

STUDY GUIDE FOR SMALL GROUPS
SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING

Week 5: Week of October 20

"Enough for Everyone"

Text: John 6:1-15

(For Facilitators mainly - optional for the group)

Background:

This week, we are departing from the book of Acts but not from the theme of Spirit-filled Living. The Gospel of John, if nothing else, is written to profess Jesus, "full of grace and truth." John's gospel is a bit different from the other three gospels. He is more reflective on the importance of events and therefore records fewer events. For example, the Sermon on the Mount is not found in John, and neither are parables. However, one will find long conversations and in-depth explanations. John steps back from the Galilean ministry of Jesus, and concentrates more on the larger ministry. So when he does go into details, the reader knows that those details are there for a reason.

Theologian Karl Barth wrote, *"At the center of everything is the God of character who is in the profoundest sense, "I am." He is the one who speaks for himself. In the sense of Christian faith, God is not to be found in the series of gods. He is not to be found in the pantheon of human piety and religious inventive skill... God is He who exists, lives, and acts and makes himself known."*

N.T. Wright said, *"Whatever else John is going to tell us, he wants us to see his book as the story of God and the world, not just the story of one character in one place and time. This book is about the Creator God acting in a new way within his much-loved creation. It is about the way in which the long story that began in Genesis has reached the climax the Creator always intended.*

Regarding John 6:

- This is the only miracle, outside of the resurrection, that is in all 4 gospels.
- John is intentional with the allusion to Moses (who goes up on the mountain to meet God) , the Exodus from Egypt (in vs. 4, John mentions that it was near Passover, the festival that celebrates God's deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt), and the years in the wilderness (where God gave the Hebrews "bread" or "manna" from heaven).
- Jesus has his own crowd to feed and disciples have no way to fee them. The situation seems hopeless.
- There is no scarcity in the presence of God - only abundance.

- Jesus warns the disciples in the same manner as Nicodemus or the Samaritan woman - their inability to see beyond the "earthly things"; i.e. earthly birth vs. new birth , earthly water vs. living water; or food vs. living bread.
- God made it possible for Jesus to give eternal life. The true bread from heaven is not "manna" but Jesus. The problem is that they ask for too little.

Discussion Questions

Opening Questions (optional – pick only the ones you want to choose).

1. What your favorite food at a picnic?
2. Describe your most satisfying meal you've had. What made it memorable?
3. *From the children's time:* What do you love about your church? Why?

Read John 6:1-15.

1. How would you describe the multitude that is following Jesus?
2. What would Jesus' popularity look like today in America?
3. What is the test for Philip? What did Jesus hope for Philip? What was Philip's anxiety and how did Jesus meet him there? In what way has God helped your own anxiety?
4. Do you feel to know that God tests people to help them understand him? Why do you feel God has to test us? Has God ever tested you? If so, briefly share the test and how you did.
5. Describe this miraculous feeding from the point of view of the youth who provided the 2 fish and the 5 loaves. From the disciple's point of view? From the crowd's point of view? From Jesus' point of view?
6. What is the significance of the 12 baskets being left over at the end?
7. Unpack the teaching that Jesus says later in chapter 6, "I am the bread of life" and what does that mean to you? Why would Jesus call himself that?
8. Our guest speaker, Brad Griffin, suggested that young people have a significant place in our discipleship and walk with Christ. Describe a time when someone younger made an impact on you and your faith.
9. We've heard is said that "young people (Christians) are not the future of the church, they are the church today." How do you respond to that statement? Do you feel young people should be seen as part of the church? In what ways? Discuss ways of how our following Christ would change and transform as we engage more intergenerationally.

10. What kind of bread are you working for in your life? Are you satisfied? What kind of bread do you feel young people are working for?
11. What steps can we take to eat more of Jesus' bread (conference, prayer, etc)? What kind of steps can we take to help young adults in their faith?