



# One Page Sermon

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Worship Every Sunday at 9:30 AM

## John 6 — Jesus feeds the crowd and teaches of the Bread of Life

The Gospel of John is famous for what is in it—and it alone. Turning water into wine, the raising of Lazarus, the concept of being “born again,” are all things that are unique to John. Fewer people realize what is missing from the fourth gospel: Communion.

John’s Gospel has an extended Farewell Discourse. It is Jesus’ largest piece of teaching and happens at what could be called his last supper, but nowhere in the Gospel of John is the breaking of bread, sharing with the disciples and saying, “This is my body.” There is no blessing and sharing of the cup while he says, “This is my blood.” These are concepts that are shared throughout the gospel—but never in this ritualized way that looks anything like our understanding of Communion. The “Words of Institution” as they are called occur in the other three Gospels and in Paul’s letters, but not John’s Gospel.

The closest we come to Communion in John is in the second half of chapter 6, when Jesus is talking in very graphic terms about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. For John, the concept of eating Jesus’ body and drinking his blood was not connected to the Last Supper. This teaching did not occur in the shadow of the Cross. It was not linked to his broken body and blood of sacrifice. Instead, it is in the immediate aftermath of sharing the bread that fed 5,000 people.

The Bread and Blood of John is an invitation to consume Jesus. It is an invitation to take him in and abide with him in such a way that we are one. Jesus tells us to eat his flesh and drink his blood - not as a way to relive the painful and violent sacrifice, but as a way to relive the incredible moment at the beginning of the chapter when Jesus made them lie down in green pastures beside the still waters, and made sure everyone had enough.

This language of consumption was difficult. In fact, the first response was “This teaching is difficult,



who can accept it?” Later John tells us that “Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.”

Consuming Jesus is not always easy because there are so many other things that cry out to us to be consumed. The food, drink, media, news, fuel, energy, information that we consume is all-encompassing. We are constantly bombarded with messages calling us to consume this story, that meal deal, or this opinion.

We live in a consumer culture, provided with more choices than we know what to do with. We are a people crippled by decision fatigue, with every device we own vying for our attention. We doom-scroll. We binge-watch. We channel-surf. We succumb to click-bait. We get blue-light glasses so we can do it more. Depression, anxiety, and fatigue are more endemic than COVID-19.

Then Jesus calls out, “Consume me.” We’ve all heard the old saying, “You are what you eat.” Eat Jesus. Drink in Jesus. Consume the one who makes you lie down in green pastures. Consume the one who lays you beside the still waters. Share the bread and wine of community, plenty, and love. Consume Christ, and become what you eat.