

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | Jan 16-20

### DAY ONE | Understand Their Story

Read John 6:1-13.

After his dialogue with the religious leaders where they rejected his claims to be divine, Jesus then leaves to another region, where he will perform one of his more well known miracles.

- Summarize the main events of the passage.
  - How do the various events come to pass? What (or who) initiates them?
- List the locations where the events of the passage take place.
- Note the interaction between Jesus and his disciples.
  - How would you characterize Jesus' attitude towards the situation at hand? Is that similar to or different from the disciples' attitude?

*Pray today in adoration. Praise Jesus, for he is the one who is never flustered or overwhelmed by the situation before him, and who is always working out his good plans.*

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### DAY TWO | Understand Their Story

Read John 6:14-21.

Jesus' miraculous feeding of five thousand people (naturally) creates quite a stir among the crowds who were fed.

- Read carefully the way the people respond to Jesus.
  - What do they call him?
  - What does he sense they want to do?
  - *Reflect on the impulse which would lead them to want him to be their king. Does John want us to see it as a good instinct? Bad? Somewhere in between? How do you know?*
- What does Jesus do in response to what he senses the people are about to do?
- As the disciples head across the waters to leave behind the increased pressure of the crowds, note what we are told about what happens to them.
  - How do they respond to Jesus walking out to their boat amidst the storm?
  - What does he do that calms them?

*Pray today in reflection and confession. How often do you, like the crowds, seek to impose upon Jesus your own plans and expectations? How often, like the disciples, have you not trusted him, though he has proved himself before? Confess these things to God, and ask that he would help you to grow in submission and trust to him.*

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## DAY THREE | Connect to His Story

John intends the miracle of feeding many people, and the people's response to it, to point his readers back to a significant prophecy in Israel's history.

- Read Deuteronomy 18:15-19.
  - What do these verses predict?
  - How is this future prophetic figure described? What makes them like Moses?
- Read Exodus 16:1-12.
  - What was the problem facing Israel?
  - What did God do to solve the problem?
  - What role did Moses play in the solution God brings?
- How does Jesus' miracle in John 6 mirror what God did through Moses? How does it surpass what Moses did for the Israelites?

*Pray today in adoration and supplication. Praise Jesus for being the long awaited Prophet, through whom we see God working out the plans he spoke of long ago! Pray that the Spirit would produce in your heart trust in God's working, though it may not come as you expect it to.*

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## DAY FOUR | Connect to His Story

There is imagery at play in the second miracle—the walking on water—that links Jesus with descriptions used of God in the Old Testament.

- Read Job 9:4-10.
  - What images does Job use to describe the greatness of God?
  - Why does Job elevate “trampling the waves of the sea” alongside remarkable things like “stretching out the heavens”? What does it tell us about the significance of Jesus being one who walks on the waters in John 6?
- Read Psalm 107:23-30.
  - What situation does this Psalm describe?
  - What is the response of those whose ships are caught in the storm and waves?
  - What does God do to resolve their predicament in vv. 28-30?

*Pray today in confession and thanksgiving. Confess the ways in which you have viewed or treated Jesus as less than divine. Give thanks to God, who has shown himself so clearly in the person of Jesus as John continues to tell his story through his gospel account.*

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## DAY FIVE | Apply to your Story

John 6:1-21 tells a pair of dramatic and remarkable stories, both of which result in the misunderstanding of those who witness these dramatic events.

- Consider the response of the crowds to Jesus' miraculous provision of bread.
  - What kinds of assumptions did they make about why Jesus did this thing?
  - Are there similar assumptions that we make about what Jesus is here to do for us? What kinds of things do we tend to impose on Jesus?
- Reflect on the disciples' response to Jesus walking out to them over the waves.
  - What was their response to seeing this thing?
  - Why might they have not recognized Jesus? What was going on around them that may have prevented them from recognizing this as a display of his divine power?
  - What are the fears in your life that cloud your vision of God?

*Pray today in confession and supplication. Ask God to help you submit your expectations to what he intends to do. Ask that God will give you a clear vision him, even when the fears of life swirl around and cloud your vision of who God is and what he has done.*

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