**WITH JESUS** (Week 5, February 7, 2018)

**Getting to Know Jesus Through the Gospel of John**

**John 6:1-15**

**Background for the Passage**

Once again, John chooses a time and a place where a miracle occurred that revealed much about the truth of Jesus as Messiah, the Son of God. In this miracle, Jesus again is confirmed as Messiah, but also is revealed to be the “Bread of Life.” By using common places and objects from His surroundings as examples of deeper truth, Jesus taught that the created order itself contained insights and lessons that pointed to Him.

2. The miracle that John chose to highlight in John 6 is a turning point in the ministry of Jesus. It’s also the only miracle recorded in all 4 of the gospels. While the details are different, because the perspective and vantage point of each author was unique, the story remains a wonderful demonstration of Jesus power, compassion, and provision.

3. In the other gospels, we have much that took place in the time period that John describes as “After this,” (6:1a NLT) most significantly the execution of John the Baptist. Jesus was deeply impacted by the martyrdom of John the Baptist, as he was not only the first to proclaim Him as “The Lamb of God,” (Messiah,) but also a family member and friend. John had been arrested for calling the king to repent of his many sins, and executed to please a jealous and manipulative person after a hedonistic party got out of hand. (Mt. 14:1-12, Mark 6: 14-29, Lk. 9:7-9)

4. Jesus may have been withdrawing with His disciples to talk, grieve, and process the death of John the Baptist. His intent might have been to go off by themselves to talk, pray and think through all that had happened. Some of His disciples had first been followers of John the Baptist, so several would have been grieving the senseless death of him. But when Jesus realized that a desperate and hurting crowd had followed Him, He set aside His own needs in order to meet theirs.

5. John mentioned three Passover celebrations in this gospel. (2:13, 6:4, 12:12) Passover is significant because during the third Passover mentioned, the “Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world” would be sacrificed and His blood would cover all sin.

6. Philip was the natural person to ask about local food in the area, as he lived and worked just 9 miles away before he started following Jesus. He would have known local resources, but even if he had known of a place to get so much food, he correctly and practically stated that to pay for that much food would be nearly impossible for “normal” people like Jesus, His disciples, and the approaching crowd.

7. By asking first for a human solution, Jesus was able to highlight the Divine miracle that He was about to do. The task was impossible for any human to accomplish with human methods. The task of feeding such a large crowd, on such limited resources, with no advance time to prepare, made it absolutely impossible. But with God, all things are possible!

8. The word translated “test” in 6:6 is the Greek word [PEIRAZO] which has a neutral meaning. It referred to a proving experience, as in a “testing of Jesus’ resolve in the wilderness” or “testing someone’s endurance.” It’s the idea of a practical experience that proves and strengthens someone at the same time, without any judgment that reflected on the person.

9. As Jesus often did in the gospels, He chose to use the limited ordinary resources that were available to Him to work extraordinary miracles. Jesus also often chose to use the limited ordinary people near Him, if those people had enough faith to follow or obey Him.

10. We do not know anything about the limited and ordinary boy who offered up his limited and ordinary lunch to help. (6:7-8) Andrew may have been standing near him and able to interact with him. The boy may have overheard the conversation between Philip and Jesus, and then may have gotten the attention of Andrew to offer up all that he had to help. Andrew clearly is thinking “logically,” (in human terms,) as he passes along the offer to Jesus. As really, what good will such a small amount of food be in this situation? But again, in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit and following the will of God the Father…. A lot is a little, and all things are possible!

11. The boy offered up his lunch, which was made up of a little quantity of food that would have been the average meal for a poor person. There may have been others who had more food or higher quality provisions, but the boy was the only one mentioned who was willing to give to Jesus all that he had to help others.

12. Jesus intentionally directed the thousands of people to sit down in groups. He then paused to give thanks, then again chose to work through limited and ordinary people to distribute the food., (6:11) Then Jesus did the same with the fish. He could have performed this amazing miracle in a much more direct, powerful, awe-inspiring way, (imagine all of the possibilities!) but He chose to work through limited and ordinary resources/people to do an extraordinary miracle.

13. Leftovers! Not only was there more than enough and not only did everyone get to eat as much as they wanted, but there were 12 baskets of leftovers! Jesus is revealed again to be the all-sufficient Lord who provides for our needs and beyond.

**Review Questions:**

14. (6:1) What does the first few words of the verse indicate? (”After this” = after what?) Where was Jesus? Why does the geography matter? Why are both names of the body of water given?

15. (6:2-4) Why were crowds following Jesus? What were they wanting? Where did Jesus go with His disciples, perhaps to get some quiet time? What’s the significance of it being nearly time for the Passover celebration? So what?

16. (6:5-6) What did Jesus see? Why was a crowd appearing at that time and place a difficult reality? What strange question did Jesus ask? To whom did Jesus ask the question? Why did He ask the question of that specific disciple?

17. (6:7) What was Philip’s response? What did Phil actually say, and what did he mean? Why is this answer both convicting and amusing?

18. (6:8-9) Who spoke up? How is this disciple identified, and what does that indicate? What did he say? What was being offered? What was his conclusion about what was being offered?

19. (6:10-11) How did Jesus respond to the offer made by the boy through Andrew? Why did He direct everyone to sit down and to sit in groups? How many people were there? What did Jesus do FIRST after all were seated? Then what did Jesus do next? How much did people eat?

20. (6:12-13) “After everyone…..,” What’s amazing about this phrase in 6:12? Then what happened? What direction did Jesus give? Why? How much was leftover? What’s significant about the 12 baskets of leftovers?

21. (6:14-15) How did the people respond? What did they want to do? Why is this reaction both understandable and crazy? How did Jesus respond? What did He do?

**So What?**

22. How did Jesus respond to His plans for a bit of quiet time being sidetracked by the needs of the people? (6:1-5) What was His priority? How do we react when our plans and needs are sidetracked by something that God wants us to do or by someone that God wants us to love? How do we respond?

23. Jesus used the limited and ordinary things/people to do extraordinary miracles. Why did He do this?

How do you feel limited? How do you feel ordinary? So what?

What can Jesus do through you?

24. Jesus provides for the physical needs of the people as well as their spiritual needs. How is this a good model for us? How do we tend to go to extremes on this topic?