**Follow Me: Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John**

**Session 4: “Believe in Me”: Trust and Surrender (John 4:43 – 6:71)**

***“So he came down again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.”*** *(John 4:46)*

* The Greek word that is used for official was used to describe someone that was working for Herod.
* This official travelled 15 miles from Capernaum to Cana to beg Jesus to heal his son.
* In irritation, Jesus replies, ***“Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”*** *(John 4:48)*
* In the original text the word used for “you” was “idete”. Idete is not you, individual second person singular. It is you, plural.
* Jesus is referring to the many people He encountered in Jerusalem that believed in Jesus because of the signs (miracles).
* Jesus is testing this man to determine if he is among those individuals who believe in Him for the signs or if he really believes in Jesus.

***“’Sir come down before my child dies.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go your son will live.’ The man believed in the word Jesus spoke to him and went his way.”*** *(John 4:49)*

* Initially the royal official asked Jesus to come to Capernaum to heal his son.
* Jesus instead advises the official to trust Him that He could heal his son with His spoken word.
* The man believed that word that Jesus spoke to him. He was not one of those people who followed Jesus because of the signs (miracles).
* As the official was returning to Capernaum, his servants met him on the way to advise him that his son was living.
* The official’s son was healed at the seventh hour which was the very hour Jesus has told him, ***‘Go your son will live.”*** *(John 4:50)*
* Jesus wants us to turn to Him with all of our needs. He wants to help us. Sometimes Jesus answers our prayers not in a way we are expecting or on our timetable.
* God may allow other things in our life to happen so that where is other good things that may come from us.

***“After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethzatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, ‘Do you want to be healed? The sick man answered him, ‘Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Rise, take up your pallet and walk’”*** *(John 5:1-8)*

* The text “one man was there” reminds us of John 3 when Nicodemus is identified as “a man.” A man who looked at Jesus from a human perspective.
* The man was ill for thirty-eight years. Thirty-eight is a significant number in the Bible.
* The Israelites were in the desert for forty years. The number thirty-eight harkens back to that desert wandering.
* The first several months they were getting ready to go out to the Holy Land. They stayed in Mount Sinai for an extra year.
* They begin journeying into the Promised Land.
* In Numbers 14, ten of the twelve scouts tell the people that the inhabitants of Canaan would be too much for them.
* Because of their lack of faith, they did not enter the Promised Land but wandered in the desert for thirty-eight more years.
* That particular generation did not trust God. They did not trust that God would protect them when they went into the Promised Land.
* The next generation would go into and take the Promised Land.
* That this man has been ill for thirty-eight years is a signal to us that this man is someone that is like the ancient Israelites who did not trust God.
* The five porticoes symbolize the five books of the Torah.
* Jesus asks the man, ***“Do you want to be healed?”*** Jesus’ question implies that the ill man has no hope or trust.
* The ill man’s response reflects his lack of hope and trust. He states he has no one to help him in the pool and that others step ahead of him when he tries to go in.
* Jesus heals the man with the words, ***“Take up your pallet, and walk.”***
* Jesus had healed this man on the sabbath. He is seen carrying his pallet on the sabbath and is questioned why he is carrying his pallet on the sabbath.

***“And this is why the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did this on the sabbath. But Jesus answered them, My Father is working still, and I am working. This is why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God.”*** *(John 5:16-18)*

* There are two aspects of creation. The first aspect is bringing things into existence. That is what God did in the six days.
* The second aspect of creation is holding those things that were created in existence. On the sabbath day, God did not create anything new but still continues to hold everything in existence.
* If God took a complete rest, then nothing would exist anymore.
* In referring to God as His Father, Jesus was making Himself equal to God. This was too much for the Pharisees.
* This is a turning point in the Gospel of John. The Pharisees now want to put Jesus to death.

John 6

***“After this Jesus went to the other side of the Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a multitude followed him, because they saw the signs which he did on those who were diseased. Jesus went up into the hills, and there sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a multitude was coming to him, Jesus said to Philip, ‘How are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?’ This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.”*** *(John 6:1-6)*

* The people were following Jesus because they saw the signs that He has performed.
* They were intrigued by the signs, but they have not entrusted themselves to Jesus.
* Jesus is testing Philip with His question on buying bread to feed the people.
* Andrew advises Jesus that there is a lad with five barley loaves and two fish. Andrew goes on to say, ***“But what is that among so many.”***
* Both Philip and Andrew were with Jesus at the Wedding of Cana when Jesus performed the miracle of turning the water into wine.
* They should have trusted that Jesus could provide abundance in a time of lack.

***“Jesus said, ‘Make the people sit down.’ Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, ‘Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost. So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments for the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten.”*** *(John 6:10-13)*

* This is a great lesson in trust. Philip and Andrew did not trust Jesus. They were only looking at the situation from a human perspective.
* Jesus is showing us that He wants to make up for all of our deficiencies. He wants to supply whatever we are lacking.
* When we are lacking in something we need to entrust it to Him.
* God advised St. Paul, ***“My strength will be made manifest in your weakness.”*** *(2 Corinthians 12:9)*
* Whenever we feel overwhelmed or that we do not have enough energy, time, or resources we need to turn to Jesus and allow Him to do the work through us.
* ***“Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated;”***
* This is the same language that is used at the Last Supper. This miracle was performed during Passover.
* Passover is mentioned three times in the Gospel of John: 1:13, 6:4, and 19:14.
* The miracle of the Feeding of Five Thousand with five barley loaves and two fish prefigures the Eucharist.
* He takes bread, gives thanks, and distributes the bread at the time of Passover.

Bread of Life Discourse

***“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.”***

* The Jews took exception that Jesus referred to Himself as the bread that comes down from heaven.

***“The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, ‘I am the bread of life which came down from heaven.’ They said, ‘Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he say, ‘I have come down from heaven.’”*** *(John 6:41-42)*

***“I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the mana in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die.”*** *(John 6:48)*

* Jesus is referring to the Israelites when they were journeying to the promised land. God fed them with mana.
* The Israelites murmured about the mana. They wanted meat.
* As a result of murmuring about this bread they were part of the group that were disinherited.
* They would wander around for an additional thirty-eight years and then die in the wilderness.
* Jesus is making a parallel. Their ancestors murmured about the mana (bread) and were disinherited.
* The people before Jesus in His Bread of Life Discourse are murmuring about this teaching on the Eucharist.
* The people in the desert were murmuring about the mana from heaven and were eventually disinherited from the promised land.

***“Your Fathers ate mana in the wilderness and they died. This is bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.”*** *(John 6:49-51)*

* This is not the kind of language that Jesus would use if He was speaking on a metaphorical sense. His language was very graphic.

***“The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’”*** *(John 6:52)*

* It was there understanding that Jesus was not speaking figuratively but literally.

***“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.*** *(John 6:53-56)*

* The language that Jesus uses is very graphic.
* This is not the language of someone speaking on a symbolic or figurative level.
* The language that Jesus uses in this scripture changes. Prior to this scripture the Greek word “phagete” was used. Phagete means to eat. It can be used literally of figuratively.
* In this scripture the Greek word “trogo” is used for to eat. “Trogo” means to chew or gnaw.
* Unlike “phagete” which can be used in a literal or figurative sense, “trogo” is used in the literal sense.

***“Many of the disciples drew back and no longer went about with him.”*** *(John 6:60)*

* Many people who had been following Jesus left Jesus because of His teaching on the Eucharist.
* Jesus does not explain that he was speaking figuratively or symbolically but lets them leave without a word.

***“Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Will you also go away? Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the holy one of God.’”*** *(John 6:68-69)*

* Peter does not indicate that he understands Jesus’ teaching on the Eucharist.
* Peter does not understand but he trusts. Peter trusts Jesus’ word.
* Peter’s example here is a model for us. There may be times when there is a teaching of the Church that we do not understand.
* When we do not understand we are to trust.