that are leaving the people asking questions like, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

I think the answer lies in what Jesus says in verses 51 and 58. In verse 51, Jesus tells the people that the bread that He will give for the life of the world is His flesh. Which, according to verse 58 is a different kind of bread. In other words, it seems like Jesus is saying that the bread He offers is different from the bread their fathers ate in the wilderness. This bread Jesus is referring to isn't a bread that you literally eat, but is a "bread" that will satisfy their souls.

The things that Jesus is saying is a "fore-taste," if you will, of what is to come—that His body would be offered up and broken on the cross, and that all those who will partake of His sacrifice will find eternal life.

13.	How would you explain these verses for someone who might point to them and say, "See? Jesus is crazy
	because He said you have to be cannibals to be a Christian"?

14. What do you think it really means to "eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood"? How does this bread satisfy our souls?

## Day 5 — Today's Theme: The "Bread" That's Hard to Swallow

#### Read John 6:60-71.

Christianity isn't always easy. Sometimes following Jesus calls us to really difficult things, and there are even some teachings found in the Bible that are really hard to understand. Even Peter says that some of Paul's writings are hard to understand (2 Peter 3:15–16). Well, this is one of those things!

As a matter of fact, this was one of those messages that Jesus shared that caused a lot of people to think twice about following Him. As a result, many of those people left Him (v. 66). It'd sure be nice if everything Jesus taught and did was super easy to grasp, easy to understand, and easy to follow. But that's simply not the case. The question will be, what will you do when you are confronted with something in the Bible that you don't quite understand or, maybe even, that you don't really like?

While this teaching was hard for those people, it's really important to Jesus. He didn't back down on what He said just because He saw a lot of people leaving. If He weren't 100% sure that what He said was the truth, then He might have called out and tried to water it down a little bit and make it easier to grasp. But He didn't do that.

I think that's why Peter answered Jesus after He asked His 12 disciples, "Do you want to go away as well?" and Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

Sure, sometimes Jesus' teachings may be hard to grasp and at times even seem impossible to understand, but where else will you turn? Where else will you go? Who else offers what Jesus does?

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15.	Do you find	the things Jesus talked abou	t in this passage hard to understand and follow?	

What things have you found difficult to grasp and follow in the Bible?

16. How should we wrestle with and deal with the things we don't understand or find difficult to believe?

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