

More Like Jesus Part 4

Bread That Satisfies

John 6:22-71

Memory Verses: John 6:27

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

Have you ever been really hungry and eaten a slice of warm bread? It's delicious isn't it? It satisfies in ways very few things can. Perhaps it's not just a regular piece of bread, but banana bread or cinnamon raisin bread? I remember being at a friend's house back when I was in college. He lived in Jersey and it was snowing and freezing and we were outside messing in the snow and we came inside and his mom had made a piping hot loaf of cinnamon raisin bread. Sliced it up, put some butter on it... Wow! You know what I'm talking about. That stuff was too legit to quit. And you know that it was that good because I'm still talking about it 20 years later.

Now think about back in Jesus' day when bread was a staple at every meal and the primary sustaining food source for the culture. Not only was it good to eat, but it was necessary for life. To not have bread was to basically not have life. There's a story in the Old Testament where a woman and her son are starving and about to die and they have enough flour and oil left to make one last cake of bread. Once the bread runs out, their lives will run out. So Elijah the prophet has her make the last cake for him and then because of this the Lord blesses her with never ending flour and oil. What a miracle... bread that never ends, and by extension life that never ends.

We are in a series called More Like Jesus. Our goal is to see major events or pivotal moments of Jesus' life and try to see how we are to apply it to our lives. How can we be more like Him by emulating who he is? Last week we looked at John 3 and his conversation with Nicodemus where he presented the Gospel to him. We recognized that when sharing the Gospel we must preach the real meaning of the word "believe." It's not just a head thing or a heart thing, but it's also an action. You must look on Jesus, you must respond to his salvation in repentance. You must turn from the darkness and walk in the light. To believe means to be living what you believe.

There is a belief that saves and as we will see today, there is bread that satisfies. It's important that we understand that salvation isn't about escaping hell or having our best life now. Salvation in Christ is about getting Jesus. It's about a relationship with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. It's about being sustained, not by the things of this world, or the ways of this world and having Jesus as some side item. No, it's

about making Jesus the main thing. As John Piper always says, "the chief purpose of man is to glorify God by being fully satisfied in him alone."

Look at [John 4:31-38](#). Jesus says, I have food that you don't know of. This food of course is God. Jesus' relationship with God and his desire to worship Him is what keeps him going. He wants to bring in a harvest, not only because he loves people and wants them to be saved, but also because this is the mission the father has given him. Jesus, by his actions, is proving that he is fully satisfied and sustained by his relationship with God.

So the question this morning, as we look in John 6 at Jesus as the bread of life, is... are you fully satisfied in Christ alone, or do you still need the world to be satisfied? Perhaps you are like a friend of mine I was talking with recently who asked me about heaven. He said, don't you think worshipping Jesus forever will be boring? I get it. When you think about it like that, yes, singing in a service could get a little old. But it's not about how we worship, it's about who we worship. The disconnect in scenarios like this is, do we really think Jesus is worthy of eternal worship? You know who isn't excited about worshipping Jesus forever? Those who have not figured out how to be satisfied by Jesus in this life. As Christians... **we will never know true satisfaction until we are satisfied in Jesus alone.**

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

In recognizing Jesus as the Bread of Life and... **To Be More Like Jesus We Must Desire Jesus For Who He Is And Not Merely For What He Does.** Let's start by looking at the first few verses here in [John 6:22-26](#) where Jesus calls the people out saying, "you didn't come diligently searching for me because you saw a miracle but because you know I can provide you with bread. You think I'm your meal ticket. You don't care so much for the fact that I just did something only the Messiah could do, but for the fact that I can give you food." I find it kind of funny and a little sad that most of those at the feeding of the five thousand didn't realize that it was a huge miracle. They saw food and that's all that they could focus on. It's like on comedy movies where someone wins the big race or saves the day and then someone mentions free food, everyone runs away as fast as possible, and the one that was just being lauded is completely forgotten. Let's just face it... people just wanna eat!

So in [John 6:27-29](#), Jesus turns their minds back to spiritual things again. He says, stop striving for food that perishes. He is talking about both literal food and metaphorical stuff. Basically, anything that you find satisfaction in other than God. This is the crux of the entire message. Right here. Jesus says to them as he is saying it to us; **"stop trying to find satisfaction in the things of this world that can't satisfy!"** Instead spend your life striving for "food"... the thing that can truly sustain you and satisfy you not just for now but forever.

And then Jesus, once again boldly and bluntly tells them... this food

can only be given to you by me... the Son of Man, whom the Father has set his seal on, the one sent from God. He's telling them, "I am the only one capable of giving you eternal food because I am the one you've been waiting for, the Messiah." I love how so many Jewish people today still want to claim that Jesus never tells anyone in the Bible that He is the messiah... he literally can't go an entire conversation without telling someone.

Kind of just blowing the fact that Jesus just revealed himself as the Messiah, they, like Nicodemus, want a law, a rule, a command to accomplish. They say... If you have this food then what work can I do to get this food from you? Jesus, once again has to remind them... it's not about work anymore, it's about faith. You don't have to follow a rule or do some religious ceremony, all you have to do is simply put your faith in me as the Messiah. You must believe in me.

And so they ask him to prove that He is in fact the Messiah. It's almost comical. In **John 6:30-33** they ask him to perform a miracle to prove that he is the Messiah so they can believe in Him. Time out. Jesus just literally did one of the greatest miracles of all time by taking 2 fish and 5 loaves and feeding what is estimated to be over ten thousand people if you include women and children. Not 10 hours ago, you just ate fish sandwiches until you puked because Jesus made food appear out of thin air for you... but that miracle wasn't enough to convince you that He is the Messiah.

To add insult to injury, they say, "Moses gave us bread in the wilderness." Wait what kind of miracle do you want me to do? You want me to make bread appear out of thin air? I just did that! Are you not paying attention! I just did it and you ate it! If I was Jesus I would be like... are you kidding me right now? Two possibilities. One, they truly didn't know that what Jesus did in feeding the five thousand was a miracle. They were just too distracted to recognize what was really happening. Or two, they are trying to manipulate Jesus into doing it again because, yes they ate lunch, but what about dinner?

Jesus finishes this point here simply by saying... It doesn't matter what Moses did because it came from God. Your faith wasn't in Moses, it was in God. Put your faith in God again and in the bread that he is giving you now. Stop desiring the physical things I can give you. Stop desiring the supernatural things I can do. Start desiring me! The physical things I can give you will not sustain you and satisfy you forever. The supernatural things I can show you will not sustain you or satisfy you forever. The only thing that can sustain you and satisfy you forever is a profound love and desire for me. **We will never know true satisfaction until we are satisfied in Jesus alone.**

The second thing in recognizing Jesus as the Bread of Life and...

To Be More Like Jesus We Must Depend On Him As If Our Very Lives Depended On it. In **John 6:34-35** they relent a little and finally say, okay, give us this bread from God. And incase they didn't get it the first time, Jesus again makes it clear, I am the bread of Life! Erasing all doubt, and doubling up on what he just said, Jesus makes it clear that He is the only thing you need to eat. You don't need food as much as you need Him. You ultimately don't need anything if you don't have Him.

So in **John 6:36-51** again shares the Gospel message much like he did with Nicodemus. For those of you who have been following along with this series up to this point. This entire section is kind of a short recap of what we've already studied. In **vs36-40** we see a lot of what Jesus told Nicodemus last week. He asks them: "you've seen my miracles and yet you don't believe?" He declares to them that "I have come to save the world." He gives the benediction; "If the world would look upon me and believe they will have eternal life."

In **vs41-42**, just like we saw three weeks ago, we see Jesus being rejected simply because these people saw him grow up in Nazareth. Once again, a prophet is welcome most places except his hometown. They are already starting to turn on him.

In fact, the entire passage revolves around the symbolism of bread. Four weeks ago we saw that the first temptation that Satan gave to Christ was to tempt him to make the stone into bread. Jesus here is saying... I don't need to make anything into bread to eat... because I am the bread that sustains all things! The temptation for us is to keep trying to be filled and satisfied with the things of this world when only one thing really satisfies.

There are also some new things to notice though. One, Jesus mentions three times in this passage (**vs39, 40, 44**) that when people believe in him as the bread of life, he will "raise them up on the last day." In speaking with those in Galilee and in speaking with Nicodemus, neither time do we see Jesus emphasizing the resurrection. Here it is a main theme. He wants this group of people to recognize... there is an afterlife but the only way to get there is to depend on Him. He tells them, "your fathers ate the mana in the desert and died... but if you eat of me as the bread of life you will live forever. And, after you die, I will one day raise you up to eternal life with me." Listen, **we can depend on nothing else than faith in Christ to see us safely across the Jordan.** He will raise us up on the last day.

Another new thing of note here is when Jesus mentions twice (**vs37, 44**) that it is Father who draws men to himself. No one can even come to Him unless He draws them. Don't be confused. Yes Jesus is making a plea that they desire Him as the bread of life so that they would be saved. Yes, there is a part for men to play and a decision for them to be made. But we ultimately can't choose Him unless he first chooses us and draws us. So, even though we play a part and must choose Him, God plays a much bigger part in choosing us.

The point still remains though... we cannot be saved from Hell and from our sinful consequences; we cannot be saved, born again, redeemed, unless we depend on Christ with every fiber of our being. Our good works won't do it. Our religion won't do it. The only thing that can give us sustained eternal life and satisfaction forever is faith in the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ. **We will never know true satisfaction until we are satisfied in Jesus alone.**

Lastly, in recognizing Jesus as the Bread of Life and... **To Be More Like Jesus We Must Feed On His Flesh and Drink His Blood Everyday.** Yuck right? It's not a pleasant metaphor to be sure. Those listening to Jesus would agree. Let's look at the rest of this passage in **John 6:52-66**. Like Nicodemus they get stuck up in the analogy thinking it literal when it is figurative. But without explaining it to them, most likely because He knew they could figure it out on their own, He doubles down and says bluntly; "you must eat my flesh and drink my blood." In **vs54** he switches up his verbs. Up to this point Jesus has used the verb eat... but now he switches it up to the verb feed. There is a huge difference in the two that He wants you to see. Eat can mean a meal; a one time event. Feed implies a continuous action. Something that must be done again and again everyday. If one meal on Jesus flesh and blood wasn't bad enough... Jesus is now saying that you really must consistently feed on my flesh and blood.

Most likely because of the violently cannibalistic imagery Jesus uses here, destroying all manner of decorum and easy believism, the response is mostly negative. Many of his disciples responded in **vs60** by saying this is a hard saying, who can hear it." Meaning, this is too tough even for us. Jesus has clearly crossed a line. No one will buy into this. This whole mission has been for nothing because this joker has gone out of his mind! In **vs 66** we see many of his disciples decide that they are done and turn back to no longer walk with him. Is this not one of the saddest verses in the whole bible? Some may be tempted to say, well Jesus deserved it... he went too far. What about being seeker sensitive? But, just like with Nicodemus, Jesus can't pull his punches here. He has to make people understand that in the same way they depend on physical bread to live by in this life, they must have the spiritual bread of Jesus in order to live eternally. He has to make it somewhat hard to follow what will eventually turn out to be a bumpy ride. He's not trying to trick anyone. He wants them to receive eternal life now!

Side note – what is eternal life? Is it just Heaven, the life after this one? Or is it something more? Spoiler alert, it's something way more. Eternal life doesn't start when we die, it starts when we believe in Christ. Eternal life is now for those of us who are in Jesus. Meaning... **we don't need to feed on Jesus body and blood simply to make it to Heaven... no,**

we need to feed on his body and drink his blood to make it through every single day! Every single day you will face the temptations of the enemy. Everyday you will face lust, jealousy, anger, greed, bitterness, and laziness. You will struggle until we go home. How are you going to make it through the daily battle with out feeding on Him in his word and drinking Him in prayer? How are you going to absorb more of Jesus without Christian fellowship? How are you going to get that goodness in you if you aren't intentionally feeding on Him? How can you be sustained and satisfied in this life, when you allow the world to overcome you with darkness? You can't! The only way is to feed on Christ! **We will never know true satisfaction until we are satisfied in Jesus alone**

Application

The application is simple. How much do you desire and depend on Jesus to sustain you and satisfy you? Do you find that Jesus is the meal, or that he is simply a side dish? Do you find your joy in the things of this world? If Jesus wasn't a thing in your life, how would that change your life? Another way of asking that is this... **if Jesus were a single building block in the tower of your life would removing it cause the whole thing to fall down?** If not, you aren't depending on Jesus enough! I dare say, you aren't depending on him enough to even be saved.

We must depend on him to be saved and then we must depend on him to live the Christian life everyday. Is that something you are doing? Are you feeding on him every single day or are you a casual if not infrequent visitor to the restaurant of Jesus? How can you make it without Him? I dare say if you can make it without Jesus then you don't know him.

Conclusion

This was the reality for those who followed Him. You do know this was the breaking point for Jesus' ministry. Up until this point, thousands followed him everywhere he went. After this very few followed him.

Look at **vs66-71**. Here's your choices. You can turn away like most. You can persevere with Jesus like Peter declaring, "we have no where else to go, we depend on you," or you can be like Judas and be a pretender who ultimately betrays him. Is Jesus the bread of life that you depend on or not?

We will never know true satisfaction until we are satisfied in Jesus alone.