

About this Reading Plan

The Seven I Am Statements of Jesus

This reading plan walks you through the seven “I AM” statements that Jesus made in the book of John.

Each day’s reading includes:

- The “I AM” statement from Jesus and other related scripture references throughout the bible.
- A commentary, devotional, or reflection thought to process the message more intentionally.
- Space for you to write thoughts or questions from that day’s corresponding scripture or reflection.

Additional Study Resources

The study material in this guide was adapted from *Jesus in the Present Tense: The I AM statements of Jesus* by Warren Wiersbe, *“Finding I Am”* by Lysa TerKeurst, *Behold and Believe* by Courtney Doctor & JoAnna Kimbrel, *John: Verse by Verse* by Grant Osborne, *Jesus and the Gospels* by Craig Blomberg, and *Enduring Word Commentary* by David Guzik.

Check out graceclarkville.com/graceintheword for additional resources.

What is your hope for this study in God’s Word?



SCAN TO FOLLOW
ALONG ON OUR APP!

I Am the Bread of Life

John 6:22-59



I Am the Light of the World

John 8:12-30



I Am the Good Shepherd

John 10:11-18

I am the Gate

John 10:1-10

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

John 11:17-44

I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

John 14:1-14

I am the True Vine

John 15:1-11



The Importance of the I Am Statements in Scripture

Many believers see the “I AM” statements as important revelations about Jesus. However, people in His time may not have recognized Him as the Messiah. Today, we understand these statements better, seeing their connection to the Old Testament. These statements reveal who Jesus is and reflect how God showed Himself to Israel. Jesus uses “I AM” in reference to Exodus 3:14, where God tells Moses to say, “I AM sent you.” In John 8:58, Jesus states, “Before Abraham was born, I am.” This claim upset Jewish leaders, leading to accusations of blasphemy and His crucifixion. As we study these statements as a church over the next 7 weeks leading up to Easter, we should consider what Jesus reveals about Himself and how these statements can impact our lives today.

No leader, no author, no organization, and no set of religious disciplines can do for us what Jesus alone can do, if we let Him. Jesus doesn't say, "I was." He is alive and says, "I AM." He can meet our needs today. He is alive this very moment and offers us a satisfying spiritual life in the present tense. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever". Past history, present reality, and future certainty all unite today in Jesus Christ, the great I AM. The I AM statements recorded in Scripture reveal the depths of the Christian life and how God's children can go deeper by living with Jesus in the present tense. The better we understand our Lord's I AM statements and by faith apply them, the more our strength will equal our days and we will "run and not grow weary [and] ... walk and not be faint". We will abide in Christ and bear fruit for His glory today—now. The seven I AM statements all relate to John's theme of spiritual life in Christ. Jesus called Himself "the bread of life" and "the light of life". Through the Word we can "feed" on Him and follow Him and experience this promised life. He is the door (gate) of the sheep that enables us to "go in and out" and enjoy freedom and abundant life. He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life so that we might have eternal life. "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus told Martha, and to the disciples He said, "I am the way and the truth and the life". Jesus is "the true vine," and we are the branches. Because of the life He imparts to us as we abide in Him, we are able to bear fruit that glorifies Him. In His I AM statements, Jesus not only tells us who He is, but He also tells us what He can do for us and what we can become through Him. Can our lives be fruitful for His glory? Yes, if we abide in Him and draw upon His life. In Jesus Christ, the great I AM, we have all that we need!

Warren W. Wiersbe, *Jesus in the Present Tense: The I AM Statements of Christ*

What is Lent?

Traditionally, believers use the season of Lent, which is the 40 days leading up to Resurrection Sunday, as a time to remember the life, death and resurrection of our Savior. This is often done through a variety of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, reflecting on Scripture and fasting. Many Christians also use this time for introspection, repentance, and personal growth. The Lenten season serves as a time for believers to renew their faith and draw closer to the core tenets of Christianity. It has become common for believers to think of Lent as a time to give something up in order to focus on our need for Jesus. This is a small act of self-denial and sacrifice that we can make in our lives as we reflect on the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for us. If you choose to make that a part of your Lent season, think about choosing something in your life that would truly feel like a sacrifice and something that takes your focus away from the Lord or time with the Lord. Fasting, or abstaining, for certain activities and items in our days can point us in this season to focus more deeply on the life and sacrifice of Jesus. Throughout church history and across various Christian traditions, the Lent season is a time for sober reflection on our shortcomings, our need for salvation, but also a time to consider how merciful, loving, and forgiving our God is. It is a time to reflect on God's beautiful redemption story that culminates in the resurrection of His Son Jesus.

We are called to a life of self-control, that is why the practice of fasting is so important. Fasting historically is choosing to abstain from something good so you can enjoy something even better. It is mentioned all throughout scripture as a practice that people use to draw closer to the Lord.

So what might that look like for you to practice self-control in a specific area for the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?

Be prayerful and ask God to show you what is a stronghold for you. Maybe you fast a certain meal each day, maybe a specific food or drink, social media, the news, TV, a certain type of music, book, or movie, or maybe it's unnecessary spending. Ask Him to guide you in this area. Choosing to observe Lent is counter-cultural. It goes against every voice out there telling us what we need, what we should watch, wear, eat, drink, and buy, but instead points us to the voice of the Lord telling us what we really need deep in our souls. It requires us to go against the flow.

G.K. Chesterton says,

"a dead thing can go with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it."

We pray that as you spend the next 7 weeks in God's Word, you will begin to see the beauty of Jesus in a new way. These seven "I AM" statements are a perfect lens to center our hearts on the person and work of Jesus to help us follow him more closely with our lives. They provide an excellent roadmap for our hearts and minds as we walk through the weeks leading up to Holy Week and Resurrection Sunday.

Prayers & Reflections

Before You Read God's Word Today, Seek His Help with these 5 Prayers

1. God, give me wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.
2. God, let any knowledge I gain help me love You and others more and not puff me up.
3. God, help me see something new about You i've never seen before.
4. God, correct any lies I believe about You or anything I misunderstand.
5. God, direct my steps according to Your Word.

** Prayers from *The Bible Recap Reading Plan* by Tara-Leigh Cobble **

Tips For Approaching Scripture

- Pray before you read (use the prayers above)
- Read the words in proper context, taking into consideration when it was written, to whom it was written, and what was happening when it was written (a good study bible is helpful)
- Look for God's character and faithfulness to His people
- Look for themes that point to Jesus
- Look for anything repetitive, unusual, confusing, hopeful, comforting, challenging
- Once you are finished reading, take a few minutes to meditate on what you have read:
 - Narrow down what you've read to just one or two main thoughts.
 - What did I learn about God in these passages?
 - How can I praise God for what this says about him?
 - What did I learn about the human heart in these passages?
 - What behavior/emotions come when I forget these things about God?
 - What is God revealing to me today that I need to listen to?
 - What sins do I need to confess in light of what God revealed today?
 - What next step can I take in light of what I have read today?

Weekly Checklist

Week One

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE - John 6:22-59

- Day 1 - John 6:1-58, John 6:35, Exodus 16:1-18, John 1:14
- Day 2 - John 6:1-15, John 6:22-27, 36
- Day 3 - John 6:28-33, Exodus 16:1-18, Ephesians 4:21-24
- Day 4 - John 6:32-51, 39-40
- Day 5 - John 6:52-58, Luke 22:14-20, 2 Corinthians 3:6
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7 - Rest Day

Week Two

I AM LIGHT OF THE WORLD - John 8:12-30

- Day 1 - John 8:12-59, Psalm 27:1
- Day 2 - John 8:12-51, John 3:16-21, John 12:35-36, Colossians 1:10-14
- Day 3 - John 8:12-19, 2 Corinthians 11:14, Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 119:105, Isaiah 9:2, John 1:1-10
- Day 4 - John 8:12, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Matthew 5:14-16, 1 John 1:5-7, Ephesians 5:8-21
- Day 5 - John 8:12, Isaiah 60:19-20, Revelation 21:22-25, Revelation 22:1-5, 2 Corinthians 4:3-13
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7 - Rest Day

Week Three

I AM THE GATE - John 10:1-10

- Day 1 - John 10:1-10, John 10:7, Ezekiel 34:1-16, John 14:6
- Day 2 - John 10:1-10, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Matthew 24:43
- Day 3 - John 10:1-10, Psalm 23
- Day 4 - John 10:1-10, Matthew 7:13-14
- Day 5 - John 10:1-10, Revelation 3:20
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7 - Rest Day

Week Four

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD - John 10:11-18

- Day 1 - John 10:11-18, Hebrews 13:20-21
- Day 2 - John 10:14-16, Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34:11-16
- Day 3 - John 10:11-18, Psalm 139:1-3, Ephesians 1:17-19
- Day 4 - John 10:14-16, Matthew 18:10-14, Luke 15:1-4
- Day 5 - John 10:11-18, Isaiah 53:4-7, John 3:16-17
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7- Rest Day

Week Five

I AM RESURRECTION & THE LIFE - John 11:17-44

- Day 1 - John 11:17-44, Revelation 1:17-18, Hebrews 7:25, Romans 6:4, 1 Peter 1:3-4
- Day 2 - John 11:1-16, Colossians 3:4, Philippians 1:21
- Day 3 - John 11:30-44, Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 3:1-6, Ephesians 4:26-27
- Day 4 - John 11:17-44, 11:35, Psalm 34:18, Matthew 26:38, Matthew 5:4
- Day 5 - John 11:23-25, 38-44
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7- Rest Day

Week Six

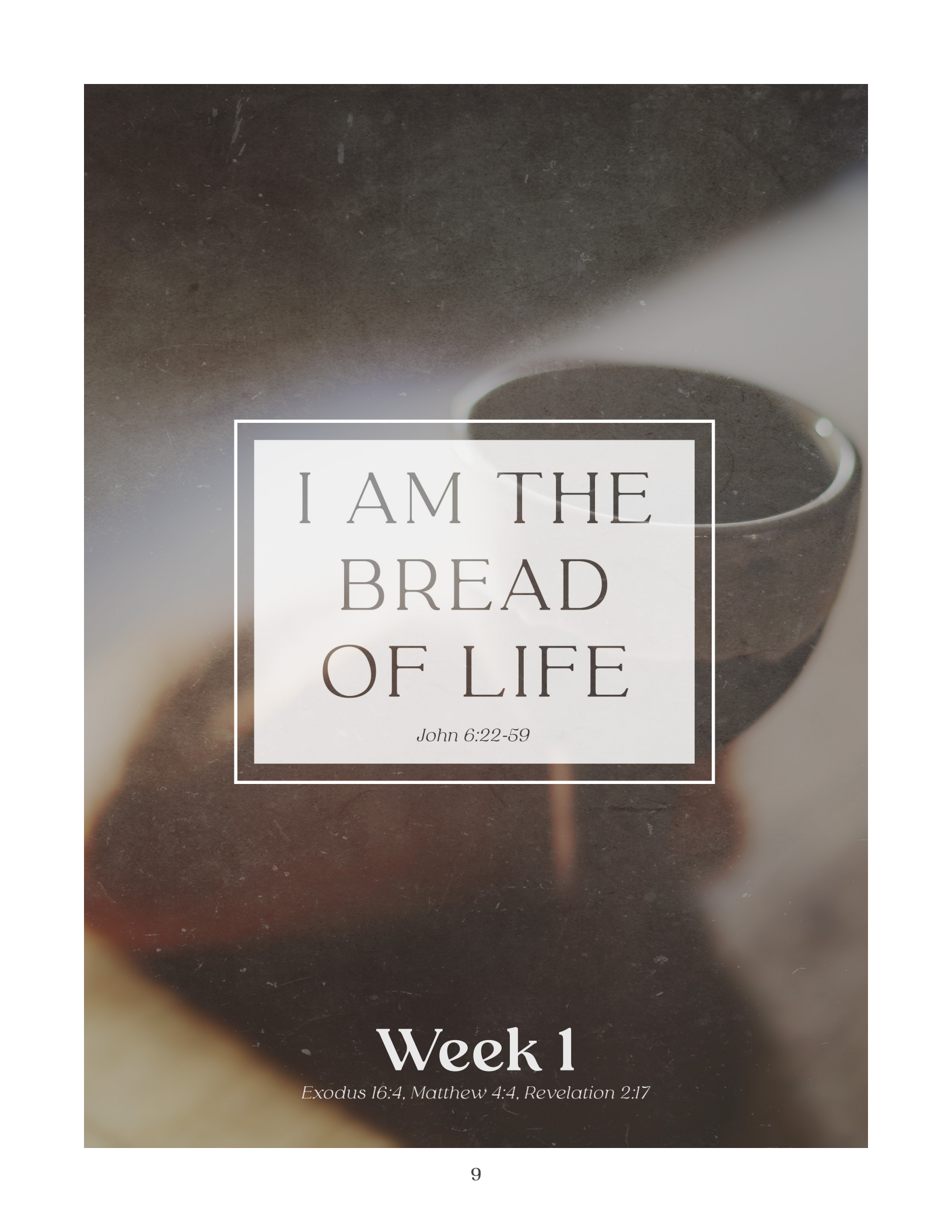
I AM THE WAY, TRUTH, & LIFE - John 14:1-14

- Day 1 - John 14:1-14, Psalm 119:30
- Day 2 - John 14:6-14, Matthew 7:13-14, Acts 4:11-12, 9:2; 19:9, 23
- Day 3 - John 1:14, 8:31-32, 14:6-7, 16:13, 17:3, 1 Timothy 2:3-6
- Day 4 - Mark 10:45, John 11:33-36, 13:14-15, 34-35, Philippians 2:5-8, Ephesians 4:14-32
- Day 5 - John 14, John 6:63, 10:10, Deuteronomy 30:19-20
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7- Rest Day

Week Seven

I AM THE TRUE VINE - John 15:1-11

- Day 1 - John 15:1-11, Isaiah 5:1-7, Psalm 80:8-19
- Day 2 - John 15:1-11, Matthew 7:16-20, Galatians 5:22-26, Hebrews 12:5-11
- Day 3 - John 15:1-11, John 6:56, John 14:23, 1 John 2:24
- Day 4 - Maundy Thursday John 15:9-11
- Day 5 - Good Friday- Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19
- Day 6 - Reflection Day
- Day 7- Rest Day



I AM THE
BREAD
OF LIFE

John 6:22-59

Week 1

Exodus 16:4, Matthew 4:4, Revelation 2:17

Day 1 - Monday

John 6:1-58, John 6:35, Exodus 16:1-18, John 1:14

The Promise of God in the Flesh

Metaphors can be confusing. “Bite the bullet,” “Let the cat out of the bag,” and “Spill the beans” sound confusing and bizarre without context. This is why we often find ourselves deeply confused when we examine the spiritual metaphors in Jesus’ “I AM” statements. During this study, we will examine the spiritual metaphors that Jesus used to help us learn more about Him, His work of salvation, and what this means for our lives.

We start this week with Jesus’ first “I AM” statement in the Gospel of John. It’s important to read the entire passage to understand the reasons behind this metaphor and His further explanation of this personal identifier. Jesus has just performed the miracle of feeding 5,000 hungry (physically and spiritually) people who have come to Him with little more than a basket of fish and bread. When He departs from them, they search for Him and find Him. It is at this time that He reveals who He is to them through a powerful metaphor: “Jesus replied, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’” (v 35)

Jesus is obviously using a metaphor here. He is not bread but the fulfilling life that these people hunger for spiritually. Just as bread nourishes the body, Jesus explains that He heals and nourishes the soul. This is a promise hundreds of years in the making. The Israelite people experienced the miracle of God feeding them physically in the desert to remind them of the spiritual feeding He offers to all of them. Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s work in the desert through the Exodus of the Israelites. John 1:14 reminds us that Jesus is the promise of God in the flesh. Jesus is the promise of salvation, redemption, healing, and life. He is the bread of life for our weary and hungry souls.



Reflection

This week, we will unpack what Jesus’ words mean for our lives and souls. Today’s reading is longer, but if you haven’t already, make sure to use your reflection time to read today’s passages. Then, spend some time journaling or in quiet reflection about what your soul hungers for and how the Lord can bring life to this starved place.

Day 2 - Tuesday

John 6:1-15, John 6:22-27, 36

One and the Same

"People commit a serious blunder when they decide that the Bible is an outdated book about an ancient people who lived in a backward culture, and therefore the Bible has nothing to say to us today. But the reason most people ignore or totally dismiss the Bible isn't because the cast of characters and the script seem radically different from life today, but because Bible people and modern people are so very much alike!"

-Warren W. Wiersbe, *Jesus in the Present Tense*

The miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand is so significant that besides the miracle of the resurrection, it is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four of the Gospels. And yet the people who witness this miracle seek Jesus out, not for spiritual feeding and healing, but for more food or to be near someone who performed such a great "trick" (v30). Jesus addresses this in verse 26. We may look at this passage and sadly or condescendingly shake our heads at their ignorance or lack of faith, but the truth is that we are just like them. As Warren W. Wiersbe addresses, we look to those in the ancient text of scripture and find ourselves, whether we want to or not.

We lack faith. We know this about ourselves but don't want it to be true. We want to believe that our faith in Jesus is rock solid, stronger than our circumstances, anxieties, and doubts. The fact is: Jesus knows this about us. This is why He pours out such profound spiritual truth to the ancient people He fed and why we get the joy of reading and wrestling with it today. "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." (v 35-37). The longing of our hearts is fed through the life we find in fellowship and salvation with Jesus Christ. Feast on this truth.



Reflection

Reflect/journal on this today:

- Where do you feel you are lacking faith?
- When do you find your faith most tested?
- How does Jesus' admission to being the bread of life change how you approach your areas of unbelief?

Day 3 - Wednesday

ASH WEDNESDAY

John 6:28-33, Exodus 16:1-18, Ephesians 4:21-24

The Work of God

As we continue to look at Jesus' claim that He is the bread of life, we read the people calling out to Jesus, asking Him to help them do miracles like Him. The people want to do great works, but Jesus clarifies what the Father wants: "Believe in the One He has sent" (v 29). God does, and always has done, great miraculous things. We are drawn to admiration and affection over His power and character. Of course, we (just like the ancient people of this passage) want to participate in this work. The people see Jesus perform this great work and want in on it. Jesus helps them to see that the work of the people, and all believers for the rest of time, is to believe in the One He has sent. The One of course being Jesus, the bread of life, Himself.

What this means for everyone today is that we need to be shaped and dedicated to doing the work of God, which is believing in the salvation, love, power, mercy, goodness, wisdom, and freedom found in Jesus Christ. When we do this work and commit our hearts and lives to it, we are transformed. We are changed. We can live in ways only possible through Jesus because we live in the reflection of His character and work. We reflect Christ's power, love, and mercy when we actively believe in Him. That active belief permeates everything about us and does powerful and miraculous works only possible through Him.



Reflection

Today's reading may have been hard on us. It was probably a challenge to what you thought your life was about. We tend to fall into a pit of anxiety and stress when it comes to thinking about what we are meant to be doing. We have so many expectations of ourselves, and we know that there should be some expected fruits that the believers' lives should produce (devotion to Christ, love/kindness to our neighbors, and forgiveness towards our enemies). Where we go so wrong is thinking that we do this work on our own. Our belief should lead us to obedience towards Jesus and His ways. Just as food doesn't simply satisfy hunger but also nourishes the body, salvation not only bring us right with God but also pours out into our thoughts, actions, and words.

Throughout your day today, try to recall the words of Jesus: "Believe in the One He has sent." Throughout your day, spend time in quick or timely prayer to remind the Lord of your belief in Him. At the end of the day, reflect on how doing this changed you.

Day 4 - Thursday

John 6:32-51, 39-40

The Will of God

The Trinity is confusing. The ways of God are confusing. That is intentional in many ways. He is far greater than us and our understanding. That is hard for us to accept because we desire to be in the know of all things, to have a say in all things, and to be able to do all things (this is what sin fosters in us). But one thing God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit seek to make abundantly clear is how much we are loved. These three persons pour out their love and mercy for us every moment of every day, which is why Jesus, while highlighting who He is (the bread of life), shines a light onto the Father to share how kind and loving He is.

"...this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them up at the last day. For it is my Father's will that all who see His Son and believe in Him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day."
(v 39-40)

"I want you all to believe." are essentially the words of God here. His will is for Him to be with us for all of eternity. He wants no man, woman, or child left outside His communion and embrace. These words should be life-shattering. There is no greater love. There is no greater hope. There is no greater purpose for us than to run toward the will of God!

But then again, the people (just like us) falter from that path. We see them question the work and identity of Jesus four times in this passage. (v. 28, 30-31, 41-42, 52) How many times do we do this each day? We fail Him. We forget Him. We push Him away. BUT He is still there. He is still the bread for our lives. His will is still being done each and every time we turn back and believe in Him. The will of God is ever-present in our lives. When we remember it, we find life.



Reflection

Take time today to remember the will of God. Remember His love and kindness for and toward you. Reflect at the end of the day on how remembering the will of God impacted your thoughts and actions.

Day 5 - Friday

John 6:52-58, Luke 22:14-20, 2 Corinthians 3:6

Take and Eat

“The symbols which we think are mere signs were given to us because we could not then understand the thing itself... But if they are only symbols, then all reality is in a sense present in them. The higher does not stand without the lower. In the act of being communicated, it is incarnated. The Letter, as St. Paul says, killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. The world is so full of a multitude of metaphors because reality itself is metaphorical.” -C.S. Lewis, *Transposition*

Just as Paul reminds the early church in Corinth, we are called to be workers (ministers) of God. We are called to share who Christ is, what He has done, and what this means for all of us. Paul, like Lewis, like Christ, first explains that this work we are enabled to do, this salvation we get to receive is not because we adhere to the law (the letter), but to the Spirit (the flesh/bread of life, Jesus Christ). When Christ urges the disciples of old and the disciples of today to take and eat His body and drink His blood, it is an invitation to make the metaphor of the bread of life a reality for our souls. It is an invitation to be welcomed in by Him, nourished, and made new again.

The greatest invitation we will ever know is to take and eat His body, for this is an invitation to live for and with Him.



Reflection

Have you ever thought of the act of communion as an acceptance of the invitation Jesus offers us of salvation? The thing about symbols, metaphors, and rituals is that they tend to lose their meaning; they tend to be forgotten. Our prayer is that through this week's study of the I AM statement of Jesus, "I am the bread of life," you would find and see new meaning in the good work of salvation that comes from Jesus. Our prayer is that the next time you partake in the symbolic work of communion, you would see it for the miracle it is, the receiving of the invitation of the bread of life.

Spend time today praising God for this invitation. As you enjoy a meal today, let it represent something more; let it be a token/reminder for you of the life, nourishment, and goodness that Jesus offers us all.

Day 6 - Saturday

Reflection Day

Reflection Notes and Questions

As we wrap up this week's study, reread John 6:1-58

Reflect on these words that Jesus spoke, "I am the bread of life." and what they mean about His character, His work on the cross, and how it should change how we see Him and how we live.

Reflect/journal your thoughts on this or these following prompts:

- Write down what you learned about who God is this week.
- What is something you learned this week that you want to remember? Why?
- How can you begin to posture your life to receive more from the Lord?

Day 7 - Sunday

Rest Day

Reflection Notes and Questions

Join us for worship today and prepare your heart to engage with next week's study of God and His word. Use your time today to rest, pray, and reflect on this week's readings.