

Life without limits

 **John 6.35,41-51**

Jesus calls himself the, 'bread of life', which causes some anger from those he is speaking to who ask: isn't this the son of Mary and Joseph, people we know, why is he saying he is from heaven? Jesus responds by telling them not to complain among themselves and that no one will come to him except those who are drawn by the Father. He then goes on to use the example of bread to explain how, unlike the ancestors who received bread in the desert and died, he is the living bread who brings eternal life.

Now read **John 6.35,41-51** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Those in this passage think that they know Jesus and therefore question him and what he is saying. It is easy to make assumptions about people, and difficult to stop, listen and try to understand. We can see in wider society how this can lead to conflict, prejudice and disharmony. For you, where are the uncomfortable spaces where you need to listen and grow your understanding? When have you experienced others making assumptions about you?

LIMITS

Set yourself some limits this week, e.g. restricting how much time you spend on social media. But also set some positive limits as targets, e.g. spend an hour each day outdoors. Think about ways you can also limit the assumptions you make about others, i.e. when you meet someone, count to 60 before you make any kind of decision about the kind of person they are. Use this to help you unpack what kind of assumptions you may be carrying with you about others.



Ask yourself:

How have our assumptions about which professions are seen as 'heroes' changed in the past year?

GROW UNDERSTANDING

Every day this week, try to talk to someone, listen to a podcast, radio programme or watch a short video, to help you understand something which is not your life experience but which you want to understand more about. Ted Talks are a good place to start.
<https://www.ted.com/talks>



Do an active reading of the passage – either using your imagination or with others. If possible, have a narrator who reads the passage. As the words are read out by the narrator, others should play the 'characters', but rather than speaking use their body language to react to what's being said. Or you can imagine the scene and the reactions – what do the words convey? How are they received?

SEE IT DIFFERENTLY

Invert the colours on your mobile phone, you can do an internet search on how to do this.



<https://lifehacker.com/invert-your-phones-colors-for-easier-night-reading-5957534>

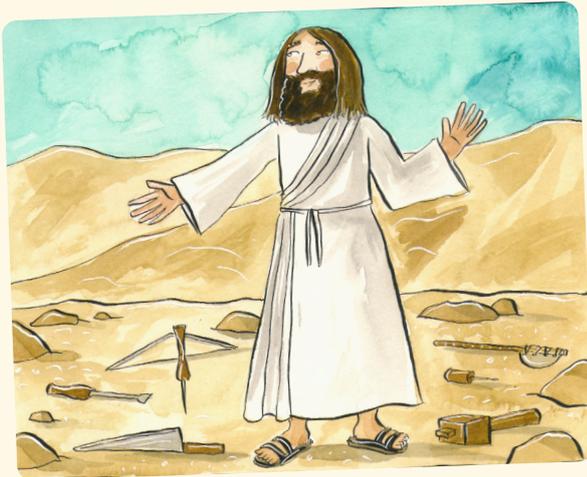
How does this make your phone and images look? Things are the same, but different. Those in the passage and Jesus are seeing things in a different way; just as when we invert our colours, things can look very different and yet we are seeing the same thing. What can this teach us about differing perspectives?

PUSH YOURSELF

Teach yourself a new physical skill, one you can practice indoors or outdoors like juggling, balancing exercises, a roly-poly! How does it feel to step into the new? Was it difficult? Did you have to push through? How did it feel once you'd achieved your goals? How could these feelings and experiences be related to this passage?

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.' People were complaining to each other because Jesus also said, 'I am the bread that has come down from heaven.'



They muttered, 'This is just Jesus, Joseph's son. We know him. We know his mother and father. How can he now say, "I have come from heaven"?'

In reply, Jesus said, 'Stop complaining to each other. People will only come to believe who I really am if they are drawn to me by God. At the end of time, I will raise those people up to God. The prophets have said that those people will learn from God. To learn from God is to know me and believe in me. The only one who has seen God is the one who has come from God.'

He continued, 'I'm telling you the truth when I say that everyone who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate bread in the desert; they did not live for ever. But I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever. And the bread that I will give for the world is my body.'

John 6.35,41-51

Did you know?

- A prophet is someone who wrote down messages from God, a long time ago, about the promised Messiah.
- The story of manna in the desert is found in Exodus 16. The people who ate manna were the great, great, great (etc.) grandparents of the people complaining in this story!

John 6.35,41-51 (NRSV)

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.'

Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' 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"?' Jesus answered them, 'Do not complain among yourselves. 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. 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. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'