

# BREAD OF LIFE

John 6:1-15, 25-35



## SYNOPSIS

In Jesus's first "I am" statement, John begins another series of "7" that provides evidence for his thesis: that Jesus is the son of God and believing in him grants eternal life. In combining Jesus's signs, teachings, and claims, John presents Jesus as the Messiah, the only one who can satisfy.



## OUTLINE

1

### SIGN

Many sermons have covered various aspects of the feeding of the 5,000, but P. Phil highlighted the Messianic proof that John's retelling was meant to be. The feeding occurred during the Passover, an annual reminder of Israel's deliverance from slavery. Jesus's distribution of the food could be seen as a foreshadow of the Last Supper. In fact, John uses the Greek word for eucharist, i.e. the sacrament of communion. John highlights that everyone ate until they were fully satisfied. We, too, can give thanks for the sufficiency of the grace we receive from God. John highlights the parallels between 3 breads: manna, the loaves for the 5,000, and Jesus's body.

2

### TEACHING

When the crowd follows Jesus to the other side of the lake, free food is their main draw. Jesus's teaching about choosing eternal food over perishable food mirrors his offer of living water to the Samaritan woman (John 4:13). Jesus emphasized that man requires not just physical sustenance but spiritual sustenance too, and the spiritual hunger is deeper than the physical. The apostle Paul echoes this sentiment in calling our bodies tents, temporary dwellings. (2 Cor 5:1-4)

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Jesus offered his very self for spiritual sustenance, but the crowd was more interested in him meeting their felt needs. We are the crowd. We ask God for "bread" (e.g. career, friendships, even health for our children), but God wants to give us himself. Eternal life starts now in receiving Jesus, the only one who sustains and satisfies.

3

### CLAIM

Jesus wasn't the Messiah the crowd expected, but they remained intrigued and were willing to accept him as a Moses-/Elijah-like prophet. Jesus drew a clear distinction between what he offers and what Moses offered by calling himself the bread of life from heaven. As with manna, the crowd still had to engage and receive Jesus to be satisfied. For John, the "work of God" is as simple as believing in Jesus. (v. 29) and as profound as having that belief transform our lives holistically. Belief is not only an intellectual exercise, it is a complete realignment of our worldview, desires, and lifestyle to the person of Jesus. Hear Jesus say, "I am the bread of life," and act in accordance with your intellectual response.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

In what ways are you working for bread that perishes? How could you pivot to work for food that endures to eternal life?

2

When was the last time grace was amazing to you because you realized what a wretch you are?

3

In what ways do you feel unsatisfied? "If only \_\_\_, I would be content." How would you fill in this blank?

4

Where in your life might God be layering a spiritual revelation on a natural one? How does he use your experiences to point to himself?

5

What would it look like for you to do "the work of God" (i.e. to believe in the one he sent) in a way that is transformative?



## BIG IDEA

Jesus said, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me...because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you."

When you approach Jesus, what/whom do you seek? The work of God = believing in Jesus. Are you doing the work of transformation-activating belief in Jesus?

