John 6

MY JOURNAL

ENGAGE FELLOWSHIP

"When the Jews who were hostile to Jesus heard him say, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven,' they immediately began to complain." (John 6:41)

Many today still grumble because they miss seeing Him for who He really is; sadly many miss Jesus because they don't encounter Him in His people.

Pause to ask God *who* it is in the traffic pattern of your life who needs to experience encouragement, comfort, acceptance, or support through you!

"No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and His love has been brought to full expression through us" (1 John 4:12).

True fellowship, in which we genuinely love each other, enables the *full expression* of God's love. This means as we experience God's love through the love of others, we see Him as He really is. As we receive acceptance from others, we'll be able to see the God of gracious acceptance (Romans 15:7). Through the comfort of a friend, we'll be able to see the One who is "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3).

Just as we receive this blessing of experiencing God through others, we are called to express His presence to others, giving testimony to His glorious riches in order that they might see Him more clearly and find added hope.

Pray together with a partner or small group, asking for His life to be shared through you beginning with those close to you and with other followers of Jesus, and then extend this sharing of His love to others who need to know Him.

John 6

MY JOURNAL

ENCOUNTER JESUS

"Here's a young person with five barley loaves and two small fish." (John 6:9)

"Jesus then took the barley loaves and the fish and gave thanks to God. He then gave it to the disciples to distribute to the people. Miraculously, the food multiplied, with everyone eating as much as they wanted!" (John 6:11)

There is no better illustration of "freely receiving" and "freely giving" of His provision than Christ's miracle of feeding thousands. "Freely you have received, therefore freely give." (Matthew 10:8)

Pause quietly to picture Christ with eyes toward heaven, His hands open.

- With one hand He receives what is available—five loaves and two fish from a young lad.
- With one hand He gives freely and abundantly to the needs of all.

At times, this calling is to freely receive as He gives to you. At other times, He calls you to freely give to the needs of others. His inheritance toward you never runs out; His provision is without limit.

Quietly consider: What encouragement, care, support, or affirmation might you need in the midst of your struggles? Yield to the Holy Spirit within you. Would you open your heart to receive these gifts from Christ, the One who provides?

What acceptance, compassion, appreciation, or respect might you freely give to someone this week? Could you take the time to think of a specific name and then yield to the Spirit's prompting? As you share His life and love, others will find hope in the Jesus who provides.

Pray like this:

"Lord Jesus, I sense that you would be pleased for me to share _____ _____with _____. Prompt and empower me to do so by your Spirit. We find hope in a Jesus who provides.

John 6

EXPERIENCE SCRIPTURE

"I speak to you timeless truth. The Son is not able to do anything from himself or through my own initiative. I only do the works that I see the Father doing, for the Son does the same works as his Father." (John 5:19)

MY JOURNAL

Imagine that you are one of the twelve disciples. You have left everything to follow Jesus, entrusting your life and future to this carpenter from Nazareth. Your hopes are riding on an unclear vision of His plans for a "kingdom." It is becoming increasingly clear that the Jewish leaders are not big fans of His. In fact, they are trying to kill Him, and maybe you too!

Now imagine your reaction as you hear Jesus say: "the Son can do nothing of Himself." Are you surprised by this declaration of humble dependence? Surely this One whom you are following has some kind of plan, right? Doesn't He enjoy some sense of security about the future? Are you a bit shocked when you hear Him say, in essence, "I just wait around for the Father to show Me what to do"?

Jesus' words, startling though they may be, provide the blueprint for our lives. We are called to express humility through complete dependence upon God and His Word. Faithful, maturing disciples who walk intimately with the Spirit are able to declare, as Christ did, "I can of Myself do nothing" (John 5:30).

Too often the bible is read like a newspaper that describes everything that is going on while the reader remains unengaged, satisfied to have the information without ever experiencing the flesh and blood of engagement.

The man at the pool of Bethesda heard the word, engaged the command and experienced the love of God when he took the chance to stand and walk. Had he not acted on the Word he would not have experienced the healing power of God.

How do you need to experience the written word today? What step is the Father encouraging you to take? Pray like this:

"*Father, as I read Your word I recognize that You always meet Your children exactly where they are…You have come to me, Father, and now I come to You! Today, I want to experience Your grace by…* (Sharing your word, walking away from sin, practicing the fruit of your Spirit, etc.")

As you read His Word each day, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you. **Write down** what you sense He is telling you. **Pray and thank** the Holy Spirit that He goes with you and before you. Trust that our adequacy is in Him and His Word. Now go and live each day experiencing the Father's love through His Word.

MY JOURNAL