

Lighthouse Bible Church

March 17th, 2013

John 6: 30 – 36 *Scripture Reading Isaiah 55*

I am the Bread of Life

Stand – Read – Pray

As we began to look at John Chapter 6 starting in Verse 15, we saw a contrast between two groups of people. In Verses 16 – 21 we saw the true followers of Jesus Christ that, when they saw His power and have heard His words, they concluded that He is the Son of God and they worshipped Him.

They were the ones that are marked by obedience to the Lord even though they didn't understand what He was asking of them. They did not question His words they just obeyed even though it took them through a stormy trial and we saw how Jesus delivered them from that.

The second group of people we began to look at last week, were the ones who also follow Jesus, but they were the hypocritical, selfish, unbelievers who are following Him only for the food and the healing and the curiosity of the miracles. Their lives were marked by disobedience, as we saw last time, and their seeking of Him was only for what they could get out of Him.

Their lives, as we also saw last time, were one of believing that they had to have some part in their receiving everlasting life, they had to do some work in order to have everlasting life. We saw that we have these same two groups today as well.

Jesus told this group of hypocritical, selfish, followers that the only thing that they could DO to inherit eternal life is to **believe in Him whom God sent**. Jesus says you need to believe in Me and the **food**, the salvation **which endures to everlasting life**, that only I alone can provide, He says.

And that is where we want to pick it up this morning, where Jesus tells these unbelievers that He, Himself, is the true bread of life, the true food which endures to everlasting life.

By the way, in this passage, we have a third group of people, that are made up of the second group, and that is the unbelieving Jews. We have seen the true followers, the true disciples, who are Jews, we have seen the hypocritical self-serving unbelieving followers who are Jews and Gentiles and now we see this specific group of unbelieving Jews.

Remember that Jesus had just fed them with bread that He created and their response was 'let's take Him by force and make Him a king', 'He may be the Prophet or Messiah but He will do what we want and what we ask'. It is never enough to see the miracles of God without understanding the words of God.

They recognized His power but they had no idea about His purpose and His plan in the display of His power so He begins to tell them, specifically, in His words that He is the bread of life because that is where their conversation is heading according to Verse 31 and the miracle feeding of the bread sets the stage for this.

Jesus is going to tell them that His purpose is redemptive not physical, but spiritual. He didn't come to satisfy their bellies but to satisfy their souls. He is going to tell them that He came to do the Father's will, which was laid out from eternity past, to save men's souls, not their bodies. So let's look at it starting in Verse 30.

Verse 30: Therefore they said to Him what sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will you do?

The therefore takes us back to what Jesus had just said in Verses 27 & 29, that He has the seal of God set on Him and that God is the One who sent Him and that they needed to believe in Him for everlasting life and that He is the food which endures forever. So the crowd says ‘since You say You have the seal of God and since You say You were sent by God, since You say we must believe in You, prove it, show us a sign, **perform something that we may see it and believe You.**

As I was typing this out this week my thoughts went immediately to the Pharisees who were standing before the cross when Jesus was hanging there dying. They were the ones who orchestrated His crucifixion and death. They said in **Matthew 27: 39 – 44**. ‘Jesus come down off the cross and we will believe in You’. They no more wanted to believe in Jesus than did this group of followers here.

This group is still making demands on Jesus. They don’t acknowledge Him for who He is, they don’t fall down and worship Him, they just demand, demand, demand; we want something, we want you to show us something. Listen, Christ isn’t ours to do with what we want, we are His to do what He wants.

So these Jews want Jesus to prove who He is by **performing** some kind of **sign that they may see it and believe Him**. They want Him to do some kind of **work**. Well, what had He just done for them the day before? He fed 20,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish and **6: 14** says **and they saw the sign**, and as a result they wanted to take Him by force and make Him their king.

Remember that Jesus had sent the disciples into the crowd to see if anyone had anything to eat and all they could find was a lad with 5 loaves and 2 fish. That was a veiled way of preparing for this miracle by eliminating the options that everyone brought their own food. No!

And now they are saying ‘show us another sign that we can believe’. One writer said this “that that is exactly the character of unbelief? You approach unbelief in terms of signs and wonders, and it's a never-ending thing. It's impossible for the natural man to be convinced of anything in terms of signs and wonders. If he can't come to the point of simple faith in Christ and His finished work, all the signs and wonders in the world aren't going to convince him. The Lord said "believe," they said, "show us a sign." The Lord said "have faith," they said, "do a trick."
MacArthur esword.

What they are saying is ‘listen, if you are the provider of the food that endures to everlasting life and we are to believe in You, then feed us some more, feed us permanently, after all **Verse 31: our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat**’.

You see what they are doing? They are saying ‘if You are who You say You are, then feed us, show us another miracle sign’. This is the characteristic of unbelief; they want to see more and more signs and yet they still will not believe.

But sometimes Christians fall into the same trap, don't we? We say we believe in God and He is our **provider, sustainer, creator, helper, deliverer, comforter** and all of those things that we are grateful for....until.... we have a crisis situation in our lives then all of a sudden we question His love, His care, His providence, and we put demands on Him, we put Him to the test by saying ‘God, if You love me, if you care for me, if...if...if THEN do this and I will believe. We, are in essence asking God to do a sign for us so that we will believe.

But for an unbeliever, there are never enough signs and wonders and miracles and tricks that will make them believe. That's why Jesus said of these kinds of people in **Matthew 12: 39 an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign...**

They even want Him to do a specific sign as Verse 31 says ‘Our fathers ate the manna in the desert ... Moses gave them bread all the time, every day for 40 years, what can you do’. If all we have to do is believe in You, show us what you can do, cause Moses fed the people’. They are still thinking with their bellies.

So Jesus answers them in **Verses 32 - 33** Then Jesus said to them ‘most assuredly, I say to you, **Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.**

Because these are the Jews that are talking with Jesus, they quote an Old Testament passage to justify their demand that Jesus show them a sign. And because of the way Jesus answers them, they must have told Him that it was Moses who fed them in the wilderness all those years.

Jesus says ‘listen **Moses did not give you the bread from heaven**, God did. Even Moses admits that in **Exodus 16: 15** when he says **this is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.** In **Exodus 16: 4** it says **The Lord told Moses behold I will rain bread from heaven for you...** So Jesus has to correct them because what they are in essence saying is; Moses did this, what are you going to do to top it. So Jesus says ‘Moses didn’t do anything, but tell them how much and when to pick it up’.

Jesus tells them ‘re-read your scriptures, that was God’s gift of bread from heaven to them; it had nothing to do with Moses’. Then Jesus says to them **My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.**

Jesus says ‘what your Fathers ate in the wilderness was not true bread, it was physical bread that satisfied a physical appetite; oh and by the way, it had limitations with it, didn’t it?’

How long did the manna last? One day, except on the Sabbath then it lasted two days and if you tried to keep more it spoiled. Did the manna provide life? No! The people continue to die in the wilderness even though they were eating the bread. The true bread of God comes down **and gives life** and that true bread of Life is **He who comes down from heaven** and that is Jesus.

He says Moses, through God, fed them physical food that was temporary but the bread I will give endures to everlasting life as **Verse 27** said. It is a life giving bread that keeps you alive and overcomes death, overcomes spiritual death.

And Jesus also says ‘by the way, you say the manna was for your fathers, for the nation of Israel, for the Jews, but the true bread of life **comes down from heaven and gives life to** (whom) **the whole WORLD**. The manna was temporary and physical for Israel, the true bread is permanent and eternal and offered to everyone.

Notice what else Jesus says; He says **for the bread of God is HE who comes down from heaven and gives life**. Jesus over and over again, as we have seen, said He came from God and is going back to God, because He (what) is God. Jesus is saying that He is truly greater than Moses because He is God in human form.

The writer of Hebrews in **Hebrews 3: 3** said **for this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses ...** Well, do they get what Jesus is saying? Look at Verse 34

Verse 34: then they said to Him ‘Lord, give us this bread always’.

They didn’t get it, they are still thinking in the physical realm of the bread. They said ‘give us this bread **always** is a phrase in the Greek that means continually. We want you to give us this physical bread like God gave to our fathers so we can have it all the time.

First of all they say to Jesus ‘prove to us through a sign that you can provide bread for us’ and then they say ‘give us this bread’. Still looking at the physical and not the spiritual truths behind what He is saying. They don’t ask ‘how can we receive the bread of life’, they say ‘give it to us’.

There is a truth there even for us today and its found in **1st Corinthians 2: 10 – 14** but especially Verse 14 which says **but the natural man** or the unbeliever, which these people to whom Jesus is talking are, as Verse 36 says, **does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to them, nor can they know them because they are spiritually discerned.**

Can you imagine if He would have given them the food? They would have followed Him anywhere, but it would have only been for the physical and not the spiritual. That, unfortunately, is how Jesus is sometimes portrayed to people today; as the supplier of your needs, the meter of your needs, the provider of your physical, social and emotional needs; and people will follow Him everywhere and like the **wide gate down the broad path of Matthew 7: 13 – 14** it will lead them to destruction. So look how Jesus answers them in Verse 35.

Verse 35 and Jesus said to them ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst’.

Can you imagine their reaction to that? If they are still thinking in the physical realm and Jesus says ‘I am the bread of life’, they just don’t get that, they don’t get the spiritual implications of that statement.

Jesus says to them that ‘I am the bread of life and he who comes to Me shall never hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst’. He is not talking about the physical hunger and thirst that we all experience, He is talking about satisfying the soul. The soul that comes to Christ stops hungering and stops thirsting for those things that can not satisfy. He becomes the nourishment for your soul that satisfies like nothing else can.

I think of **Matthew 5: 6** where it says **blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.**

There are two aspects of receiving this everlasting bread and water that Christ offers and it is in **believing** and **coming** to Christ. Believing, in Christ, is never enough, right, **James 2: 19** says **even the demons believe and tremble**.

The other aspect is that of **coming** to Christ. What does it mean to ‘come’ to Christ? It means completely trusting, by faith, in Him to obtain eternal life, in Him to satisfy and sustain your soul to everlasting life, as Verse 27 said.

It is realizing that Jesus Christ our Lord is the giver of the bread and water of eternal life because He is the bread of eternal life that you will hunger no more and He is the water of everlasting life that you will thirst no more. You become completely satisfied in Christ and Christ alone as the only way for everlasting, eternal life.

By the way, as we shall see later in **John 6: 44**, **no one can COME to Christ apart from the Father drawing him to Christ** and as **John 6: 37** says **all that the Father gives to Christ will come to Him and never be cast out**.

But think about this, what Christ provides, He is. He provides the bread and water of eternal life because He is the source of eternal life. It is like everything about Christ; He provides **peace** because He is our peace. He provides **comfort** because He is our comforter. He provides **strength** because He is our strength. He came to bring **joy** and He is our joy. He is the provider of **love** because He Himself is love. He provides us with **spiritual light** because He is the light of life, He is the light of the world.

He alone can satisfy the longing of a lost heart and soul that the world tries to satisfy with money, alcohol, sex, rebellion, religion, human goodness, status, education, or whatever. It is only in believing in Jesus and coming to Him where true satisfaction comes. Then look what He says to them in Verse 37.

Verse 36: but I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

That is a sad commentary on the Jewish people and all the people in the crowd that were following Him, but it wasn't because they believed in Him, it was because of what they could get from Him, physically and not spiritually.

He told the crowd back in Chapter 5 and Verse 40 **you are NOT WILLING to come to Me that you may have life**, and it is the same with this crowd here. They **saw** the miracles but **they did not believe** the miracle worker for who He is, they only wanted to follow Him for their own selfish ends.

You wonder sometimes, don't you, why the people of Jesus' time missed who He was and were not willing to believe in Him. Well, it is really no different than our day today, many people miss who Jesus is today and don't believe in Him today.

But the real amazing thing to me, as it is to some of you because you have commented to me, is how the people of that time with all the miracles and teaching directly from the mouth of Jesus Himself would not believe who He is and they would not come to Him for eternal, everlasting life in heaven.

The simple truth is this. Every person who was ever born was born with a sin nature, born separated from God and as **Ephesians 2: 1, 5** were born **DEAD in our trespasses and sins**.

Our minds were blinded by the god of this age, Satan, because we didn't believe and because we didn't believe, **the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ couldn't shine on us** as **2nd Corinthians 4: 4** says.

We were **blinded** to the truth, we were living in **darkness**, we were under the power of **Satan**, we had **no forgiveness of sin** and we had **no inheritance** awaiting us as **Acts 26: 18** says, except an eternity in pain and torment in hell.

That is the way these people to whom Jesus is speaking are right now. They are unbelievers that have **seen Him** and heard His teaching and witnessed His signs and miracles and **yet do not believe**.

That is the most hopeless place for someone to be; to know the truth, to hear the truth, to see the truth and then to not believe it. That is the hopeless state of every person who is ever born. That is your hopeless state today if you have never come to Jesus, if you have never believed in Jesus, by putting your faith and trust in Him as your sin bearer, as the only acceptable sacrifice for your sin.

But the good news is this; ‘all that the Father gives to Jesus **WILL COME** to Him. There is hope, even amongst those in the crowd of Jesus days just like there is hope in our congregation today, for one to **COME** to Christ. And we will look at that next time.

Closing prayer

Lighthouse Bible Church
March 17th, 2013
John 6: 30 – 36
‘I am the Bread of Life’

Introduction and Review:

Verse 30 What work will You do?
Matthew 27: 39 – 44, John 6: 14

Verse 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert
Matthew 12: 39

Verses 32 – 33 My Father gives you the true bread
Exodus 16: 4, 15, Hebrews 3: 3

Verse 34 Lord, give us this bread always
1st Corinthians 2: 10 – 14, Matthew 7: 13 – 14

Verse 35 I am the bread of life
Matthew 5: 6, James 2: 19, John 6: 44, 37

Verse 36 You have seen Me and yet do not believe
John 5: 40, Ephesians 2: 1, 5
2nd Corinthians 4: 4, Acts 26: 18

Lighthouse Bible Church
March 17th, 2013
John 6: 30 – 36
‘I am the Bread of Life’

Introduction and Review:

Verse 30 What work will You do?
Matthew 27: 39 – 44, John 6: 14

Verse 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert
Matthew 12: 39

Verses 32 – 33 My Father gives you the true bread
Exodus 16: 4, 15, Hebrews 3: 3

Verse 34 Lord, give us this bread always
1st Corinthians 2: 10 – 14, Matthew 7: 13 – 14

Verse 35 I am the bread of life
Matthew 5: 6, James 2: 19, John 6: 44, 37

Verse 36 You have seen Me and yet do not believe
John 5: 40, Ephesians 2: 1, 5
2nd Corinthians 4: 4, Acts 26: 18