

**JESUS**  
**16. BREAD: True Life for the World (John 6)**  
**STUDY AHEAD**

In the gospel of John, Jesus often used metaphors (a thing that is symbolic of something else) to describe Himself. “I am the bread.” “I am the light.” “I am the resurrection and the life.” “I am the door.” “I am the shepherd.” “I am the way.” “I am the vine.” With each metaphor, Jesus is inviting us to understand something that He IS, and something that He DOES for us. The setting Jesus was in shaped the metaphor that He chose to describe Himself.

1. John 6:1-14. What was the setting for the “bread of life” message?
2. John 6:15-25 Why did Jesus try to get *away* from the crowd?
3. John 6:26-34 Jesus discerned the people’s true motives for following Him to the other side of the lake. What did they really want from Him?
4. John 6:35-40 Jesus openly declared that “*He is the bread of life.*” The people wanted more physical bread; but He was offering them a different kind of bread. He said that the one who comes to Him “will never hunger,” what do you think He meant?
5. John 6:41-51 The Jews begin to dispute with Jesus over His words. He contrasts Himself with the bread (manna) that their fathers ate in the wilderness. (You can read this story in Exodus 16.) What is His point in contrasting Himself with the manna their fathers ate?
6. John 6:52-58 The Jews were particularly troubled by Jesus saying that He would give the world “*His flesh*” to eat. What was Jesus really saying? (Remember, Jesus was using *symbolic language* here.)

Note: Some Christian traditions believe that Jesus was speaking literally when He spoke about “eating His flesh.” Thus, they believe that when a priest prays over the communion elements they become (by a divine miracle), the body and blood of Jesus. Most Protestant Christian traditions take the view that Jesus was speaking symbolically; thus the communion elements are symbolic representations of His “body and blood” that were given for us.

7. 6:59-66 Many of Jesus’ own disciples struggled to understand and accept His description of Himself as “bread” that must be “eaten” for people to receive “life.” As a result, note what happened (v.66). How do you think this impacted Jesus?
8. 6:67-71 How did Jesus’ closest disciples respond to this “bread of life” discussion? Do you think they fully understood Jesus? Or do you think they stayed even without fully understanding at that moment?

If you want to survey the other “I am” statements in the gospel of John, and other metaphors, look up these verses.

I am the light of the world (John 8:12).

I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25).

I am the gate for the sheep (John 10:7,9).

I am the good shepherd (John 10:11).

I am the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).

I am the vine (John 15:1).

Other metaphors in John:

Jesus is water (John 4:13,14; 7:37-39).

Jesus is the Lamb (John 1:29).