

“I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE” KNOWING JESUS SERIES

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TEXT: John 6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst... 40 For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”

INTRO: Story about two loaves of raisin bread. Bread is considered a staple food—i.e., a basic dietary item. Bread and rice. I personally am a rice person, but we are talking about the Bread of Life! Bread is first mentioned in Genesis 3:19. The bread was so nutritional, not like the store-bought bread today; a person could live a long time on only bread and water. Bread is such a basic food item that it becomes synonymous for food in general. Jesus taught us to pray, “Give us today our daily bread.” We even use the phrase “breaking bread together” to indicate the sharing of a meal with someone.

Many people were so impoverished throughout the history of humanity that their goal was to have enough bread and water for the day. Even in Christ’s time, 85% of one’s income went to purchase bread for the family (Dr. Carson). Meat was rarely eaten except on holidays and during the time of the feasts. E.g., story of Georgian Banov when he came to the USA from Communist Bulgaria. He would have to wait for hours to get a loaf of bread in Bulgaria, but when he came to the U.S., he was overwhelmed by the variety of the bread section alone.

Bread also plays an integral part of the Jewish Passover meal. The Jews were to eat unleavened bread during the Passover feast and then for seven days following as a celebration of the exodus from Egypt. Finally, when the Jews were wandering in the desert for 40 years, God rained down “bread from heaven” to sustain the nation (Exodus 16:4). It is in this overall biblical context that Jesus says, “I am the Bread of Life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.”

What does “Bread of Life” mean in John 6? I believe it means three things based on the context of our text: **(1) Jesus, the Bread of Life wants to meet your physical needs on a daily basis. (2) Jesus, the Bread of Life wants you to be spiritually nourished by Him as you abide in Jesus. (3) Jesus, the Bread of**

Life wants you to receive the gift of eternal life by believing in Him. Let's talk about how He wants to meet your all of your physical needs.

I. JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE WANTS TO MEET YOUR PHYSICAL NEEDS

A. John 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

1. We have to understand that there is a play on words here. There is a double meaning to this text. When you give your heart to Jesus, He will fill your spiritual needs by giving you His Spirit. But it is also suggesting that He will meet your physical needs. The context to John 6:35 is that Jesus healed the lame man in John 5 and then Jesus feeds the five thousand in John 6.

B. LOOKING ONCE AGAIN AT THE TETRAGRAMMATON

1. "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35) is one of the seven "I Am" statements of Jesus. Jesus used the same phrase "I AM" in seven declarations about Himself. In all seven, He combines "I AM" with tremendous metaphors that express His saving relationship to the world. Last week I taught that whenever Jesus said, "I am," He was referring to the revelation of God's name to Moses in Exodus 3 called the *Tetragrammaton*. The four letters of YHWH in Hebrew are translated "I AM."
2. Another translation for the **Tetragrammaton** is **"I will be that I will be."** **Implying, "I am the God who will meet all your needs."**
3. Jesus' first words in public ministry in the Gospel of Luke are in **Luke 4:18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR."**
4. *Gospel* means good news. What is good news to the poor? They don't have to be poor anymore.
5. The context to Jesus saying "I am the Bread of Life" is healing the lame man in John 5 and the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6:1-14. The feeding of the 5,000 is the only story that is in all four Gospels.
6. God wants to meet your spiritual needs but also your physical needs.
7. **John 6:32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world." 34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread."**
8. It is not Moses who fed you, but God in Heaven.

9. He revealed Himself as Jehovah Jireh, God the Provider in the Old Testament.
 10. **Genesis 22:14 Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide (YHWH-jireh), as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”**
 11. **Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 6:24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. 25 For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? 28 And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil, nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ 32 For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”**
 12. God wants to meet our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**
 13. Fuller School of World Mission, Dr. McGavran taught “Redemption and Lift.”
 14. **David said in Psalm 37:25, “I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread. 26 All day long he is gracious and lends, and his descendants are a blessing.”**
- C. TWO PRINCIPLES THAT YOU MUST ACTIVATE TO RECEIVE HIS PROVISION FOUND IN JOHN 6
1. **SOW:** You have to sow in order to reap. The little boy sowed his two fish and five small barley cakes to Jesus. He gave his all, and Jesus blessed him

with 12 basketfuls. **John 6:8** One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, **9** "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?" **10** Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So, the men sat down, in number about five thousand. **11** Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise, also of the fish as much as they wanted.

2. **STEWARD:** You have to steward what He gives you. **John 6:12** When they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost." **13** So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. **14** Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."
3. My personal life as expressed in the book *The Grace of Giving*. (Sarah, please make a slide of the cover of the book)

II. JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE WANTS YOU TO BE SPIRITUALLY NOURISHED BY HIM AS YOU ABIDE IN HIS PRESENCE

A. John 6:55 "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. **56** He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *abides* in Me, and I in him."

B. BE FULL BUT STAY HUNGRY

1. **Matthew 5:6**, Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."
2. A dumb beer commercial but with spiritual truth: "Stay thirsty, my friends."
3. Paul, at the end of his life, he wanted to know Jesus (Philippians 3:10).
4. When you lose your spiritual hunger, it is the beginning of losing your first love.

III. JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE WANTS YOU TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE BY BELIEVING IN HIM

A. He accuses the crowd of ignoring His miraculous signs and only following Him for the "free meal." Jesus tells them in:

1. **John 6:27** "Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

2. In other words, they were so enthralled with the food, they were missing out on the fact that their Messiah had come. So, the Jews ask Jesus for a sign that He was sent from God (as if the miraculous feeding and the walking across the water weren't enough). They tell Jesus that God gave them manna during the desert wandering. Jesus responds by telling them that they need to ask for the true bread from heaven that gives life. When they ask Jesus for this bread, Jesus startles them by saying, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."
3. This is a phenomenal statement! First, by equating Himself with bread, Jesus is saying He is *essential* for life. Second, the life Jesus is referring to is not physical life, but eternal life. Jesus is trying to get the Jews' thinking off of the physical realm and into the spiritual realm. He is contrasting what He brings as their Messiah with the bread He miraculously created the day before. That was physical bread that perishes. He is spiritual bread that brings eternal life.
4. Finally, notice the words "come" and "believe." This is an invitation for those listening to place their faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. This invitation to come is found throughout John's Gospel. Coming to Jesus involves making a choice to forsake the world and follow Him. Believing in Jesus means placing our faith in Him that He is who He says He is, that He will do what He says He will do, and that He is the only one who can. Then by faith you surrender your life to Jesus.

CONCLUSION:

The Bible also tells us that there is nothing we can do to earn our way to heaven because we've all sinned (Romans 3:23) and the only thing our sin earns us is death (Romans 6:23). There is no one who is righteous in himself (Romans 3:10). Our dilemma is we have a desire we cannot fulfill, no matter what we do. That is where Jesus comes in. He, and He alone, can fulfill that desire in our hearts for righteousness through the Divine Transaction: "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). When Christ died on the cross, He took the sins of mankind upon Himself and made atonement for them. When we place our faith in Him, our sins are imputed to Jesus, and His righteousness is imputed to us. Jesus satisfies our hunger and thirst for righteousness. He is our Bread of Life.