

The Bread of Life
Part 2
John 6:26-40
Reading: Psalm 66:1-7, 16-20

Bethany Baptist Church
August 9, 2020

...pray...

Return with me to the Gospel of John 6:25-40 (read).

Last Sunday we examined the **first half** of Jesus' dialogue w/this **hungry crowd** at **Capernaum's synagogue**.

Yesterday He *fed* them (up to **20K!**).

This morning they *chased* Him (from the **east shore** all the way to **Capernaum**).

Now they are *pressing* Him for **another free meal!**

Jesus' dialogue with the crowd unfolds in a series of **four questions/demands** (from the **crowd**)...and the resulting *responses/rebukes* from **Jesus**.

Exchanges that forced the conversation from **barley loaves** to the **Bread of Life**.

From **today's desires** to **eternity's destination**.

This is **not** just **Capernaum's** problem, it's the **world's ultimate question...!**

Again, Jesus exposes the religion of the crowd (...and of the world).

...last Sunday (vv.25-33)...

1. **The world wants a religion of prosperity.**
2. **The world always defaults to a religion of works.**
3. **The world demands proof in the place of faith.**

...this morning...

4. **vv.34-36 The crowd's spiritual blindness.**
The world can't see the truth.
5. **vv.37-40 The crowd's only hope.**
Jesus: "I am the Bread of Life."

Let's review those first *three exchanges* (last Sunday)...

The dialogue began as Jesus *exposed* the world's *temporal appetites* (25-27).

1. Jesus had **preached** to them and then **fed** them on the east side of the *Sea of Galilee*, then they **chased** Him across the Sea to village of *Capernaum*.
 - a. And they **found** Him... "*Rabbi, when you get here?*"
 - b. Their *concern* was still their *appetite*.
2. Jesus saw right through them. Instead of **answering** their *lame question* He **cut** straight to the chase.
 - a. "*Truly, truly*" (26) - Jesus is calling them to **stop listening to their stomachs** and start **listening to Him**.
 - i. "When I **fed** you, my **point** was your **faith**, and my **goal** was your **salvation**."
 - ii. "But *what* do you **remember**...? A **free meal** and a **full belly**!"
 - iii. **Stop** with this preoccupation with your **fleshly appetites**!
 - iv. **Start** "**working**" for the **food** that never **goes out of date** and **satisfies forever**.
 - b. The **religion of the world** wants a *free meal* and a *full belly*.

The dialogue continued as Jesus *exposed* the world's *false religion* (28-29).

1. The crowd had seized on **one word** from Jesus' rebuke (27): "*work*."
 - a. We're **not** talking about *vocation* and *toil*...
 - b. "Anything you do to **earn God's favor** by **your performance**." That's *works*. This "*works religion*" was *engraved* into **Jewish thought**.

2. Jesus had introduced the idea of **working**, but then (29) defined **work** as ***faith***, **not** religious effort.
 - a. The only “***work***” **God** is looking for is ***belief*** in **His Son**. **2X**
 - b. And as Jesus had **taught** repeatedly, ***He*** is the **Son of God**, sent to do His **Father’s** will.
3. Here is a **question** you **can’t avoid** here: “Are you *practicing* the **religion of your works** or *trusting* in **God’s gift of His Son?**”
 - a. Any religion other than ***faith alone in Christ alone is false religion – false hope!***

In the third exchange Jesus *derailed* the world’s *skeptical response*. Read vv. 30-33

1. They **chased** Jesus around the Sea of Galilee, **heard** Him preach, **witnessed** the feeding, **tried to crown** Him king, but now they want a **sign!**
 - a. They quoted **Exodus 16:4** (31) ... Moses gave **manna**, and our fathers **ate**. Ask if to say, “What can ***You*** do for us?”
2. In response, again Jesus **demanded** their full attention – “***Truly, truly.***”
 - a. Then Jesus **rebuked** their **skepticism** by pointing out their **four misunderstandings** about **manna** (“***manna mistakes***”).
 - i. ***Manna Mistake # 1 (32)*** – That **manna** came from God, **not** Moses. **Moses** had just relayed God’s ***instructions!***
 - ii. **# 2** – The **OT manna** was not the “**true bread**” from heaven.
 - iii. **# 3** – The **OT manna** only gave **physical life**, the **bread of God**, the “***true bread,***” gives **spiritual life... eternal life**.
 - iv. **Error # 4 (33)** – The **manna** fed a **generation of Israel**; the **bread of God** gives life to **all** who believe, in **every generation**.
 - v. The world is ***skeptical*** and ***slow to believe*** – show it ***one sign*** and it demands ***another***. Show it the ***truth***, and it gets it ***wrong!***

This brings us to Jesus' *fourth & final exchange* with the crowd, a *rebuke of their spiritual blindness*. Read vv.34-36

1. The crowd seemed to instantly go from **demanding** another *sign* (30) to **asking** for the *bread of life*. From *skepticism* to *accepting*...
 - a. "*Lord, always give us this bread.*"
 - b. But let's review the **long bread menu** in this morning's text...
 - i. **v.26** – yesterday's *barley loaves*
 - ii. **v.27** – food which *perishes*, and the food which *endures*
 - iii. **v.31** – **OT** *manna*, and the bread out of *heaven*
 - iv. **v.32** – *true bread* out of heaven
 - v. **v.33** – *bread of God* (**read v.33**)
 - c. "*Lord, always give us this bread.*" But *which bread* is the crowd really asking for...?
 - i. Just the *same bread* it's asked for all along! Just more *barley loaves*, preferably enough to last a **mortal lifetime**.
2. Jesus responded with a **plain-spoken explanation** of the **bread** of **vv.32-33**. *He* is the **true bread** of heaven, the **bread of God**...the bread which **gives eternal life!**
 - a. "*I am the bread of life*" – "*I am.*" **What a claim...!**
 - b. This is the first of **seven "I am"** declarations in John's Gospel.
 - i. "*I am*" is the **OT** name of **Jehovah** that He spoke to **Moses** from that **burning bush** in Exodus 3.
 - ii. Now Jesus, "*The Word Became Flesh,*" declares, "*I am*"... "*I am the Bread of Life.*"

Each of Jesus' **seven "I am" declarations** are bound to a **metaphor** that help us understand/love Jesus more

- c. Each of Jesus' seven "***I am***" declarations are bound to a **metaphor** that help us understand/love Jesus more.
- i. *I am the bread of life*. I satisfy every spiritual need and I give eternal life.
 - ii. *I am the light of the world* (8:12). I show truth.
 - iii. *I am the door of the sheep* (10:7,9). You enter the fold thru Me.
 - iv. *I am the good shepherd* (10:11,14). I take care of My own (does that remind you of **Psa 23** – *The Lord is my shepherd!*).
 - v. *I am the resurrection and the life* (11:25). **I** will be **raised**, so **you** will be **raised**.
 - vi. *I am the way, the truth, and the life* (14:6). There is **no other!**
 - vii. *I am the true vine* (15:1,5). You draw spiritual life *from* Me and you bear fruit *for* Me.
- b. The **Bread of Life** that Jesus offers is ***Himself***. (He'll say it again in **vv.41, 48 & 51** – *read each one.*)
- i. King David wrote, "*My soul thirsts for you and my flesh yearns for you.*"
 - ii. Jesus said, "*Blessed are those who **hungers** and **thirst** after righteousness.*"
 - iii. And He said, "***I am the Bread of Life.***"

Jesus is the soul-satisfying bread this crowd/**we ought** to be asking for, ... but they **don't!**

- d. We like to say, “*seeing is believing,*” but as we’ve seen, this crowd/world is **spiritually blind!**
- e. The **sense of contrast** between **v.35** & **v.36** is *painfully powerful*:
 - i. “*I am*” the Bread of life... “**Iam**” the Bread of Life...
 - ii. *But* (36, $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$ – *strong contrast*) ...*But you have seen Me* – My teachings, signs, testimonies – and yet **do not believe.**”
- f. What a *rebuke...!*

The “Bread of Life” - *eternal life* – stands right there in front of them, and they *can't* see and *won't* believe...

Then Jesus offers the world’s only hope: “*come to Me.*” **Read vv.37-40**

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1. That crowd **won't see** – **won't come**. And **that crowd, that day**, is just one more example of the *world's religion*, in every *generation*, in every *location*.
 - a. *If that's true* – what *hope* is there for **anyone...?**
 - b. But then Jesus moves from **rebuke** (36) to **hope**.
2. Jesus **promises** (37) that the **sinner's hope** rests in **God's grace**. Follow closely as **I read v.37 again**.
 - a. Let's break Jesus' promise into **two** parts. *First...*
 - b. "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me..."
 - i. The **underlying idea** (37) is that the Father has given a **gift** to His Son. That's seen in the idea of He "**gives Me**."
 - ii. The **gift's identity** is summarized as the "**all**." The meaning of "**all**" is a *collective* idea – like the **complete roster** for a *team*.
 1. The "**all**" is everyone in history who *believes* in Jesus.
 - iii. The **gift's activity** is that the *entire membership* of this team ("**Team Jesus**") will sooner or later *come to Christ*.
 - iv. The **gift's origin** is from *eternity past*, by the *sovereign choice of God*. God *selected* Jesus' followers ("**Team Jesus**") and *determined* to save them before the *foundation of the world*.
 1. We call this "**The Doctrine of Predestination**."
 2. **Paul** will write (Eph 1) – *He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself*

- c. Now consider the **second part** of Jesus' promise (37)... "*and the one who comes to Me I will certainly **not** cast out.*"
- i. Jesus' **promise** is *simple* and *emphatic* and *pumped full of hope!* "*I will certainly **not** cast out!*"
 - ii. If you **come** to Jesus, **Jesus' way**, Jesus **absolutely will** receive you! **No one** who *believes* in Jesus and *comes* to Jesus will be *turned away!*
- d. To review, the **first part** *theologically* identifies **who** will come (**elect**). The **second part** *emphatically* **invites** you to **come!**
3. Then Jesus *fortifies* His promise by rooting it in **God's will**.
- a. **God's will** is for Jesus to *save* and to *keep* the **gift** He's been given (*all, the elect*). When Jesus says (39) "*I lose **nothing***" you can pull that *inside out* and hear Jesus say, "*I keep **everything***" ... "***all that the Father has given Me.***" "*Every one of the elect.*"
 - b. The **Son's mission** (and *determination*) is to do His **Father's will**. As we've seen before (ch.4, ch.5), Jesus is *all about* **God's will**.
 - c. **Christian, listen!** Your eternal security is anchored in Jesus' commitment to do **God's will** (2X). *What else do you **think** He's going to do!?! That is *incredibly* assuring!*
 - i. On those **rare days** when **you don't do so good**, Jesus is no less **committed** to the **Father's will** to *save & secure* you!
 - ii. We refer to this truth as "***The Doctrine of the Perseverance/ Preservation of the Saints.***" Jesus **preserves** His own!
 - iii. As **Jude** wrote – *Now to Him who is able to **keep** you from stumbling, and to **make you stand** in the presence of His glory **blameless with great joy**, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. **Amen.***
 - d. Beloved in the Lord, **God's will** is for Jesus to *keep you*. **He will!**

4. Jesus **sums up** His promise in **v.40** (**read**).
 - a. **Jesus' promise** now looks at the **elect** *one by one* (“everyone”).
 - b. The undergirding idea is still **God's will**: *eternal life* and a *last day resurrection* for every single individual who *beholds* and *believes in* the Son of God (“all” – “the elect” from v.37).
 - c. And, again, the Son is **committed** (“*I Myself will...*”) to Father's will.
 - i. **20th century Bible teacher Willem Hendriksen**: *Scripture teaches that God's counsel cannot be changed, His calling cannot be revoked, His inheritance cannot be defiled, His foundation cannot be shaken, His seal cannot be broken, the life He gives ... cannot perish.*

So take it to the bank: Jesus will **raise up His people** on the *last day*, and that means Jesus will **save** and **keep His people**, ... all who **come** to Him and **trust** in Him.

“But what if I’m not one of the elect?”

That decision was **made by God** in eternity past.

Your responsibility is to *come* to Jesus right now.

The **evidence** of being one of **God’s elect** (37.a) is to **come to Jesus** (37.b).

Here’s how... Let’s start by **re-reading v.35**.

Jesus says *come* to Me and *believe* in Me.

Coming to Jesus suggests *repentance* – to determine to *turn* from your sin and to *follow/come* to Christ.

Believing in Jesus means...

To **accept** His claims to be **God’s Son** – *truly* Man and *truly* God.

To **embrace** that His **death on the cross** paid for the *debt of sin* you have accrued against God, because *you are sinful* and *God is uncompromisingly holy*.

To **believe** that Jesus’ payment is **all you need**, because

God is *satisfied* with the death of His Son in your place....,

and God *demonstrated* His satisfaction by *raising* Jesus from the grave on the *third day*.

Are you spiritually hungry?

Do you *want* “**The Bread of Life - eternal life?**”

Jesus said you can *have it now* – *and know it now!*

Come! “*all who come to Me, I will never cast out!*”

...pray...