

I Introductions and announcements, joys and concerns.

II Prayer.

III Review: John has selected episodes from the life of Jesus to reveal that:
A. Jesus is the Messiah with four witness that affirm this.
B. Belief and acceptance of Jesus means being born as a child of God.
C. The Jewish festivals, now lost to the Christians are to be replaced.

IV Overview: This chapter is an extended meditation about bread; bread as essential food and bread as symbol. You will be encouraged to think about the unleavened bread of Passover, of manna in the wilderness, of bread at the table of Sophia (Wisdom), Prov 9:1-6, of Jesus as bread that gives eternal life and of the bread of the sacrament of Eucharist.

V Read John 6 and Willhauck 4. It might require more than one sitting to absorb and digest all the material.

VI The astute Samaritan woman at the well had deduced that Jesus was the prophet like Moses promised in Dt 18:15-18; she even concluded that he may be the Messiah. John the Evangelist has organized this chapter to elaborate on Jesus as the new Moses theme, in three ways.
A. Moses goes to Mt. Sinai to learn from God. Where does Jesus go? 6:3
B. Moses, as a gift from God, provided manna, bread from heaven, for the Hebrews in the desert. Ex 16:4,5. Was there enough for all?
Jn 6:5-13 is the Jesus parallel. Was there enough for all? v21,22.
How did the people understand the message of the food?
C. Moses was able to lead the people safely through the water, Ex 14:21,22
Jesus is also able to lead people through stormy water, 6:18-21.

Neither Jesus nor John thought that signs were useful evangelistic tools, i.e. events to persuade sceptics and opponents. Why? 6:30. These two events are the fourth and fifth of the seven signs in John, Willhauck 15. In this Gospel, the signs function to strengthen the disciples, 2:12, and to illustrate truths about the person of Jesus the Messiah.

VII 6:25-34. The bread of life discourse begins. Why would v27 bother a reality based person like me? Why do people have jobs?
v28 is one of the oldest questions in any religion. Micah 6:6-8.
Jews thought the answer required observing the 613 rules or laws derived from the Old Testament. How does Jesus answer? v29
Does this differ from Jesus' answer in Mt 22:34-40?

The demand of the crowd for more signs and more food, v 30,31 advances the bread of heaven discourse. Psalm 78 is a review of Hebrew history; this discourse is developed like a midrash or homily on Ps 78:24.
Note the giant leap in the development: God through Moses provided manna which has a short shelf life; likewise God through Jesus had fed a hungry crowd. Now the metaphor changes dramatically. How? v35

The bread of life metaphor continues with development:

A. Bread of life comes by belief and acceptance of Jesus, v40,47, 3:16.
B. The bread of life becomes part of you, v51, leading to eternal life.

VIII There is discussion among scholars about whether v 51-58, with its developed Catholic eucharistic language is a later addition. NIB 605-607. Why? 1. The explicit eating and drinking language is foreign to Jesus, a Jew. 2. The literalistic language re essential flesh eating is discordant with v 63. The evangelist does not want us to stumble over the literal meaning of symbolic language like some of the crowd did, v60. He want us to identify with Peter. v 68,69. Please do not turn away, v66.

Discuss the Methodist meaning of the Eucharist (Communion) symbols.

IX Next time: John C7. Sabbath controversy continues. Living water explained