

Men's Breakfast - The Bread of Life

1. What type of bread are you today: All natural? Rye? Moldy? Crusty? Fresh? Easy to butter up?
2. What kind of bread do you like most?
3. What four things does bread provide or do for us?

John 6:24-59 (NIV) 24 Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." 28 Then they asked him, "**What must we do to do the works God requires?**" 29 Jesus answered, "**The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.**" 30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? 31 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" 32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who 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 "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread." 35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. 40 **For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.**" 41 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven?'" 43 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. 44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. 47 **I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.** 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. 50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. **If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.** This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." 52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

DISCUSSION: The people recalled Moses providing (God actually provided) a whole nation mana from heaven for many years, the rabbis sometimes spoke of the Law as the heavenly food that God gives and by which a person can attain life. In some religions they people or priests would eat the meat from the sacrifices so their could become closer to their god.

1. Why are the crowds still searching for Jesus (w. 24–26)? What are they expecting or wanting?
2. How does Jesus' response to their question show the difference between his interests and theirs?
3. What did Jesus say the Son of Man would give to these people? (6:27)

4. What do you think the people were expecting to hear when they asked the question in verse 28? What are some of the answers you have heard to that question?

5. How are they to work for the food that leads to eternal life (v. 29)?

In what sense is faith in Jesus a human "work"?

What did Jesus say was the work of God? (6:28-29)

What did the crowd ask Jesus to do? (6:30-31)

6. What does the crowd ask Jesus to do in order that they can believe him? What is their real interest?

Who did Jesus say was the true bread of life? (6:32-33)

What did Jesus say would be the result of coming to Him? (6:35)

What did Jesus say He would never do to those who came to Him? (6:37)

Why did Jesus come down from heaven? (6:38)

7. How does Jesus use their interest in food to illustrate what he wants them to understand? What are the similarities and differences between manna (Ex 16) and the "bread of life" (v. 35)?

12. How is the "bread" he gives greater than that of Moses (w. 32,49)?

Exodus 16:4 (NIV) 4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

Psalms 78:24-25 (NIV) 24 he rained down manna for the people to eat, he gave them the grain of heaven. 25 Men ate the bread of angels; he sent them all the food they could eat.

Isaiah 7:14 (NIV) 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Matthew 5:6 (NIV) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

John 4:14 (NIV) but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Romans 4:4-8 (NIV) Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. 5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. 6 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: 7 "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.



Discussion continued from front

13. What claims does Jesus make in verses 35—40? What do these claims emphasize about his being the bread of life? About the will of the Father?

14. In verses 41—42, how do the crowds respond to his claims? How is the principle of the hometown prophet (see 4:44) played out here?

15. What part is played by God and by the people in the process of coming to know Jesus (w. 44—45)?

16. What promise is repeated three times for those who do come to him? Why the emphasis on this?

17. Why does Jesus develop the food analogy even more graphically (w. 53—58)?

18. What does Jesus mean by "eating his flesh" and "drinking his blood" (vv. 51—58)?

19. What did Jesus say is the Father's will? (6:39-40)

20. Who did Jesus say could come to Him? (6:43-44)

21. What did Jesus say would be the result of believing? (6:47)

22. What contrast does Jesus make between manna and the bread of life? (6:48-51, 58)

23. What did Jesus say about His flesh and His blood? (6:53-57)

REFLECTION:

1. What is the main reason you follow Jesus?
2. How would you describe your daily spiritual diet: Junk food? Frozen food? Baby food? TV microwave food? Leftovers? Meat and potatoes? Pure bread and wine?
3. Has your familiarity with Jesus (from Sunday School stories, parochial school, etc.) ever kept you from seeing who he really *is*? What can remove the blinders?
4. If someone asked, "How do *you* hunger and thirst after God," what counsel could you offer?
5. What things do we seek from Jesus?
6. In what ways do you have a demanding attitude toward God?
7. When and why did you come to Jesus?
8. In what way has Jesus satisfied your hunger and thirst for acceptance and meaning in life?
9. In what ways do you still feel empty?
10. What situations cause you to feel insecure?
11. When do you feel secure in your relationship with God? Why?
12. How has the Christian life turned out to be different from what you expected?
13. In what way is Jesus an example for us to follow?

WHAT BREAD IS to hunger, Jesus claims to be for the soul. It nourishes or sustains life; it satisfies; it energizes; and it creates a desire (the need) for more and more.