

Grow Group Resources

Sermon Summary:

In this sermon, Pastor Ryan continues the church's series through the Gospel of John, focusing on **Chapter 6**, where Jesus performs the miracle of feeding the 5,000 and later declares, "I am the bread of life." Ryan emphasizes that these two moments—the miracle and Jesus' teaching—form one unified message about who Jesus is and what He offers: **Better Bread**.

To begin, Ryan reads John 6:1–13, recounting how Jesus multiplies five barley loaves and two fish to feed a massive crowd. He reminds the congregation that Jesus was speaking to a primarily Jewish audience who would have connected this miracle to the Old Testament story of the Exodus—when God provided manna, "bread from heaven," to sustain Israel in the wilderness. Jesus, by performing this miracle during the Passover season, was not just providing food but pointing His listeners back to that history and forward to a greater spiritual truth.

To make the lesson tangible, Ryan brings two loaves of bread as a visual illustration: a loaf of soft, mass-produced Wonder Bread and a dense, handmade sourdough loaf. Both are technically "bread," he notes, but one is artificial, processed, and nutritionally empty, while the other is natural, nourishing, and made with care. This, Ryan explains, reflects the difference between the temporary satisfactions we chase in life and the lasting fulfillment Jesus offers. The sermon's central theme is that *Jesus Himself is the "better bread"*—the true nourishment for the soul.

Ryan then compares the manna in the wilderness, the multiplied loaves, and the person of Jesus. The manna came through Moses; the true bread comes from the Father. Manna satisfied hunger for a day; Jesus satisfies eternally. Manna met physical needs; Jesus meets spiritual ones. The miracle of feeding the 5,000 pointed to Jesus' divine identity—the Holy One of God—and foreshadowed His ultimate act of giving His body for the world.

The sermon then shifts to how people respond to Jesus. In verses 14–15, the crowd wants to make Jesus their political king after the miracle, seeking Him for personal or national benefit rather than for who He truly is. Ryan notes that even today, people often come to Jesus for secondary reasons—comfort, success, influence, or relationships—without realizing that Jesus offers something far greater than worldly advantages. He challenges listeners to consider whether they follow Jesus for what He can *do for them* or because of *who He is*.

Later in John 6, Jesus confronts the crowd's motivations: "You are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill." They were coming to Him for temporary satisfaction—food for their stomachs—rather than the eternal sustenance of their souls. Ryan connects this to modern life, pointing out how people still chase perishable "bread": success, comfort, entertainment, or pleasure. These are fleeting crumbs compared to the eternal nourishment Jesus offers. "Do not work for the food that perishes," Jesus says, "but for the food that endures to eternal life."

As the chapter continues, Jesus begins to reveal the deeper meaning of the miracle. The true “bread of God,” He says, is not something but *someone*—“he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” When the people ask for this bread, Jesus declares plainly, “*I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.*”

Ryan explains that Jesus doesn’t merely *bring* bread—He *is* the bread. He is the only one who can satisfy the deepest hunger of the human heart. Quoting author Yi Ning Chu, Ryan says Jesus, the “living Word,” interrupts humanity’s endless search for satisfaction and introduces Himself as the true bread of life. Even His birth, in a manger used to feed animals, symbolizes that He came to be the nourishment the world needs.

The pastor then addresses the question: how do we “eat” this bread? Jesus speaks of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, which confuses many of His listeners. Ryan clarifies that this is not literal but spiritual. We “eat” by believing—by fully trusting in Jesus and what He has done. Feeding is believing. Those who believe in Him will live forever, for He is the living bread who gives His flesh for the life of the world.

Many in the crowd find this teaching too hard and turn away. Jesus asks His disciples if they, too, will leave. Peter answers with words that capture the heart of true faith: “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*” They have already tasted the true bread and know that nothing else compares.

Ryan concludes by urging the congregation to make the same choice—to reject the “Wonder Bread” of temporary pleasures and to embrace Jesus, the true and living bread who alone satisfies the soul and offers eternal life. As the church moves into communion, Ryan reminds them that Jesus not only gives His body for the world but invites us to partake of it—to believe, abide, and find life in Him.

Discussion Question:

1. As you begin your small group time, have someone open with a word of **prayer**.
2. (Optional **Ice Breaker**) What is your favourite type of bread? How do you like to eat it?
3. We will read through most of John 6 in **three sections**:

1. Have someone read verses 1-15 out loud

- What stood out to you? What themes emerge? What questions arise?
- The story is full of details (ex. 12 baskets leftover, the mountain location, barley loaves, etc.). What is revealed by these details?

2. Have a few people read verses 22-59 out loud, one paragraph at a time. Pause as desired for discussion. (Pay special attention to the concepts that Jesus builds upon as He reveals more about Himself)

- What stood out to you? What themes emerge? What questions arise?
- Jesus is using the feeding of the 5000 and the Exodus story as the background for His teaching.
 - In what ways is Jesus better than manna and other sources we try to feed our spiritual hunger?
 - What is the result of believing and being nourished by Jesus?
- There are various motivations why people follow Jesus in this story and in the world today.
 - What motivates some of the crowd to follow Jesus (what are they looking for?).

3. Have someone read verses 60-71 out loud

- What stood out to you? What themes emerge? What questions arise?
 - There are two main responses to Jesus' teaching in the previous section: turning away or trusting. What do you think motivated the two responses?
 - If you have trusted Jesus, why and how did you make that decision? If you don't believe in Jesus, would you be willing to share your obstacles to faith?
4. As you finish the discussion, take time to identify **prayer** needs and in turn pray for each other.