

Gospel of John 5:46 – 6:15

New American Standard Version

1 “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he
 2 wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings,
 3 how will you believe My words?” After these things
 4 Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or
 5 Tiberias). A large crowd followed Him, because they
 6 saw the signs which He was performing on those who
 7 were sick. Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and
 8 there He sat down with His disciples. Now the Passover,
 9 the feast of the Jews, was near. Therefore Jesus, lifting
 10 up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to
 11 Him, *said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that
 12 these may eat?” This He was saying to test him, for He
 13 Himself knew what He was intending to do. Philip
 14 answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is
 15 not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.”
 16 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother,
 17 *said to Him, “There is a lad here who has five barley
 18 loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many
 19 people?” Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now
 20 there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down,
 21 in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the
 22 loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those
 23 who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as
 24 they wanted. When they were filled, He *said to His
 25 disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments so that
 26 nothing will be lost.” So they gathered them up, and
 27 filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley
 28 loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.
 29 Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had
 30 performed, they said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to
 31 come into the world.” So Jesus, perceiving that they were
 32 intending to come and take Him by force to make Him
 33 king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Circle the individuals or groups that Jesus encounters in this passage.

Underline words that describe their relationship to Jesus. Write down a word or two for each individual or group. Do you see yourself in any of these reactions to Jesus?

How did Jesus relate to each individual or group? What similarities and differences do you see? How might this help you to understand Jesus better?

In this very familiar passage, is there anything that you had not seen before?

What is this passage about? Beyond the obvious answer of the miraculous feeding of huge crowd, what might be the reason John included this story? What does he want us to learn about Jesus and His ministry?

Questions for further thinking:

- *Think about the scene, including a little math. How much room would be needed for 5,000 (or more?) people? How long would it take to distribute the food? How long would it take to gather the leftovers? With twelve baskets of about 3/5 bushel (a large backpack?) each, how much was left over by each of the 5,000?*
- *Why does John include seemingly minor details, like the mention of Passover (l. 8) or the grass (l. 20)?*
- *From earlier passages in John, what do we know already about Andrew (John 1:40) and Philip (John 1:43-45)? Do the descriptions of them in this passage add to what you learn from John 1? If you were doing a character study on these two disciples what ideas would you have about them at this point?*
- *“The Prophet” (not just a prophet) would probably imply Moses (cf. Deuteronomy 18:15-18). Are there any similarities in this passage with the Old Testament stories that would have suggested that similarity of Jesus and Moses?*
- *At the end of the passage, what is the difference between what the people said and what Jesus perceived? What is the difference between people saying they are looking for a prophet and people wanting a king?*

Apply yourself totally to the text.

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Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them,
and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.

J. A. Bengel (1687 – 1752)

German Theologian

“Pioneer in the critical exegesis of the New Testament”

<http://www.britannica.com/biography/J-A-Bengel>