

## **Sermon Summary**

**9<sup>th</sup> after Pentecost**

**29<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

- This morning's Gospel (John 6:1-21) marks the beginning of a long section in which John addresses issues placed by the other gospel writers at the last Supper.
- In all four gospels a feeding miracle is followed by a 'sea miracle', and then a lengthy section of teaching.
- The readings for the following Sundays will take us through that teaching. Brace yourselves.
- In handling the material this way John gives a special slant which includes some elements familiar from the Supper narratives, and some which are novel, or, at least, less immediately obvious.
- We find them in some of those verses we tend to view as background material; nonetheless, they are significant.
- The meal takes place on a mountain. In the OT, Moses (Mt Sinai) and Elijah (Mt Carmel) meet God on the mountain.
- In Isaiah 25, the gathering in of the nations is celebrated by a great feast on Mt Zion.
- This is also known as the Messianic Banquet: the meal celebrated in the presence of God's anointed one who is the agent of salvation and liberation.
- The meal takes place around Passover (just like the Last Supper) indicating that this is a new Passover, which, like the original feast, will symbolise God's people being set free from what oppresses them.
- John then connects this to the life of his readers.
- They know the rituals of eating and drinking which the NT calls the 'breaking of bread'
- John describes Jesus' actions using language likely to what they do when they meet together: take, give thanks, distribute.
- The gathering up of the leftovers is a sign that something very special is going on.
- The original participants are shown as recognising it: they want to declare Jesus as the Christ (6:14-15).
- He does not let this happen: he will be the Christ of the Father, not the Christ of popular hopes and expectations
- John is saying to his readers: that special thing he did then for them, he does now for you when bread is taken, blessed and shared.
- That special something will be the focus of the readings to follow....

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