

Sonoraville Baptist Church
Sunday, August 22, 2010 – 11:00 AM
Rev. Steve Skates, Pastor

Series: Portraits of Jesus
Jesus - The Bread of Life - John 6:22-35

Introduction: As chapter 6 opens, we find Jesus about to preach to a crowd of people. It must be a Sunday morning about 11:30, because He becomes keenly aware that they are hungry. I don't know if He hears the collective growls of those 5,000 plus stomachs or if He just knew that they were hungry, but instead of dismissing them to the Galilean Cracker Barrel, He does something that only He can do. He takes a little boy's lunch and feeds them all. And not only that; after all the people were satisfied, the disciples took up 12 baskets filled with the leftovers. That's one basket for every doubting disciple!

This miracle served as a life sized illustration for a sermon that Jesus was about to preach. In this passage, we are presented with another portrait of Jesus as the Bread of Life.

Now why does Jesus refer to Himself as the Bread of Life? Well, it could be because bread is known and used by every society on earth. From the American who goes the store to buy his bread to the Aborigine who cooks his bread on a firestone, bread is used by people everywhere. It could it be also because most people enjoy bread, or it could be because bread is one of the few foods that can be tolerated by most digestive systems. It satisfies hunger in ways that few other foods do.

Any way you slice it, bread is a good food and is one that most people need, use and enjoy. With that in mind, you can see why Jesus would describe Himself as the Bread of Life.

Jesus is what the whole world needs. Everyone can tolerate Him,. He satisfies all, and everyone would enjoy life more if they would only come to know Him. First in order to establish a basis for Jesus as the Bread of Life, we must look at:

1. The Personality of the Bread of Life

According to verses 35, the Bread of Life is not a religious system or a denomination, but:

A. A Person. Jesus knew that people could never be saved by some religious system or method. Religion can teach you. Denominationalism can define you. Laws can guide you, but neither of them can ever save you. **Acts 4:12 (NIV)** says it best: "*Salvation is found in no one else! There is no other **name** under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*" Jesus' very name was a derivative of the Hebrew name Joshua which means *Jehovah saves!*" That is why we are saved by the **name** of Jesus. The Bread of Life has a name. He is a Person! But this Bread of Life not just any ordinary person. He is a person with:

B. Power. The Bread of Life has the power to save and the power to satisfy every sinner who comes to Him by faith. Jesus said, "*...he who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.*" (35b).

This is what separates Jesus from all the religious leaders of the world. They all promise great things, but ultimately, they can only deliver death. **Proverbs 16:25 (NIV)** affirms this: "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.*" Jesus, on the other hand, gives life for everyone who will accept Him because He conquered death when He arose from the grave. I don't know about you, but I want a Savior who can satisfy me for eternity, and Jesus is the kind of Savior I can trust to do just that. Another thing to note about the personality of the Bread of Life - He is a powerful person of:

C. Promise (READ 47-51) - The Bread of Life promises to give man life. Physical bread can sustain life for a while. But even though a physical body has been well nourished for years, eventually that body will die. Jesus, on the other hand, is the bread that gives eternal life. Nothing can ever take that away from the child of God. Every person who places their faith in Jesus is going to live forever!

Before the promise of Bread of Life can be enjoyed, it must be received. Now a lot of people get hung up right here. They might believe in Jesus in their heads, but, to make His salvation real in one's life, Jesus must be internally received by faith! I believe this was the point He was making in vs. 53 "*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.*" **John 6:53 (NIV)**

If you were to go to Elaine's Mom's house for dinner, she's going to make sure you have something of

everything she's fixed on your plate. Her famous line is, "Want a biscuit?" She says it over and over, "Want a biscuit?" "Want a biscuit?" And if you don't take one, she'll put one on your plate!

Well, that's ok as far as food goes, but salvation doesn't work that way. Jesus will offer His salvation to you over and over, but He will not just put salvation on your plate. He's already done everything that is necessary to save you. He lived a perfect life, died a vicarious death, and rose in victorious resurrection. And He calls the sinner to have faith in what He's already done. He's done all that He can do. But before you can be saved, you are going to have to come to Him and receive Him. It won't cost you a dime to be saved, but it does require that you receive Him by faith.

Notice verse 47 - To be saved, you have to "believe" in Jesus. This word means to "rest all your weight upon." It isn't Jesus plus this or Jesus plus that, it is Jesus alone that saves! So, we've seen the Personality of the Bread of Life, now, I want to show you:

2. The Presentation of the Bread of Life

Jesus tells this crowd that He is the Bread of Life. But the crowd doesn't believe Him. They want proof. They said in vs. 30, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe in you?" Well, He's already done one thing which was illustrated in three ways: First, it was illustrated by:

A. The Miracle on the Mountain (1-13) - In feeding the 5,000, Jesus presented a type of Himself. He is shown caring for, providing for, and satisfying the crowd. The implication is that Jesus, like the physical loaves and fishes, is sufficient for the need of man. He's the all-sufficient Savior. Notice, every person "ate until they were full," (v. 11), then there was still leftovers! (v. 13).

Millions have been saved, but there is always grace for more! Jesus is sufficient for the needs of the entire world! You don't have to try to do things for Him for Him to accept you. All the sinner has to do is receive Him, like the bread on the mountain, by simple faith, and salvation is the result. Also, it was illustrated by:

B. The Manna in the Wilderness (30-33) - The Jews came to Jesus wanting another miracle, and they remind Jesus that Moses gave the children of Israel Manna. Now they want to know what He is going to do. His response is to remind them that Moses was not responsible for the Manna, but that it was the provision of God. He goes on to tell them that the true bread from Heaven is Himself who is the Bread of Life, (v. 33). What Jesus is saying is that the Manna was a type of Himself.

Let me try to explain how manna is an illustration of Jesus. Manna was a small, round, white, wafer-like bread that God caused to fall from heaven every night to feed the multitude of people making their 40 year trek from the bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land. At first, the Israelites misunderstood what it was. That's why they called it manna (What is it?).

Jesus was misunderstood by the very people He came to save. And He's still being misunderstood today! People are still asking, "Who is He?"

Also, only enough manna was to be collected for each day's needs. It has been estimated that the Israelites collected the equivalent of 240 boxcars of manna per day for 38 years. That's a lot of bread! This reminds us that Jesus is our daily bread.

Those who ate of the manna found it sweet and satisfying. By the same token, all who receive Jesus as their Savior find Him to be sweet to the soul and satisfying to the life. That is why David said to "taste and see that the Lord is good." **Psalm 34:8 (NIV).**

This manna was to be eaten and passed on to others in the household. Jesus is the same way. He is to be shared with others - especially the next generation, because we are only one generation away from extinction as a people at any given time. Ultimately though, it was illustrated by:

C. The Master of Eternity (52-58) - Jesus says that He is the ultimate bread. The Israelites who ate the manna in the wilderness eventually died. The crowd who were filled on the mountainside eventually died! But Jesus was telling this crowd that He is greater than the bread given out in the wilderness and on the mountainside. All who partake of Him will live forever. His guarantee is that they will never die but will have eternal life!

Finally, let's notice:

3. The Performance of the Bread of Life

A. He Guarantees Salvation (51) - As humans, God made us with a free will so that we can try any method of salvation we choose. We have the ability to choose how we will live our lives. But, regardless of how a man

lives or what path he chooses for live. Salvation will never be produced in the life of any person anywhere unless they come to Jesus Christ by faith. That may seem narrow-minded and simplistic, but that is what the Bible teaches and that is how it will always be!

There are not many things in life that are guaranteed. It's no guarantee that the Braves will win the pennant. It's no guarantee that our economy will ever turn around. It's no guarantee that we'll ever see a "*change that we can believe in*" from Mr. Obama. But, I can guarantee that every sinner who comes to Jesus by faith, repenting of his or her sins and accepting Jesus as Savior, will be saved by the grace of God and will live forever in Heaven someday! I know this because I have God's Word on it. But not only does Jesus Grant Salvation:

B. He Guarantees Satisfaction (35) - We've already touched on this aspect of Jesus, but suffice it to say that those who come to the Lord Jesus Christ are eternally satisfied. This world can never satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. But Jesus is the Bread of Life that gives life, and He gives the living water that never runs dry. There is satisfaction in the Person of Jesus, and only He can satisfy your soul. But not only does Jesus Guarantee our Salvation and Satisfaction:

C. He Guarantees Our Security (READ 37-40). If you place your trust in Jesus, you don't have to worry about being forgotten as a cast away. Faith in Jesus guarantees us absolute security in our salvation. Jesus didn't save us to lose us along the way; He saved us to take us home with Him someday.

A lot of people doubt the security of the believer. They feel that their security depends upon them and what they can do. They believe they are responsible for maintaining their salvation. They feel that if they commit a sin or let down on their guard, they will lose what they have and will have to get it all over again, if they don't die first. This couldn't be any farther from the truth! Salvation is the gift of God. It is a forever work. Man has nothing to do with earning it, keeping it, or losing it. Salvation is totally a work of God. And, when God gives it, He gives it forever!

Conclusion: Jesus as the Bread of Life is everything you need to experience eternal life. The question is: What have you done with Jesus? Have you received Him into your heart and life? Are you secure in your salvation? Where are you going to spend eternity? Come and partake of the Bread of Life today. If you will, I promise you, He will satisfy you completely.