



International Bible Study Commentary

Verse-by-Verse Bible Lessons Thru the Bible

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John 6:35-46 Commentary New Revised Standard Version

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further follow the verse-by-verse [*International Bible Study Commentary*](#). **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the *International Bible Study Commentary* website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [*International Bible Study Forum*](#).

(John 6:35) Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Jesus told those who sought Him that their focus should not be on physical bread or physical drink or physical “things” that He could give them. Instead, their focus should be on Him, on personally receiving Him into their lives, for He is the bread or sustenance of spiritual and eternal life.

Jesus began His statement with the two words, name, or

title “I am,” which is the Name of God that God gave Moses at the burning bush (see Exodus 3:14). From the seven ways Jesus used “I am” in the Gospel of John, we can see another way that Jesus rightly made himself equal to God (see John 5:18). In the coming weeks we will discuss more deeply these seven ways:

1. “**I am** the bread of life” – John 6:35, 41
2. “**I am** the light of the world” – John 8:12, 9:5
3. “**I am** the door of the sheep” – John 10:7, 9
4. “**I am** the good shepherd” – John 10:11, 14
5. “**I am** the resurrection and the life” – John 11:25
6. “**I am** the way, the truth and the life” – John 14:6
7. “**I am** the true vine” – John 15:1, 5

As the great “I AM,” Jesus offers himself to us, not something other than himself. The question remained for the crowd (and for us), “Would they receive Him?” Jesus is the Gift of God. Jesus is the Bread of Life. Nothing that God has ever sent into or given to the world is more important than Jesus, the Son of God. Knowing Jesus personally, believing in Jesus, believing the teachings of Jesus, having an eternal relationship with Jesus and God the Father should be our focus—not possessing “earthly *things*” or “spiritual *things*”—but on knowing and being known and possessed by Jesus our Lord and Savior and

God our Father.

(John 6:36) But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.

Jesus revealed himself to the crowds through His signs and teaching about himself. He showed forth the compassion, forgiveness, and love of God by healing people of all their diseases—while they were still sinners. They saw who Jesus was by His works. Yet, despite all Jesus did, they did not believe what He said about himself and His Father. They focused on what they wanted, and ignored what Jesus came to give them. They wanted a political Messiah who would give them everything they wanted for free; just like He had fed them loaves and fishes on the mountain. But no matter what the crowd wanted, giving people free loaves and fishes were not Jesus' goals. Jesus' gifts of physical food were signs of His ability to give people what really mattered, spiritual food, eternal life, if they would only receive Him.

(John 6:37) Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away;

Jesus used the word “everything” instead of the expected word “everyone,” because “everything” includes all created existence. What the Father can give Jesus is without limit and includes everything. Within created existence are “everyone.” Without exception, everything and everyone the Father gives Jesus will come to Him. But how do we

know if we are included in that number? Jesus anticipated that question and all questions about what He taught. We do not need to know or wait for an answer to that question. Jesus promised that anyone who comes to Him He will never drive away. Jesus will receive anyone who will come to Him. Jesus' invitation was to everyone in the crowd and is to everyone throughout subsequent history. Jesus still invites everyone to come to Him today.

(John 6:38) for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

From the gospels of Matthew and Luke, we know how Jesus came down from heaven. Jesus never told the crowds how He came down from heaven, but Mary knew (and His disciples learned) the answer to that question. To have told the crowds how He had come down from heaven would have unnecessarily endangered His mother and subjected her to ridicule both before and after His crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus came to do the will of His heavenly Father, with which He perfectly agreed in all particulars every moment according to His words to Nicodemus in John 3:16.

(John 6:39) And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

Jesus' purpose in coming is cosmic and not just related to individuals and their personal salvation. Jesus came to

eventually fulfill these words from the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 65:17, “For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.” Seeing the future Jesus revealed to him, in Revelation 21:1, John wrote, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.” It is the will of our heavenly Father that Jesus will not lose anything or anyone that the Father has given Him, and when the last day comes, everyone the Father has given Him will be raised with glorified human bodies—Jesus will make everything new. God the Father will make certain that everything Jesus came to do and will do in the future will be done. Jesus can be trusted absolutely, and so can our heavenly Father, to do what they say.

(John 6:40) This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

Remembering John 3:16, for the second of three times in our study of these verses, Jesus spoke about “the last day.” No matter what the Jews (or anyone else believed about Jesus); no matter what the Jews (or anyone else did to Jesus), *before* “the last day” Jesus would be raised from the dead to reign forever as King of kings in heaven, and from heaven Jesus will bless everyone who believes in Him. In John 5:29, Jesus said everyone will be raised from the dead: “and [they] will come out (from their graves)—

those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.” In these verses, Jesus emphasized how anyone can avoid the “resurrection of condemnation” and receive the “resurrection of life.” To receive eternal life, one needs to “see the Son” or learn the truth about Jesus and “believe in Him” or believe the truth they have learned about Jesus and “come to Him” (see John 6:37). Jesus’ teaching continually points us back to John 1:12, “But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.” Today, “to see” Jesus does not mean to have or to seek a vision of Jesus, or to see Jesus with our eyes as His listeners could see Him. Remember what Jesus told “Doubting Thomas” in John 20:29, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” Today, if we learn about Jesus, receive Jesus, believe in Jesus, and come to Jesus, we will be blessed!

(John 6:41) Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”

Even today, some complain or grumble about what Jesus said and some even try to explain away the meaning of Jesus’ words about himself and want to make Jesus simply a great prophet, a miracle worker, an ethics teacher, or a moral example. But Jesus said He is the life-giving Person who came down from heaven to give eternal life to all who will believe Him and believe in Him. By combining two

statements of Jesus, for a second time we read about Jesus saying, “**I am** the bread of life that came down from heaven,” which those complaining about Jesus refused to consider after they heard Him say so.

(John 6:42) They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”

After Jesus left Nazareth, Jesus made His home in Capernaum (see Matthew 4:13). The Galileans and the Jews knew Jesus “complete” ancestry, as they supposed, because keeping genealogical records was important prior to the coming of the Messiah—so the Jews would know who was and was not of the line of David, and who qualified and did not qualify to be God’s promised Messiah. Since they knew Jesus’ father and mother (Joseph had adopted Jesus as his son), they did not understand how Jesus could have come down from heaven. Knowing all the possible consequences and because Jesus knew what was in every person, Jesus did not explain the nature of His miraculous birth to them (see Matthew 1:18-2:12 and Luke 1:26-38 and Luke 2:1-21).

(John 6:43) Jesus answered them, “Do not complain among yourselves.

Once again, Jesus told them not to complain or grumble among themselves. There are still too many who seem to spend their time complaining and grumbling about Jesus

and the Bible in order to lead people away from the truth. They grumble about truths they do not want to believe because their deeds are evil, as Jesus explained to His brothers in John 7:7, “The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil.” One of Jesus’ approaches to such people was to simply say, “Stop complaining,” because Jesus knew why such people grumble about whether the Bible or what He said is true or not. Jesus considered how best to use His time when speaking to people; so, He told people the truth or refused to answer some questions without becoming argumentative or belligerent.

(John 6:44) No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day.

From what we have studied in the Gospel of John so far, we have seen how the Samaritan woman and the people in her town were drawn to Jesus and believed in Him as the Savior of the world. We have also seen how a royal official was drawn to Jesus, how he traveled twenty miles from Capernaum to Cana to ask Jesus to heal His son, and how he and his whole household came to believe in Jesus. Without giving many details, Jesus told those complaining and grumbling about Him that those who come to Him are drawn to Him by the Father. None of those complaining about Jesus will come to Him unless His Father draws them to Him. What is one lesson for everyone here? If we are complainers about Jesus and the Bible (or perhaps

anything else?), we need to stop complaining and start praying. Why is this important? When we start praying, we come to God, where we can find Jesus and believe in Jesus; then, Jesus will raise us up on the last day. How do we know this? God spoke through Jeremiah, and in Jeremiah 29:13, God promised, “When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart.” In Matthew 7:7, Jesus promised, “Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.” If we will do what Jesus and the Bible have taught, we will know that our gracious heavenly Father has drawn us to Jesus to receive eternal life.

(John 6:45) It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.

In Isaiah 54:13, God promised, “All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the prosperity of your children.” Jesus used the divine “I am” title for himself earlier in John 6:35 (see also 6:41). Now, Jesus tells the complainers and the crowd (with His disciples listening) that in, by and through His teaching they were being “taught by God.” Jesus told them that with His coming and by His teaching, people were learning directly from God, directly from God the Father. When Jesus taught, the complainers and the crowd were hearing God teach them, but many were not truly listening and learning. Complainers can read the Bible, but not hear God and learn from God. In John 14:10, Jesus told His

disciples, “The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.” If the Jews had rightly read the Scriptures, they would have heard and learned from the Father and they would have come to Jesus to hear directly from God. The same is true for all who will learn how to rightly read the Bible—they will come to Jesus.

(John 6:46) Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.”

Because Jesus had come down from heaven and had been sent directly by the Father into the world, He had seen the Father (John 6:38). Jesus was sent into our world directly from God to do the will of God and teach the word of God. This was not the way God had sent Moses to the Hebrews or the way God has sent any prophet to His people. Only Jesus has seen and known God the Father completely. Jesus, the Son of God, was with God in the beginning. Remember John 1:1-2, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.” For this reason and others, everything Jesus taught about God, about the Father, about himself, about the Holy Spirit, about what God requires of us, about the future, about the last day, can be trusted as the Word of God to the world “so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. In what way did Jesus say He was necessary for life?
2. In these verses, what are some benefits of believing in Jesus?
3. What will not happen to the person who comes to Jesus?
4. What did Jesus say was the will of His Father?
5. How can a person be taught by God?

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