

Title: The Bread of Life

Text: John 6:22-40

Will you take your Bibles, please, and open them to John chapter 6. John chapter 6 beginning with verse 22. There are notes in your bulletin. Our topic: THE BREAD OF LIFE. (Read John 6:22-40)

Prayer

We are looking at the Opposition that is building towards Jesus. Last week we look at a key miracle that caused great opposition. And that was the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. Now the question is: Why did this miracle cause great opposition? The answer is found in what (2D) happened following this miracle. And that is what I want you to understand, today. 2D on your outline. What happened following the feeding of the five thousands. A number of things happened. (1E) One, the disappearance of Jesus. Now, I don't believe this is an accident. I believe this is another miracle. The Bible says: Vs. 22, "The next day." The day following the feeding of the five thousand, "the people discovered that Jesus had left. Some boats had come from Tiberias, according to Vs. 23, but he wasn't in any of them. So, the people, Vs 24, when they saw that he wasn't there, they took boats and came to Capernaum.

So, put yourself into the scene. There you are. You are part of the five thousand. You have just been feed by Jesus. And that night you sleep there on the hill, or you go down into one of the villages along the coast. When you wake up in the morning and you go looking for Jesus you discover that he is not there. The one boat that the disciples had is gone. So, you conclude that maybe Jesus went to Tiberias. But, you learn from boats that had just arrived from Tiberias that Jesus wasn't there. So, the other conclusion is

that he went to Capernaum. After all, that was the center of His ministry in Galilee. So, you and all the others get into boats and you come to Capernaum

Some people believe that Jesus had walked around the lake to Capernaum. But, I don't believe that. WHY? Because Jesus could walk no where alone. He was always being followed by the crowds. The Bible says that He constantly withdrew himself. And on a number of occasions, He literally disappeared. And I think that is what happened here. He disappeared and then reappeared in Capernaum. Just a simple example of another miracle of Jesus.

(2E) Now, secondly, notice their desire to find Jesus. Vs. 24 says: "They came to Capernaum seeking Jesus." Then Vs. 25 says that when they found Him they ask: "When did you get here?"

The point, again, is emphasizing the disappearance of Jesus and I believe a miracle. "How in the world did you get here?"

Jesus, if you will notice, did not answer that question. He didn't answer because He knew what their real motive was in seeking Him. He knew what the crowds really wanted.

(3E) So, in the third place, let's look, in Verses 26-29, at the cause behind this search. Why were they searching and seeking for Jesus?

(1F) The first cause concerned their motivation. In vs. 26 Jesus said: "You seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."

It wasn't the miracle that caught their attention. It was the meeting of a temporary need that causes them to seek after Jesus. Hay! Man, let's follow this guy. We can get a free meal. And I believe it is much like many people today. Many people only come to

Jesus with the desire of having some temporary need fulfilled. They don't come to Jesus expecting a miracle. Dear friends, we need to realize that Jesus is almighty God in human flesh asking our obedience and submission to Him. And maybe we would see more miracles on bended knees.

(2F) Secondly, notice the message of eternal life that Jesus gave to them. And it was immediate. He wasted no time. Vs 27, Jesus says: "Do not work for the food which perishes." You could substitute anything want for the word "food", Any temporary need which is perishing. It doesn't last. There is no eternal value.

"But", Vs 27, "work for the food which endures to eternal life, which the son of man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal."

Now, what is the point of that verse? When Caesar put his seal on a document, the authority of Rome was behind it. The seal made it valid. What Jesus is saying here is that "I have authority to give eternal life. I am telling the truth. And this truth has the seal of the heavenly Father. Jesus said: "God the Father has sealed Him." Meaning: himself. So, don't ware yourself out seeking temporary needs. But, instead, work for the kind of food that last for eternal life.

And, dear friends, that still applies to us today. We work for so many things that perish. When we should be desiring with our whole hearts those things that are laid up in heaven where rust will not corrupt.

(3F) Third, I would like you to notice the method God uses in order for you to obtain that eternal life, that food which last for eternal life. The method.

In Vs 28; “They said therefore to him, What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Not only “they” but “we” continue to ask that same stupid question. Everybody want to work their way into God’s eternal life. And you cannot do it.

People are trying to score points. They hope by the things that they do which are good, that some how in the end god is going to accept them into heaven. “What shall we do that we may work the works of God?”

Well, here is the answer of Jesus. Vs 29: “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” You see, our old sin nature wants to work for that which god offers by faith. We are always trying to earn what Jesus said He would give. Salvation and eternal life is a gift of God. It is food that will last for ever. And Jesus gives it without cost. PRAISE GOD!

(4E) Now, beginning with Vs 30, please notice that a contrast is made by the Jews between Moses and what Jesus did. You may have wondered why they brought this issue up? Vs 30 says: “They said therefore to him, what then do you do for a sign, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform?”

Then before He has a chance to answer they say in Vs 31: “our Fathers ate manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.” WHAT IS THEIR POINT? Their point is a put down to the miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand. It is opposition to the claims of Jesus.

You may ask the question: WHY DIDN’T THEY SEE THE MIRACLE? Jesus said: “You didn’t see the miracle. You just ate the food. That is all you wanted.” WHY DIDN’T THEY SEE THE MIRACLE? Here is the answer

In the O.T. there fathers in the wilderness had received miraculous bread from heaven. Not just once. But, it was provided every day. For 40 years. And they saw that as a more powerful miracle then the miracle Jesus had just performed. So, what is the big deal. Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness.

Now, there are three things that I want you to see in this contrast between Moses and Moses and manna in the wilderness, and Jesus feeding the 5 thousand. Three things. (1) First of all, the proof that they wanted. They said in vs. 30: “what then do you do for a sign that we may see and believe you?” You see, they did not recognize the sign of feeding of the five thousand as being valid. Because they had seen it in the O.T. So, what unique thing, Jesus, will you do that we can see and then believe?

Every time I read a statement like that I can't help but remember the words of Jesus of Jesus to Thomas, who also required a sign following the resurrection in order to believe that Jesus was alive. After the resurrection of Jesus, people said He was alive. But, Thomas said: “I will not believe unless I see it.” And then it is kind off funny because Jesus appeared to Thomas and said: “Here are the nail prints. Here I the wound in my side. And be not unbelieving, but believe.” Thomas fell down at the feet and Jesus and said: “My Lord and my God.” But, I have always liked how Jesus responded to Thomas. He said: “Thomas, you have seen and you believe. But, more blessed are those who have not seen, yet ~~they~~ believe.”

Many that is great. Because that includes all of us. We have not seen. Yet, we believe. So, they wanted a sign. Prove to us that you are better than what happened in the O.T.

(2) The second thing in Vs 31, is that they trusted in the past. The past was very, very important in the minds of the Jews. And they trusted in the past. And rightly so. They had some great things happen in the past.

I like the meaning of the word “Manna.” The word in Hebrew means “What is It.” It is God’s little funny joke. You see, all that stuff came down from heaven. And the Jews looked at it and said, “WHAT IS IT.” And God said, “Hay! That is a great name. Let’s call it ‘WHAT IS IT’, from now on.” So, they did. Hay! Mom, what’s for dinner. Oh, I thought we would have: WHAT IS IT, for dinner.

You know, they constantly argued about what that manna was? And years later they still debated as to what it was. They called it “spiritual food” or “angle food” or what ever. They knew it was unusually food. That is for sure. Because, for one thing, that food didn’t last. Some guys would say: “Hay! Let’s save some and we will not have to gather as much tomorrow.” But, whatever they didn’t eat in one day, the rest would spoil over night. Except on Friday.

Now, I think that is kind off funny. On Friday they gathered the manna and it lasted for two days. Manna didn’t come from heaven on Saturday because that was the Sabbath. It is no wander they didn’t know what to call this food. And the funny thing is that it tasted good. The O.T. said that it tasted sweet as honey.

And it is amazing. Here they are saying: “look our fathers ate this “WHAT IS IT” in the desert. But, we want you to know that God gave the “WHAT IS IT”, from heaven. And Jesus uses that to make a play on words to tell them why they didn’t understand the loaves that he distributed. And if you miss that you miss the story. They didn’t anymore understand that then they did the O.T. manna.

(3) Now, third, the person who gave the manna. And let me tell you, the people knew what Jesus was saying. And, dear friends, this is a key reason for opposition. Please notice what Jesus is saying about the person who gave the manna. Vs. 32, Jesus said: “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but my Father (the emphases in on the word my) my Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.

Now, the word “true” , in Greek, has the idea of “a reality of type.” That is so important. Jesus wasn’t just saying “TRUE” in comparison to “FALSE”. It wasn’t false bread in the wilderness. No way! The bread was real. Thus, it is true in the sense of the fulfillment of type. Obviously, the type of the manna in the O.T.

So, Jesus says, “My Father gives you the real bread, the fulfillment of that O.T. type. And He gives that from heaven. And Moses had nothing to do with it.

And that is so true. He didn't. In fact, Moses had nothing to do with anything that went on in the wilderness. If you know the story, you will remember that he was ususally crying or complaining about something. And God was all the time reminding him that He will take care of things.

So, the Father gave that bread. Moses didn't have anything to do with it. Notice, Jesus says "My Father." WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT?

Because the issue here is the one who gave the manna from heaven. THE FATHER.!! And Jesus is saying "THAT IS MY FATHER."

Again...it is another one of those statements that would cause a Jew to get mad. Jesus claiming equality with God.

²⁸
~~(35)~~ Now, the ^{fourth} ~~fourth~~ thing that I want you to notice here, beginning at Vs 34, is the character of this bread of life. Jesus now tells you what it was that was in the wilderness ... ^{The Manna} ~~THE POINT OF IT ALL~~... WHAT DOES IT MEAN...IT HAS A SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT. Now, there are six things that I want you to see as we look at the character of this bread.

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(1F) Number one, it involves His presence. His real literal presence. Jesus said ~~after they ask him in vs 34~~ "Lord, evermore give us this bread?", I mean who wouldn't want bread like that. Jesus said, Vs 35, "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."

Now you can read on. But that is the point. That bread in the O.T., that manna. What was it? It was Jesus. Friends, you are always nourished by Jesus! ^{you are the bread of life} WHAT WAS THE WATER? JESUS!!! The rock?.....Jesus.... You see, it ^{had} ~~had~~ to do with eternal life. It was given to the people in the O.T.

You say, "Well, was that really eternal life or was it real water?" It was real water, and it is also a sysmbol of eternal life.

The manna was real; but it was also a symbol of the real presence of Jesus. Now, follow this carefully. ^{Meat - Not just Milk}

The Bible also teaches that Jesus is the pass-over meal; and that He is also the unleaven bread. Every time the Jews ^{ate the Unleaven Bread} ~~were eating that~~, it was a symbol of the LITERAL, PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST.

Now, let's look at our times. ~~The~~ church practices, when it takes communion, it has the bread and the cup. Jesus taught that the bread is his body and his presence. His literal presence. He said, "THIS IS MY BODY."

Now, some people say, "Well, I know that some churches believe that that bread is the literal body of christ. I mean ...Physical....NO!! IT IS NOT SAYING THAT.

Some believe that "IT BECOMES" Jesus. His literal presence..NO, IT IS NOT SAYING THAT.

Some believe that it is only a symbol and nothing else. NO! It is not that either. Jesus didn't say "This is like my body." IT IS MY BODY.

So. The point is that it is the real presence, spiritual presence, of Jesus, *ite* is always present. And the bread in its continually nourishment of the people was symbolic, but also spoke to the fact that the presence of Jesus was always there. [You mean to tell *me* that Jesus was there in the wilderness? OH, YES, He was! You see, Jesus has always existed. The real presence of Jesus has always been there. *IN FACT* Jesus is right here, today. *He is here in this room*

Now, the body in which he came and lived for 33 years is not here. It is in heaven. But, that is not all there is to Jesus. God is in human flesh. And God is omnipresent.

Christians say, "Jesus is in my heart." That is literally true. Not because you feel like it. But because it is a fact upon which you place faith in the Word of God.

and How is Jesus made real? Well, the Holy Spirit lives in me. But is Jesus here to? YES!!! Because the Spirit and Jesus are one and the same. And so ~~is~~ the Father and Jesus. So, whatever the Father is...Jesus is...Whatever the Holy Spirit is...Jesus is.

SO THE ~~Jesus~~ actual presence *of Jesus* is here, right now. Now, in some *mysterious* way he

and was to localize that presence in a physical body which is now in heaven. But, that isn't all there is to Jesus Christ. That is a mystery for our minds to understand, isn't it? God is everywhere at once. Omn-presence... And the reality of the presence of Jesus is now felt in another loaf ~~and~~ bread

Now when

For we read in I Cor 10¹⁶ even as believers take the bread and the cup they are remembering not only the literal presence of Christ in our midst, but they are also reminding themselves that they are one loaf. The life of Jesus is now in the body of Christ: meaning all believers throughout history. All believers are part of the literal life and body of Christ. And Jesus is in the body of believers called the church. Not building or organization. But in his body---people, who have come to know Christ.

SO, Jesus is literally here this morning. ^{AND I Hope} ~~DO~~ YOU BELIEVE THAT? ^{Because it is true}

Well, I don't see him anywhere. Oh, yes you do. You see him in the lives of people. His presence is here. His presence is just as real as these hands of mine. Just as real.

Just because you don't see something, that doesn't mean it is not real.

But I praise God that that which I see now by faith, one day is going to be made clear to me even from the stand point of the five senses. ~~Because when~~ ^{when Jesus Comes Again} ~~I see just when he comes back again,~~ HOW WILL HE COME? In that literal body ⁱⁿ which he was resurrected.

But that doesn't in any way take away from the ~~literalness and the~~ reality of His very presence in this room, right now. Jesus is here, ^{dear friends} Have you been talking with him? He is here. Right now... Jesus is the bread. ^{OF LIFE}

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(2nd) The second thing that I want you to see about that bread is the pre-requisite to enjoy it. You say, "I don't understand this. I am not enjoying that bread of life. I am not enjoying that literal presence of Christ

Well, here is the reason. Vs 35.. "he who comes to me....He who believes in Me." ^{Dear} Friends, you have to come to Christ. You have to believe in Him. To believe that he is who He claimed to be. All belief in Jesus is believing in the Christ of the Bible. ^{Dear Friend} ~~Because~~ there are many people who say they believe in Christ, but they are not believing in the Christ of the Bible.

I have talked with many people who say they believe in Jesus. But they do not understand who He is. One of the best ways to identify whether they do or not, is to ask them whether or not they believe that Jesus is the God who made them.

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The Bible says that all things were created by ^{Jesus} ~~God~~. To ask them whether they believe that Jesus has always existed, that he never had a beginning or an end. ^{on} To ask them if they believe that all the physical laws of the universe are being sustained by his own power? ^{on} To ask them whether they believe that he existed before Abraham lived?

When you face people with the issues of who Jesus really is, you will discover whether they are believing Jesus of the Bible. HE WHO COMES TO ME, ^{IS} HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME, You have to believe in Jesus as He tells you who He is. Jesus is the God who made you and me.

You say, "How can the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be one. I don't know the final answer to that. But I do know one thing that that is possible on the human level. That one substance can manifest itself in three literal, visible ways that I can see. And I can understand how God can be one in substance and essence and being, and yet function in personalities different from each other. That is a possibility.

God refers to the essences and substance of each of the persons of the Trinity.

And that is very, very important as a pre-requisite. Have you come to Him. Have you believed in him in the sense of the Bible? ~~Do~~ You have to believe the historical, objective facts of the Bible. And when you believe it, you will also know that it is the truth. Because God's Spirit will minister to your spirit that what you read ^{is} the truth. Jesus is truth. He is God, I John 5:20 says "This is the true God, Jesus Christ."

(3F) Number three, His promise . Vs 35 says, that we shall never hunger and we shall never thirst."

In contrast to the manna of the O.T. which didn't last, Jesus said, "You come to this bread, you will never hunger again. You believe on me, you will never ~~thirst~~ thirst again." Wonderful statements.

(4F) Number four, his power . You talk about power. We read in Vs 37.. "All that the Father gives me shall come to me."

You say, "Boy! that is an interesting verse." Yes, it really is. It means that ever body who is ever going to come to Jesus has already been given to Jesus by the father. You see, that gives me a lot of confidence when I talk to some one about Christ. People often say, "Well, I am not going to accept Jesus." And I say, "if you are one of the ones that the Father has given to Jesus, you are going to accept him. It will happen. So, why not make it happen right now."

"Oh, you are just trying to scare me into Christ." Well, don't worry about it. It will happen. "All that the Father gives me shall come to me."

Do you understand? It is the power of God which draws a person to Christ. You may come in your owns strength and never really gets saved. God isn't even working in your life. You may just come because your wife ask you, or you think it is nice to belong to a church or whatever. But, listen dear friends, when the power of God is working in your life, you will come. You will not be able to resist the drawing power of the Holy Spirit.

I have seen people under conviction. They sweat. They ring their hands trying to stay away. Have you ever seen that? Have you ever seen the misery on someone's face who is trying to resist the power of the Spirit? It is kind off funny. It is, also, sad to watch them struggle. "All that the Father gives me shall come to me." That is wonderful assurance for your life.

The bible says that our names were written in the lambs book of life before the foundation of the world. They either were or they were not. The bible says you were chosen before the foundation of the world.

I have no problem with that if I understand who God is. But, if I have a watered down opinion of god, then I don't understand it. I get hung up on free choice. God is all knowing. He knows everything. He knows every one who is here today. He knows everything you have ever done, and everything you are going to do. He know it right now in this one moment of time. You cannot hide from God. The bible says that everything is open to Him. He knows everything in your life. And based on that principle is the simple statement "All that the Father gives me shall come to me. And he that comes to me, I will in no way cast out." WHAT TREMENDOSU ASSURANCE. Jesus will never cast anyone out who comes to him believing that He is all that He claims to be.

And he will not cast you out either. Isn't that wonderful? You know, God loves you and accets you. Not because of your performance, but because of what Jesus has already done. Isn't that wonderful? Salvation is not based upon your performance. That is a beautiful thing. He that comes to me, I will never cast out.

(5F) And that is the fiveth thing that I want you to see, Jesus will never cast you out. That is a wonderful promise.

(6F) And number six, his purpose in verses 38 to 40. His purpose, first, was to perform God's will. Vs 38 says, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me." To do god's will.

(2G) Secondly, his purpose was to perserve those who had been given to him. Vs 39, "And this is the will of Him who sent me, that of all that He has given me I ^{lose}lose"...HOW MANY? "NOTHING" Isn't that wonderful? All the ones that the Father gives to me, I will never lose a one.

(3G) And third, his purpose is to provide everlasting life and resurrection. Jesus said, "that everyone who believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I myself will raise him up on the last day."

PRAISE THE LORD! What wonerful security...what wonderful confidence.

If you would like to belong to a Lord like that, who loves you no matter what you have done, then believe in the Christ of the Bible.

Don't come to Him to get out of a jam or meet some temporary need. Come because you reconize WHO HE IS. That He loves you and He has offered you eternal life. ^{and} When you feel that pull in your heart, know that it is the Holy Spirit pulling you to Christ. And then respond by accepting Christ as your Lord and Saviour.

(CLOSE IN PRAYER)