

BIBLE
STUDIES
FOR LIFE

SMALL GROUPS

MORE THAN ENOUGH

HOW JESUS MEETS OUR DEEPEST NEEDS



JEFF IORG

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More Than Enough: How Jesus Meets Our Deepest Needs
Bible Studies for Life: Small Group Member Book

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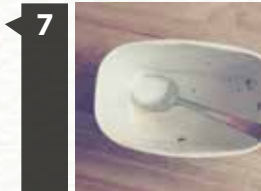
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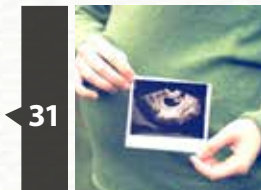
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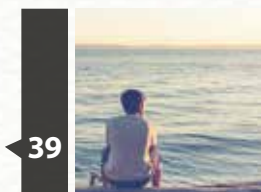
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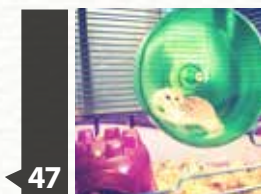
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ABOUT THIS STUDY

Don't deny your needs. Find Who you need.

We all long for peace, security, and fulfillment. Denying those needs is pointless. Trying to meet them in unhealthy ways is counterproductive. Languishing in frustration when they are not met is unnecessary.

God has a better plan:

- ▶ "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).
- ▶ "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).
- ▶ "I am the door" (John 10:7,9).
- ▶ "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11).
- ▶ "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).
- ▶ "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).
- ▶ "I am the true vine" (John 15:1).

Are you tired of the treadmill of human effort, running on the personal fulfillment track to nowhere? Are you burned out by people—tired of being let down again and again? Are you ready to give up searching for significance at the mall or on the car lot?

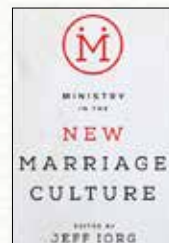
For everything you need, Jesus said, "I am." And that's more than enough.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Jeff Iorg is the president of Golden Gate Seminary (soon to be Gateway Seminary) in California. Jeff is a seasoned ministry leader who writes about real life issues, not just academic theories. He is editor of the book *Ministry in the New Marriage Culture* (B&H Publishing, 2015). Jeff is married to Ann, has three adult children, and one awesome grandson. Learn more and find leadership insights at jeffiorg.com.



SESSION 1

OUR NEED FOR CONTENTMENT



When have you recently had too much of a good thing?

QUESTION #1

#BSFLenough

MORE THAN ENOUGH **7**

THE POINT

*Jesus is the Bread of life
who gives us true satisfaction.*



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

People today want more:

- ▶ The average home has 189 TV channels.
- ▶ We can choose from over 50 brands of toothpaste; most of those brands offer multiple choices.
- ▶ The seven-ounce soft drink size of 1955 has been replaced with 42-ounce cups—and larger.

So many people in our society are convinced that more is always better, bigger is always best, and getting our way always equals prosperity and happiness. It's easy to believe that if we race to the top, gain all the privileges, or have the most money—we will finally be satisfied.

Thankfully, Jesus taught a better way.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

John 6:26-27,35-40

26 Jesus answered, "I assure you: You are looking for Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled.

27 Don't work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal of approval on Him."

35 "I am the bread of life," Jesus told them. "No one who comes to Me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Me will ever be thirsty again.

36 But as I told you, you've seen Me, and yet you do not believe.

37 Everyone the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will never cast out.

38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 This is the will of Him who sent Me: that I should lose none of those He has given Me but should raise them up on the last day.

40 For this is the will of My Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

Bread of life (v. 35)—An allusion by Jesus to manna, the white substance that tasted like wafers made with honey and was miraculously provided by God for the Israelites wandering in the desert. The psalmist called this substance "bread from heaven" (see Ex. 16:31; Ps. 78:24).

The last day (v. 40)—A phrase embodying Jewish thought about a final judgment by God featuring the resurrection of the dead that ends history and establishes ultimate justice.



Why do people seek satisfaction in things that don't last?

QUESTION #2**John 6:26-27**

In 1928, Herbert Hoover ran for president with this campaign promise: “A chicken in every pot and a car in every garage.” He was elected. Voters were drawn to the candidate who promised prosperity.

Jesus never promised prosperity, but He did something for the people that led them to think prosperity was just around the corner. Earlier in John 6, Jesus multiplied five barley loaves and two fish into enough food to feed 5,000 men—with enough leftovers to fill 12 baskets (see vv. 12-13). This was an impressive miracle that convinced people Jesus was a prophet from God who should be their king.

There’s a problem with the kind of prosperity the people expected from Jesus: it doesn’t last. Sure, the miracle provided a great meal for one day, but the people were hungry again the next day.

In verses 26-27, Jesus confronted their misplaced priorities. The miracle of the loaves and fishes was supposed to draw people to God, not motivate them to trail after Jesus in search of a perpetual buffet. The people were pursuing “food that perishes,” but Jesus had come to offer “food that lasts,” meaning eternal life, as a gift from God through the “Son of Man”—Jesus Himself.

People today often struggle with the same misplaced priorities. When we try to satisfy our deepest needs with bigger TVs, sportier cars, or fancier clothes, we waste our time and only become more frustrated. We think such material things will give us the security and significance that only comes through a relationship with Jesus.

We need to get off the “get more” treadmill and enjoy the eternal satisfaction only Jesus provides.



John 6:35

The crowd had already seen extraordinary things, but apparently that wasn't enough. They asked Jesus what sign He planned to offer so they might believe in Him. They mentioned God's earlier provision of manna for their forefathers, as if to say Jesus' recent culinary miracle was not all that special. They wanted Jesus to do a *real* miracle to establish His credibility.

We often exhibit the same self-centeredness. We ask God to prove Himself by meeting our needs or by intervening in our lives. We ignore all God has *already* accomplished—both through the work of Jesus and in our lives over the years—when we require God to act “in the moment” before we affirm faith in Him.

Jesus declared that God had given them “the real bread from heaven” and further clarified, “the bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (vv. 32-33).

In response, the people cried out, “Sir, give us this bread always!” (v. 34). They were still thinking about themselves, expressing their desire for perpetual meal service and not yet recognizing the spiritual significance of Jesus' words.

Jesus then made His most direct statement: “I am the bread of life.” He also added thirst to the metaphor. By coupling hunger and thirst, combined with the previous food miracle that had started the entire sequence, Jesus underscored His ultimate goal even more strongly. Jesus promised, “No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Me will ever be thirsty again” (v. 35).

Jesus appealed to His hearers to rise above focusing on themselves and their temporal desires for immediate gratification. He promised eternal satisfaction to every person who believes in Him—an infinitely more significant gift than food and drink.

When have you experienced spiritual hunger or thirst?

QUESTION #3

What does this “I am” statement teach us about Jesus' nature and character?

QUESTION #4



How would you describe your experiences with the "bread of life"?

QUESTION #5

John 6:36-40

After rebuking His followers' selfishness, Jesus sought to teach them the truth by highlighting two key elements of God's work in accomplishing salvation.

First, our salvation is based on God's initiative: "Everyone the Father gives Me will come to Me" (v. 37). While it is essential for people to repent (see Acts 2:38) and place their faith in Christ to experience salvation (see Eph. 2:8-9), God always takes the first step in the salvation process. He sent Jesus as our Savior, empowered His resurrection, and assured His ascension. God's plan for salvation has been set in place since before He created the world (see Eph. 1:4-5).

Still, acknowledging God's initiative doesn't diminish our need to respond. God prompts, convicts, and draws people to Himself. Yet repentance and faith are also biblical essentials for salvation. God invites people into a relationship with Him, and that relationship is sealed through our repentance and faith.

Second, Jesus taught that our relationship with God is permanent:

- ▶ "The one who comes to me I will never cast out" (v. 37).
- ▶ "This is the will of Him who sent Me: that I should lose none of those He has given Me but should raise them up on the last day" (v. 39).

Remember that the permanence we enjoy in our relationship with God is guaranteed by His power, not our efforts. God draws people into salvation and then sustains their eternal relationship with Him.

Nothing at all can threaten your relationship with Jesus (see Rom. 8:38-39). We can finally find true contentment when we base our lifestyle choices on this profound truth. We are no longer hungry, thirsty people striving to satisfy eternal cravings with earthly possessions, achievements, or accomplishments. We are secure in God through our connection to Jesus Christ.

MEETING NEEDS

Below is a list of some deeper needs that all people experience. Choose two items on that list and record how our culture typically encourages us to meet those needs.

Purpose

Wellness

Love

Security

Hope

*How has
Christ met
one of these
needs in
your life?*

LIVE IT OUT

How will you respond to the Bread of life this week? Consider the following options for seeking out even greater contentment:

- ▶ **Give it up.** Identify something temporary you have been pursuing as a means of security—a possession, an achievement, an accomplishment, and so on. Stop your pursuit. Repent and ask God to grant you true contentment in Jesus.
- ▶ **Give thanks.** Commit to expressing gratitude this week when others serve or bless you. Thankfulness is a great way to avoid self-centeredness and promote satisfaction.
- ▶ **Give it away.** Volunteer with a ministry that serves others in need. While doing so, share the gospel with someone by using this Scripture passage to help him or her understand true satisfaction comes from Jesus Christ.



As a follower of Christ, you have access to more than you could ever hope for. Your security as a believer is eternal. You received it on the day you were saved, not on the day you die. Everything you need, and so much more, can be found in Jesus.

My thoughts

SESSION 2

OUR NEED FOR DIRECTION



*When do you remember feeling
afraid of the dark?*

QUESTION #1

#BSFlenough

MORE THAN ENOUGH

15

THE POINT

Jesus is the Light who reveals the way we should go.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Late one Saturday night, my five-year-old son accompanied me on a quick trip to our church. It was pitch black outside as well as inside the building. The light switches were across the foyer from the entry. As we shuffled along in the dark, moving toward the switches, someone touched my hand. I screamed! My son squeezed my hand harder and said, “Don’t worry, Daddy, it’s me.”

What a relief!

When you are surrounded by darkness, it’s good to know someone is with you. It’s even better to have someone turn on the lights.

As we’ll see in John 8, Jesus is always with us, no matter how dark life may seem. And He does more than turn on the light. Jesus Himself is the Light of the world.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

John 8:12-19

12 Then Jesus spoke to them again: “I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.”

13 So the Pharisees said to Him, “You are testifying about Yourself. Your testimony is not valid.”

14 “Even if I testify about Myself,” Jesus replied, “My testimony is valid, because I know where I came from and where I’m going. But you don’t know where I come from or where I’m going.

15 You judge by human standards. I judge no one.

16 And if I do judge, My judgment is true, because I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent Me judge together.

17 Even in your law it is written that the witness of two men is valid.

18 I am the One who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.”

19 Then they asked Him, “Where is Your Father?” “You know neither Me nor My Father,” Jesus answered. “If you knew Me, you would also know My Father.”

Light of the world (v. 12)—Jesus illumines the path we are called to follow.

Darkness (v. 12)—The antithesis to light. Here, “darkness” is used as the metaphorical equivalent in religious language to evil, immorality, and other spiritual forces aligned against God.

Testimony (vv. 13-14)—A courtroom term referring to statements about which a person would swear in a court of law; in this case, it meant speaking truth about what one has witnessed about God.



Where do you see evidence of darkness in today's world?

QUESTION #2

What does this "I am" statement teach us about Jesus' nature and character?

QUESTION #3

John 8:12

Jesus had been teaching in the temple complex during the Festival of Tabernacles (see John 7:2,14). The morning after the last day of the festival, Jesus went again to the temple and began to teach. As He taught, the religious leaders brought to Him a woman who had been caught in adultery (see 8:2-11). They did so "at dawn" (v. 2). As the sun came up, the people would have been coming out of darkened houses to experience the fresh light of a new day. This helped set the stage for Jesus' incredible pronouncement: "I am the light of the world."

Notice Jesus did not claim to *provide* light to the world. He declared Himself to *be* "the light of the world."

The concept and symbolism of light is very important in the Bible. Light is used as a symbol or reference for salvation in both Old and New Testaments (see Ps. 27:1 and 1 John 1:7, for examples). When Jesus proclaimed that He was the Light of the world, He thus announced Himself as the only Source for salvation. Jesus is the only true Savior.

The Bible also uses light to symbolize God's direction. God had led His people by a pillar of fire at night during their wilderness wanderings (see Ex. 13:21-22). Appropriately, this event had just been commemorated through the Festival of Tabernacles during the time Jesus made this temple visit.

Think about the nature of Jesus' claim in an agrarian society. During a time before electricity, when light was more difficult to create and more precious to maintain, Jesus declared Himself to be light. Jesus identified Himself as a primary Source for a fundamental need among humanity.

Jesus also followed His assertion with a promise: "Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life" (v. 12). Jesus promised we would never be in darkness.

It's easy for people to become enamored with what appear to be other sources of light—worldly wisdom, media information, popular philosophies, and so on. All of these sparkle and shine to get our attention, but ultimately they lead down dark trails of frustration and desperation. Trust Jesus as the Light: your Savior and Guide.

YOUR TESTIMONY

Imagine you are called as a witness to testify about who Jesus is based on your personal experiences with Him. How would you respond? Use the space below to record your answer in a way comfortable for you—tell a story, make a list, sketch a picture, and so on.

What prevents you from sharing your experiences with Jesus more freely?

John 8:13-15

The Pharisees reacted negatively to Jesus' assertion that He was the Light of the world. Their objection was based on the law: "You are testifying about Yourself, Your testimony is not valid" (v. 13). This, however, was not the first time Jesus had heard this accusation, and He previously cited four witnesses in His defense—John the Baptist, His works, His Father, and Scripture (see John 5:31-39).

Jesus didn't disagree that valid testimony requires corroboration (see Deut. 17:6; 19:15). Therefore, He produced other witnesses to back up His declaration. The problem was the Pharisees' determination to ignore any information that contradicted their foregone conclusion that Jesus was a fraud. They weren't about to be confused by the facts.

Many religious people today have made up their minds about what constitutes spiritual "truth"—even when it contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture. Unbelievers make the same mistake by trusting in their reason, man-made philosophies, or humanistic education rather than in God's Word. No matter how unreasonable their positions may be, both groups hold fast to what they believe rather than submit to Jesus and biblical truth.

Jesus knew the truth, and He knew His testimony was valid. "My testimony is valid, because I know where I came from and where I'm going" (v. 14). He appealed to His origin and His destination as proof of His Deity. He had come from His Father and would soon return.

The Pharisees' problem was their humanistic worldview. Jesus said, "You judge by human standards" (v. 15). They started with themselves and incorporated God into their lives wherever they could. Jesus calls us to start with God as our Father and adjust our lives accordingly. He must be at the center of our lives, with everything else ordered around Him.

What are some reasons people give today for rejecting God's Word as truth?

QUESTION #4



What decisions must we make in order to follow Jesus' judgments and directions?

QUESTION #5

John 8:16-19

Jesus came to extend salvation, not condemnation, to all people (see 3:17). He came as light to overcome darkness, not just as a judge to condemn darkness. He came as an exclusive Savior, and all people will be judged based on their choices about Him.

Continuing His testimony, Jesus used an argument based on the law—the Pharisees' ultimate source of authority: "Even in your law it is written that the witness of two men is valid" (v. 17). This was based on Old Testament passages which required at least two credible witnesses to determine guilt in a legal proceeding (see Deut. 17:6-7; 19:15). Jesus declared His claims to be true because they were based on the testimony of two witnesses—Himself and His Father. These two witnesses are the pinnacle of anyone who might be called in any judicial proceeding.

Jesus concluded this exchange with His most pointed rebuke: "You know neither Me nor my Father" (v. 19). Imagine how stunning those words must have sounded to the arrogant Pharisees who paraded themselves as public models of religious devotion. They claimed to know God; in fact, they claimed to know more about God than anyone else. Yet Jesus pronounced them to be illegitimate usurpers with no genuine relationship with the Father.

We must not make this same mistake. Jesus is the Light of the world, and God the Father is His corroborating witness. Therefore, live your life under His authority in submission to His instructions.

LIVE IT OUT

Since Jesus is the Light of the world, how will that truth influence your actions and attitudes this week? Consider taking one of the following steps in response:

- ▶ **Identify.** Seek out an area of your life in which you are following sources of light other than Christ. Take action to move away from those sources and follow Christ.
- ▶ **Submit.** Begin each day this week by verbally submitting yourself to God. Proclaim your desire to walk only in the direction revealed by the light of Christ, and continually pray for guidance throughout the day.
- ▶ **Study.** Read a book on Christian worldview such as *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis. If possible, study this book with someone else and discuss what it teaches about following the light and direction of Jesus.



There will be times when you find yourself in darkness—our world is filled with it, after all. But you never have to be alone in that darkness. When you follow Jesus, you will always be able to find the Light.

My thoughts