

Study Hints for Thinking Further
International Bible Lessons

John 6:22-35

Sunday, May 6, 2012

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

**Five Questions for Discussion
and Thinking Further**

1. What are some things Jesus did (or refused to do) when showing and telling the truth about himself so He would not appear arrogant, egotistical, or self-centered?

When talking to the crowds or His enemies, Jesus always referred directly to God the Father and only indirectly to himself as God the Son. He humbly called himself the Son of Man, which to the discerning ear was a true claim to be the promised (and long-expected by many) Messiah. Jesus could have performed many miracles whenever He wanted, just as God the Father commanded Moses, His servant, to do in Egypt and in the wilderness wandering.

These miracles could have substantiated Jesus' claims about himself without question, but Jesus wanted to teach the truth about God and himself and draw people to His Father and to himself on the basis of teaching the truth, not on the basis of compelling belief by performing extravagant miracles. In these and other ways, Jesus acted and taught in ways that were not arrogant, egotistical or self-centered. Those who were truly seeking God and the truth found Jesus and came to believe in Him because they learned Who Jesus was as the Holy Spirit helped them interpret His signs and understand His teachings. Jesus refused to say and do grandiose things; such as saying, "Look at Me everybody! Look at Me! Look at what I can do!" or fly through the air without wings (which He could easily have done) or jump off of the pinnacle of the temple (as the devil tempted Him to do). Jesus did not say and do things to compel people to believe in Him, Jesus said and did things that won the hearts and minds of people so they began to follow Him and obey God out of love and thanksgiving.

2. Why did Jesus allow His disciples see Him walk on water, but did not walk on water in front of a crowd for them to see Him walk on water?

Jesus had been gradually teaching His disciples more and more about himself and His purposes as the Messiah and Son of God. They believed what He taught up to the level of their understanding. His walking on water was another revelation to them about himself according to the Father's perfect timing. Walking on water in front of a crowd in order to prove something to them about His power and Who He is would have interfered with their learning the

truth about Jesus in the ways the Father and Jesus intended, through His teaching the truth.

3. How did Jesus give God the Father the glory and honor for feeding the crowd?

Jesus thanked God the Father in prayer BEFORE He fed the crowd. His feeding the crowd was the Father's answer to His prayer of thanksgiving. Jesus later told the crowd that the Father had fed their ancestors through Moses; it was not Moses who had fed their ancestors. Likewise, the Father sent Jesus, the Bread of Life, to them to feed them spiritually. In all things, the Son glorified the Father and the Father glorified the Son.

4. What did Jesus say that the crowd was seeking when they came to Him? What are some people seeking when they come to Jesus today?

Jesus said they came to Him seeking free food or material things. Today, some come to Jesus for the same reasons. Others come to Jesus to receive the gift of eternal life, to receive forgiveness for sins, to receive cleansing from sins, to receive the power to overcome temptations and sins, to thank Jesus for living, teaching, and dying on the cross for them, and for other spiritual reasons. Jesus will meet all the needs of those who come to Him on His terms, of all those who believe in Him.

5. Who does Jesus tell the crowd to believe in? Who does Jesus want people to believe in today? What are some of the results of believing in this person?

Jesus told the crowd to believe in Him. They must also believe in God the Father, for Jesus said that God the Father had sent Him. Jesus still wants people to believe in Him and in His Father, just as He told the Samaritan woman He talked to at the well. All of our real needs will be met by Jesus and His Father.

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