

John chapter 6,  
- Part 1 -



## **“THE BREAD OF LIFE”:**

### **What are YOU eating?**

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**John 6:22-40** *On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not*

*entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. 25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?” 26 Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27 “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” 28 Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” 30 Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? 31 “Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” 32 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 “For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34 Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.” 35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. 36 “But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. 37 “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38 “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 “This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

**I would think that across the board we all are thrilled to hear that someone is “seeking after Jesus.”** Yet anyone who is active in ministry endeavors knows that people seek Jesus for a lot of different reasons, many of which are disingenuous and even nefarious. Even scripture records several of these persuasions. Folks who came to him out of curiosity or out of a desire for vindication, acquisition, or earthly redemption.

There were and *are* a lot of reasons to seek after deity...most of which can honestly be selfish and worldly in nature. Sadly, the broader church today often propagates this practice, and in reality many who attend church or even count themselves as part of the family of God live daily in misconception and with a ‘re-envisioned’ gospel. These that sought Jesus that day were frankly just simply after free food. They were in it strictly for themselves...

This passage comes on the heels of the “Feeding of the 5000,” where Jesus broke the bread that was present, multiplied it, and used it to feed the thousands of people who were present. There is no doubt that Jesus supplied the human need that existed, as He so often does even yet today. But the tendency will be to lose oneself in that caveat and fail to grasp the bigger picture, the ‘larger ideal’: *The principle that Jesus longs to fill a hunger in humanity that far outweighs the immediate need, the next urgency.*

The people missed the point. Perhaps they too, like now, were lost in the want, the desire, the *self*. I wonder why we are all here today? Is our presence and involvement in kingdom pursuit that of self-preservation, comfort, possession, and physical want? Sadly, we can even perhaps gain all of those things and still be *hungry*. I believe there are many who are out there today...participating in the things of church, and missing that greater picture. And like these in the story, once they discover or admit to the truth of the Christian paradigm, they too will “*go back and walk with Him no more.*” (vs 66)

Our modern church today has in many instances simply reinvented the gospel to make it more appealing to contemporary culture. We have sanded off the sharp edges and erased the more controversial elements. Having rejected the scary stuff and softened the biblical demands we have created a more palatable 21<sup>st</sup> century credo: one that embraces the social gospel...feeding the hungry bread, while ignoring the greater picture, one that encompasses a provision that would provide a dynamic in which we would never hunger again. In doing so, we have become guilty of having “*worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.*” (Romans 1:25)

Some might see this all as a rather harsh appraisal of the state of the church and the hearts of many who count themselves a part of it. But I would defend my assessment by recognizing that Jesus was herein doing much the same. Jesus knew that in order to have real truth and honest commitment to God one must be first stripped of our veil of hypocrisy. No individual will ever come to know Christ until he comes to know himself as well as his honest motivations. What’s the use of talking about salvation until we know that we are really lost and in need of a Savior, even if we have plenty to eat?

As Jesus begins to unfold the true nature of His ministry, one can immediately sense resistance. Jesus says “*Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.*” The words ‘labor not’ means “be not busy about.” Jesus wasn’t promoting a laissez faire attitude: a cavalier position against working for a living. In fact the bible teaches just the opposite. Jesus had already spoken in Matthew 6:26 saying “*Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*”

But these people were engrossed with the loaves and the fishes! They were singularly obsessed with that which perishes! Oh if we could only live in the light that everything we have will remain when we are gone! We can take nothing with us. How little will our stuff matter on the day of our departure!

“*Then they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.’*” We might quickly reply herein “Oh! Then I am safe, because I do indeed *believe in Him.*” Ahh! But do we really? To believe *IN* Him, is to believe in everything He is and everything He taught. It means we accept the whole as a ‘package deal.’ It further means that I have accepted all of it as a principle of being... a way of life, even if we do so in an imperfect state. Please note that Jesus wasn’t asking for perfection outside of His positional redemption. But what He is asking for is a belief that the gospel is not just for salvation but for living.

It is an acceptance of the truth of Jesus as genuine and for me and for me to model my life in. No ‘buts.’ No exceptions. Perhaps that is why Jesus said it the way He did... “*this is the work of God.*” Because believing in this manner is not a passive action but rather a principle of lifestyle and a purposeful action and intent. Such a life requires *work*. He tells us that we **are** to labor “for the food which endures to everlasting life.” Paul, recognizing the effort required tell us to “*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*” (Philippians 2:12) He tells us in Galatians 6:4 to make a practice to ‘examine’ that work. In example Jesus Himself said elsewhere “*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.* (John 4:34)

We rightfully embrace the doctrine of ‘eternal security’...that our true salvation can never be lost, but such reality...the **proof** of that standing, lies in our living, our **response** to His redemption! When we ‘labor for that food which does not perish...that which endures to everlasting life...the stuff that we can take with us when we leave, it is such that says that God has indeed “*set His seal*” on us. (verse 27) So many of us are afraid of looking too closely in that matter, because we are honestly afraid of what we might find!

Archbishop D’Arcy put it succinctly when he said, “*The words of Jesus shine by their own light, they carry with them their own credentials. There are no other words like them anywhere. Like the Person who uttered them, they are unique. They are simple, yet profound; calm, yet intense; ‘mild yet terrible.’ They have a peculiar force which expresses authority. They do not persuade or intreat or reason with the hearer: they penetrate, they convict, they reveal. The charm and the wonder of them are as fresh today, for the unlearned as well as the learned, as when the people were astonished at His doctrine.*”

All of what Jesus was speaking of came in language that may seem odd to us, but the hearers that day may have found it somewhat shocking and even repulsive, but they knew what He was saying. For it was the Passover season when our Lord gave this discourse. It was the springtime of the year. In the first Passover back in Egypt, a lamb had to be chosen for each household in Israel. It had to be without blemish or without spot. It was then killed and it’s blood was to be applied to the door posts and lintel. There was an *action* that was required or there would be death. That was a fact. God said, “...*when I see the blood, I will pass over you.*” The angel of death would pass by them because of their response to God’s directive. It wasn’t merely the blood of the lamb but it was that **blood on the door posts** that protected that house.

The Scripture says, “*Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*” He was the lamb of God without blemish or without spot. But as there was no salvation for Israel in a live lamb, so there is no salvation in an uncrucified Christ, nor an uncrucified life. **Having** an unspotted lamb doesn’t count. **Believing** that such a lamb can save will not redeem. Apart from the cross, there is no salvation. Jesus had to die to this world, and so must we in modeling our life after His. It was the blood on the door posts that protected the first-born in Israel from being slain with all the first-born in Egypt. It is the blood on the heart that saves, not the blood on the cross. There must be personal appropriation before there can be salvation from judgment and sin.

Please don’t understand my words herein to say that you are in anyway *adding* to the work of the cross and to your salvation. I am speaking in light of our *response* to that work that Jesus completed unilaterally and absolutely. Ours is an issue of obedience in light of that finished work. It does not save you, but it says you *are* saved, something we are called to examine! 2Corinthians 13:5 is explicit in calling us to “*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? — unless indeed you are disqualified.*”

Those that were present at that first Passover could not merely say they believed in God if they failed to act upon His word's... failed to move in obedience to His directive. They may have believed He was *real*. But that would not have saved them. They still would have been lost. They may have believed that they *should* move according to God's direction, but if they hadn't, they *still would have been lost*. Only their follow-through testified that they truly *believed in God*. Anything short of such said, *and says*, that they really don't believe...

Verse 35 says that "Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." Again, such a statement speaks of action on our part. We are not saved by default. Despite some folks belief, not everyone "will eventually be saved." We must *go to Jesus* and there we will never hunger. We must *believe*, and in such, we will never thirst. Oh how humanity hungers and thirsts today! Our economy speaks it, our politics scream it, and our culture wears it and is consumed by it. And one of Satan's great lies, is that we can believe and still live as we please. Vast numbers of church-ed folks have embraced such a paradigm and are today lost even while sitting in church week after week.

For some, our "belief" depicts a confession with the mouth but a heart that is unchanged. For others, our belief depicts an attitude of having to help God out which is a direct insult to the entire Godhead. That is a 'works based faith' that essentially says the Father's plan was faulty and needs our help. That the cross was not a sufficient sacrifice for our sins, and our works can be substituted for the work of the Holy Spirit. There must be a firm grasp of this issue, if we are to be sure: To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to commit to Him.

The Greek word for "believe" is "pisteuo." According to Strongs (G4100) it means: (I) to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in; (A) of the thing believed, to credit, have confidence; (B) in a moral or religious reference, used in the NT of the conviction and trust to which a man is impelled by a certain inner and higher prerogative and law of soul, to trust in Jesus or God as able to aid either in obtaining or in doing something (saving faith), mere acknowledgment or some fact or event (intellectual faith): (II) to entrust a thing to one, i.e. his fidelity; (A) to be entrusted with a thing. This word is translated as "believe" 239 times in scripture.

So again I ask: *Why are you here?* Are you looking for more bread today or are you here seeking "The Bread of Life?" Maybe you "believe" in the classic modern sense, but you are factually still hungry and still thirsty. You know something is not right, but are afraid of the ramifications of such a confession. Verse 54 will tell us that "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

The word "eats" is in the present tense, meaning "continuing and ongoing." So perhaps you once partook in the life of Jesus, but have since become distracted and began to live off the sweet cotton candy of the world. Hebrews 11:25 tells us that sin is sweet for a season. But it is also empty and leaves us wanting. Those that are truly believers are *satisfied*. Isa 55:2 "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance." Ps 107:9 "For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness."

Are you spiritually hungry today?

*What are you eating?*