

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | Jan 23-27

DAY ONE | Understand Their Story

This story is long, so we'll break it into two parts! Today, read John 6:1-40 and answer the following questions.

The setting:

- What place names are mentioned in this text?
- What else do we learn about the setting in verses 22-24? (eg. Who is speaking with Jesus? How did they find him?)

The conflict (or rising action):

- What question does the crowd ask Jesus to set the story in motion?
- Does Jesus answer this initial question? Why do you think he responds the way he does?
- List each question asked by the crowd, and how Jesus responds to each.
- What is the work of God, according to this text?
- What is the will of God, according to this text?

If you are a believer, pray today in adoration that God has “worked” in you so that you believe (v 29), and “wills” that all who behold Jesus and believe will have eternal life (v 40)! If you are not yet following Jesus, pray for him to work in you, to help you to believe!

DAY TWO | Understand Their Story

Read John 6:41-59 and answer the following questions.

The rising action and climax:

- As the story builds in verses 41-51, John shifts our attention to a specific group within the crowd. How does John describe this group? (eg. What does he call them? What is their attitude? What questions do they have?)
- What indicates that the mood is intensifying as you continue to read to verse 59?
- This story reaches a climax this week and is resolved next week. Jesus' words in 53-58, and John's surprise description of the setting in verse 59 leave us on a cliffhanger. What is the big idea that Jesus wants them to 'digest' :-), and respond to?

Pray today in supplication. Ask God to open the eyes of people you know who may be grumbling about Jesus, or arguing with people about his identity.

DAY THREE | Connect to His Story

The Jews in Jesus' day look back fondly on the way that Moses provided manna for them, but grumble against Jesus. The question we need to think about is, did they actually respond differently to Moses? Are they re-imagining their own history? Read the following texts to find out how Scripture records their responses to God's first provision of bread from heaven:

- Numbers 11:1-10. How do they respond to God's gift of bread in this text? How did God react?
- Psalm 78:17-32. How do they respond to God's gift of bread in this text? How did God react?
- Hosea 11:1-9. What do you learn about God's heart for his people, despite the fact that they didn't appreciate how he 'bent down to feed them' (v 4)?

Pray today in adoration. Thank God for his steadfast love for his people in the past, and his people today! Praise him for his faithfulness to us, despite our faithlessness. Thank him for all the ways he has cared for you.

DAY FOUR | Connect to His Story

As you read this story, you may hear echoes of a previous story in John's Gospel.

- Read John 6:22-40 again, and then read John 4:1-34 and try to identify the common themes.
 - How does Jesus describe what he is offering to people? (see 4:7-14 and 6:25-26)
 - How do the people respond to this offer? (see 4:15 and 6:34)
 - What does Jesus say about himself, and what response does he call for? (see 4:16-26 and 6:35-40)
 - How does John 4:34 look forward to John 6:27?

Pray today in supplication, asking God to refresh you with his living water, and feed you with the bread of life. Praise him that he can sustain and strengthen believers in this life and welcome us into the life to come!

DAY FIVE | Apply to your Story

Read John 6:21-59 in its entirety one more time.

- Are you working for the food which perishes, or for the food which endures to eternal life?
- Are you praying for God to work in people's hearts, so that they may believe in Jesus (6:29)?

“Truly, truly” [Jesus says], “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.” Praise Jesus for offering his body and his blood for us, so that we can have life now, and eternally!
