

The Gospel of John 6:1-31

I The Hungry World and the Feeding Christ (6:1-15)

- A. In contrast to ch.5 where the person was by a pool, here, in ch.6, the people are around a sea. In the former, the scene was the holy city with a sacred pool for man's healing. In the latter, we have a wilderness with a secular sea for man's livelihood. The man in ch.5 was impotent and needed life's enlivening, the people in ch.6 are hungry and need life's feeding. In typology, the land signifies the earth which was created by God for man to live on and the sea signifies the world which has been corrupted by Satan and in which fallen mankind lives. In this world, mankind is hungry and has no satisfaction. In this world, mankind is troubled and has no peace (v.18)
- B. Jesus left the sea and went up to a mountain. (v.3) The mountain signifies the high, transcendent position where Christ is and where we must be with Him. If you wish to be fed by Christ and to be satisfied with Christ, you must go with Him to a high place.
- C. The time of Passover was near. (v.4) In that feast, people slay the redeeming lamb, sprinkle its blood and eat its flesh. This typifies Christ as our Passover (1Cor.5:7). He is the redeeming Lamb of God (1:29, 36) slain for us that we may eat His flesh and drink His blood, taking Him in as our life supply that we may live Him. As He looked out toward the multitude, the Lord wanted to provide bread for them. (v.5)
- D. Five barley loaves and two fish were available (v.19).
 - 1. In the land of Palestine, barley ripens earlier than any other crop and is the first of the harvest. Therefore, barley signifies the resurrected Christ, who is our life supply. As the firstfruits, He can become our bread of life.
 - 2. The five barley loaves signify that the Lord as the Creator (one) added to the creatures (four) bears the responsibility to feed us.
 - 3. The two fish are of the animal life, signifying the redeeming aspect of Christ's life. The number two means testimony (Rev. 11:3). The two fishes are a testimony that Christ is sufficient to bear responsibility in feeding us. We need the Lord Jesus to be both our generating life and our redeeming life.
- E. The people were arranged in 50's and 100's, reclining and receiving as much as they wanted, and the Lord gave thanks to the Father and dispensed an unlimited supply to the hungry. (vv.10-11, Mk.7:39-41)
- F. Twelve baskets of fragments were left over. The number twelve signifies eternal completeness and eternal perfectness. This means that even the fragments are eternally full and eternally complete. Even a small, fragmented Christ is full of a richness which can never be exhausted. He is so small and yet so unlimited. After the feeding of the five thousand, more surplus remained than what was there originally. This portrays the richness of Christ, for there is always something left over after the multitude has been fed.

II The Troubled World and the Peace Giving Christ (6:16-21)

- A. We live in a troubled world. The world is altogether troublesome. Family life, school life, and every type of occupation—all are troublesome. Who is at peace? Regardless of who you are, you are troubled. Christ comes into this troublesome world as the peace-giving Christ (6:16-21). The world may trouble everyone, but it cannot trouble Him.
- B. The stirred-up sea and the strong blowing wind signify the troubles in human life. Under the sea are demons, and in the air are evil spirits. That is why we have trouble. How could we ever expect to have a peaceful day? We are in the wrong place for that.
- C. Jesus walked on the sea (6:19). This signifies that the Lord can overrule all the troubles of human life. He can walk on the troubling waves of human life, and all the unrest is under His feet. Christ walked on top of all the waves. It seemed that the more waves there were, the more He enjoyed walking upon them. The waves terrified His disciples, but He trod upon them. He seemed to say, "Demons, please cause bigger waves. Then I will have more enjoyment. I can walk on top of your waves." This is the peace-giving Christ.
- D. When the disciples took Him into their boat, immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going (6:21). Do you want to have a peaceful life? If you do, then you must take Jesus into your "boat." Your "boat" may be your married life, family, or occupation. When He comes into your "boat," you will enjoy peace with Him on the journey of human life. If you receive Christ into your marriage, your marriage will be peaceful. If you receive Him into your family, your family will be at peace. If you accept Him into your job, your job will be peaceful. Without Christ, the world is hungry. Without Christ, the world is also troubled. But with Him, we have satisfaction and peace. He is the feeding Christ and the peace-giving Christ. Praise the Lord!
- E. In the book of John we see the Lord moving and living with the believers. In resurrection, the Lord was not only meeting with the brothers but also moving and living with them. He is not only with us when we meet; He is even with us in our daily walk. Wherever we go, He goes. Whatever we do, He is there with us. Whether we are right or wrong, the Lord is with us.

III The Bread of Life-Seekers after the Perishing Food (6:22-31)

- A. In verse 22 through 31 we find the seekers after the perishing food. They were seeking satisfaction. Regardless of the kind of food people are seeking, they all are seeking satisfaction. These people were trying to do something and to work for God. They were also seeking for signs and miracles. The concept of fallen man toward God is always that he must do something for God and work for God. This is the principle of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Genesis 2. The Lord's concept, concerning man toward God, is that he should believe in Him, that is, receive Him as the life and life supply. This is the principle of the tree of life in Genesis 2. The answer to the seeking after the perishing food is to receive the Lord by believing into Him (6:29).
- B. The Lord went on to tell them not to work for the food which perishes, but to work for the food which abides unto eternal life (v.27). Here the Lord Jesus seems to be saying, "Do not seek food that perishes. Instead, you should seek for eternal food, for food that abides forever." The eternal food is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He came from the heavens not only to be our Savior—He also came to be our food. This means that He came to be the tree of life. What we need is Christ as the tree of life. We do not realize to the fullest extent how much we need the Lord Jesus to be our daily food. Yes, we may talk somewhat about life. Nevertheless, we do not know how much we need Christ as our food.