

**John 6:9** *There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?* <sup>1</sup>

### Feeding the Five Thousand

Andrew's words contain one interesting detail that none of the other Gospel writers provide. Andrew said the boy had barley loaves. The boy was carrying the lowest quality of bread available to people at the time. <sup>2</sup>

**John 6:11** *Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted.*

John unambiguously proclaims that the feeding of the five thousand men with five loaves and two fish was a miracle. <sup>2</sup>

It is significant that twice John mentioned the fact that Jesus gave thanks (6:11, 23). Matthew, Mark, and Luke all state that Jesus looked up to heaven when He gave thanks. We should give thanks to God for what we do have. <sup>3</sup>

**John 6:14** *Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."*

At this time in Jewish history, when the people of Israel were under Roman occupation, the Passover was not just an exciting and important religious festival, it was the supreme celebration of national pride. <sup>2</sup>

Jesus' feeding of the five thousand in the wilderness of Galilee took place during the time of Passover. Under Moses leadership, the Israelites received manna miraculously in the wilderness. Moses also led the people out from under the rule of Egypt. This explains the willingness of the crowd to try to force Jesus into being their king. <sup>4</sup>

But Jesus knew "that the kind of king they were looking for had nothing to do with the kind of kingdom He had come to inaugurate. They were looking for the kingdom of man; He came to bring the kingdom of God." <sup>2</sup>

### Bread from Heaven

**John 6:19** *Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.*

- They saw Jesus approaching them without the benefit of a boat. <sup>2</sup>

**Mark 6:48-50** *Seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them. But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out; for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid."*

### John 6

**Matthew 14:28-29** *Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.*

Jesus did things that only God can do and made claims that only God can make. Our Lord told them not to fear. "It is I," Jesus said, which translates the phrase *egō eimi*, the Greek version of God's covenantal name *I am*. <sup>4</sup>

**John 6:27-29** *"Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal." Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."*

Physical food satisfies us only temporarily. To make obtaining it our chief end, then, is a waste of time and effort. Telling the people not to labor for the food that perishes, Jesus meant we must instead labor for the food that leads to eternal life. When asked what the God-ordained labor is that leads to eternal life, Jesus said the labor is believing in Christ as Savior. <sup>4</sup>

### Bread of Life

**John 6:35** *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."*

While in seminary R. C. kept a card on his desk that said, <sup>2</sup>

"You are responsible to believe and to teach what the Bible teaches, not what you would like for it to teach."

**John 6:37** *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."*

- "That's the rock of offense, the stone over which we trip for that verse suggests that God never intended to save everyone." <sup>2</sup>

**John 6:39-40** *"This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."*

These (John 6:37-40) are among the most profound words He ever spoke. He explained that salvation involves both divine sovereignty and human responsibility. When a church member asked Charles Spurgeon how he reconciled the two, he replied, "I never try to reconcile friends." <sup>3</sup>

"It is God's will that those whom He has given to the Son – whom the Bible over and over again describes as the elect, or those who are called and chosen by God – should not be lost but have everlasting life." <sup>2</sup>

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**John 6:44-46** *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD’. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.”*

In this astonishing universal negative proposition, Jesus said, “No one has the power or the ability to come to Me unless the Father draws Him.” <sup>2</sup>

1670. ἑλκῶω **hēlkuō**, *hel-koo’-o*; or

ἑλκῶ **hēlkō**, *hel’-ko*; to drag (lit. or fig.) : – draw <sup>5</sup>

The Greek word translated here as “drawn” actually means “to compel”. <sup>2</sup>

**John 6:65** *And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”*

- “Calvin was quick to emphasize the work of the Trinity in salvation. God the Father decrees salvation (election), Christ the Son provides salvation (redemption and atonement), and the Holy Spirit applies salvation (regeneration and faith).” <sup>6</sup>

God chooses His elect for salvation, but He does not do so in a way that takes away our responsibility to believe. If you have not yet believed in Jesus, believe in Him alone this day for salvation. <sup>4</sup>

Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam had written his *Diatribē* against Luther and Luther’s doctrine of predestination because Erasmus held on to the idea that there remains in the soul of fallen man a little island of righteousness by which we can choose to come to God or to reject Him. Luther, picking up on Jesus’ words in John 6:63, “the flesh profits nothing,” said to Erasmus, “That ‘nothing’ is not a little something.” <sup>2</sup>

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Q. 67 *What is effectual calling?* <sup>7</sup>

A. Effectual calling is the work of God’s almighty power and grace, <sup>u</sup> whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto <sup>w</sup>) he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his Word and Spirit; <sup>x</sup> savingly enlightening their minds; <sup>y</sup> renewing and powerfully determining their wills, <sup>z</sup> so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein. <sup>a</sup>

u. Ezek. 37:9, 14; John 5:25; Eph. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 1:8-9; w. Titus 3:4-5; Eph. 2:4-5, 7-9; Rom. 9:11; Deut. 9:5; x. John 3:5; Titus 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:20; 2 Cor. 6:1-2; John 6:44-45; Acts 16:14; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; y. Acts 26:18; 1 Cor. 2: 10, 12; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 1:17-18; z. Ezek. 11:19; Ezek. 36:26-27; John 6:45; a. Eph. 2:5; Phil. 2:13; Deut. 30:6; Isa. 45:22; Matt. 11:28-30; Rev. 22:17

**John 6**

## Hard Sayings

**John 6:53-54** *So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day.”*

“Believe, and you have eaten.” – Augustine of Hippo <sup>4</sup>

Jesus is speaking here not about the Lord’s Supper but about the same subject He addressed in His conversation with the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-26), when He talked about the living water He will give. Jesus was making the point that He is the giver of supernatural life, the living Redeemer who had been sent by the living God to impart eternal life to all who put their trust in Him. He was asking for a deep commitment. Our Lord said, “You have to take all of Me, as if you were ingesting Me.” <sup>2</sup>

**John 6:60** *Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, “This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?”*

**John 6:63** *“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”*

- The discourse of Jesus in John 6 provoked many of Jesus’ hearers to leave his company. So by the end of John 6, the ranks who received the teaching of Christ had dwindled to eleven. <sup>2</sup>

**John 6:67-69** *So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”*

Peter didn’t deny that Jesus’ sayings were hard, but he also acknowledged that Jesus’ words were words of life. <sup>2</sup> Simon Peter told Jesus they were staying. <sup>4</sup>

- “If I want the words of eternal life, there’s only one place I can go to get them – to the One who gave His life that we might live.” <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *New American Standard Bible*, Charles Caldwell Ryrie *study Bible*, 1995

<sup>2</sup> *John (St. Andrew’s Expository Commentary)*, R. C. Sproul, 2009, pp. 99-126

<sup>3</sup> *Be Alive*, Warren W. Wiersbe, 1986, pp. 93-105

<sup>4</sup> *Tabletalk* magazine, Robert Rothwell, April 2018, pp. 39-51

<sup>5</sup> *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*

<sup>6</sup> *Pages from Church History*, Stephen J. Nichols, 2006, pp. 183-186

<sup>7</sup> *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, 1647

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