

Series: John

Title: Christ the Bread

Text: John 6: 22-71

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John 6: 22: The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;

They knew the Lord did not enter the boat with his disciples. There were no other boats that he might have taken to the other side. So they waited for him.

John 6: 23: (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks.) 24: When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. 25: And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

These folks put forth great effort to come to Christ. They asked him how he came to this side of the sea. The Lord could have told that he walked across the sea. But he was not impressed with their efforts to come to him because Christ is God and he knows the heart in all sinners. So rather than tell them how he came over, he told them WHY THEY came over.

John 6: 26: Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

They sought Christ not because they saw the miracles with spiritual understanding. They sought Christ not because they believed they were ruined, depraved sinners and he the Savior who alone could save them from themselves. But they sought Christ for their own temporal good—for worldly advantages which they thought Christ could give them. So the Lord says:

John 6: 27: Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

He is not saying we do not labor to provide daily bread which we must eat for our temporal bodies. The Lord is saying we should labor more for the spiritual meat than for the temporal bread. Everything in this world is meat that shall perish, along with these earthly bodies. Then we shall face God and eternity. He is saying, indeed, labor—put forth more effort than you did getting to this side of the sea seeking temporal bread—but put forth this kind of effort for the meat that endures unto everlasting life. As Christ will declare, if a sinner does seek him earnestly, God gets the glory. But those who truly seek, diligently, earnestly, shall find him.

ENDURING BREAD

Where is the enduring meat? It begins with the words Christ himself speaks effectually into the heart through the preaching of the gospel. He declares it is bread "**which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.**"

God the Father sealed Christ. He set his seal on Christ when he bore witness from heaven saying “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased, hear ye him!”

When God begins a work of grace in a sinner, he gives the sinner an earnest desire to hear Christ’s words. And this life is given by Christ’s words through the preaching of the gospel. Christ is in the synagogue preaching to them. Christ is the Bread and he gives this true meat that endures to everlasting life by the words he speaks. Later in the chapter, Christ says,

John 6: 63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

Having been born of the word of the Lord Jesus when Christ asked the apostles if they would go away with the unregenerate multitude who walked away, it was the words of Christ which they knew were life which kept his true disciples following Christ.

John 6: 68: Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure thou art that Christ the Son of the living God.

In our text, our Lord declares what he declared in the wilderness when he gave the manna from heaven. “Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live” (Deu 8: 3). The word of Christ—this gospel preached in spirit and in truth—is more needful than our daily bread. He makes the believer labor for this meat. All our other labor is for this meat.

But until Christ speaks his word into the heart and gives spiritual life, a sinner does not hear Christ aright.

THE WORK OF GOD

John 6: 28: Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29: Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

This is the thought of the sin-nature in every unregenerate sinner—“*what shall WE do that WE might work the works of God?*” But this is also the sin-nature yet in every believer.

How often is our first thought “*what shall WE do?*” When the Lord tested Philip and Andrew, asking “Where will we buy bread to feed these people?” Their first thought was “*what shall WE do?*” This word was as much for his believing disciples as it was for these unregenerate sinners.

From the first moment Christ speaks into our hearts, throughout lives and in every trial, our gracious Master is constantly teaching his saints what Christ declared to them here. The work of God is to believe on Christ who the Father sent. This is the work of God, that a sinner cease trying to do the work of God and believe on Christ whom God hath sent who finished the work. It is like what the Spirit said in Hebrews “Labor to enter into Christ our Rest.”

God sent his Son to work the work of God. If we could work the work of God then God would not have sent his Son. The work of God is the work Christ finished by laying down his life for chosen sinners. Christ accomplished the redemption of his people. Christ’s accomplished salvation—righteousness worked out by Christ, the righteousness Christ

himself is—is given freely through faith in Christ—“*this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*”

THE TRUE BREAD

John 6: 30: They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? 31: Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. 32: Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. 33: For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

This is the deadness of the natural heart. Christ had just fed this multitude by creating bread for them. Now they ask what work do you do? Show us a sign.

Again, Christ says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you.” This is vitally important for us to believe. God gave the manna in the wilderness not Moses. The manna from heaven given by God typified Christ the true Bread who God the Father gave from heaven. The Bread of God is Christ who came down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.

The word “world” does not mean all sinners without exception. He is speaking to Jews. Therefore, he uses the word “world” because those he gave his life for are elect Jews and elect Gentiles. It is not all Jews and not all Gentiles. Christ laid down his life for chosen Jews and for chosen Gentiles. There is only one place in scripture where the word “world” means every person without exception. It is in Romans 3 where the law declares all are guilty sinners.

Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

So what is this work of God that no sinner can perform? What is the work of God that Christ finished? Why is Christ the true Bread of life?

Holy God requires he must be obeyed in perfect righteousness from a perfectly holy heart. We must be absolutely perfect to be accepted of perfect God. Sinner, you and I cannot work that work of God? We disobeyed God in Adam and became guilty before God. Not only that we were conceived in our mother’s womb from corrupt seed from Adam to his son, to his son, on down to your father and mine. So our nature is sin by conception. Therefore we came forth disobeying God. We sin because we are sinners by nature. Sin is what we are therefore sin is the only thing our sin-nature can produce. The work God requires is perfect obedience from a perfect heart. We cannot work that work.

God gave the law at Sinai, not for us to obtain life by our works, but to show us our sin. God gave the law to shut our mouths and declare us all guilty before God. God says the soul that sinneth must die. That means every sinner shall die under the justice of God. God says his law must be executed upon every sinner because God is just. He is holy therefore his law must be honored. Every sinner shall die under the justice of God. Sinner, you and I cannot work that work and live!

If God will receive all the glory in salvation God must work the work of God. Therefore God sent his only begotten Son to work the work of God. Christ is God in human flesh who

worked the work only God could work for his people. Christ finished the work of God by his perfect, holy obedience. He came forth perfectly holy from the womb, with no sin. The Lord Jesus was obedient under the law his entire life. He was obedient even unto the death of the cross. His obedience was submitting himself to God, who made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor 5:21)

God made his Son sin for chosen sinners. Therefore God poured out justice on his Son instead of those chosen sinners. By his death, Christ satisfied the justice of God so that the judgment of those chosen sinners is settled forever. It is only by Christ's obedience—by Christ working the work of God—that chosen sinners are made righteous.

Christ is declaring that the one-way Christ's righteousness is given to a sinner is through believing on Christ. Would you work this work of God? God says it is already finished. Believe on my Son and all that he accomplished shall be given to you freely! That is why he said, *"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* *"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."*

CHOSEN AND CALLED

John 6: 34: Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. 35: And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. 36: But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. 37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

All that the Father gave to Christ in eternity in divine election shall come to Christ believing on Christ. Many in this multitude did not come to Christ believing on Christ. why? the Father did not give them to Christ. Not only shall all the Father gave to Christ come to Christ, but Christ said, *"him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*

Sinner if you come to Christ—believing on him—casting yourself on his mercy—Christ shall in no wise cast you out—not ever—for any reason—because he alone is our Righteousness. Those Christ died for, he justified. Each one shall be drawn to Christ. Christ shall not cast out one.

THE WILL OF GOD

John 6: 38: For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39: And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40: And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

All who come to Christ believing on him, Christ shall save each one, because it is the Father's will. Christ and God the Father are one. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are one God revealed in three persons. But we worship one God. Therefore, God the Father's will is Christ's will. The Son of God entered covenant in eternity to work the works of God's will in saving a people by making justice and mercy meet in harmony in Christ's shed blood. Christ fulfilled the Father's will by laying down his life declaring God just and the Justifier of every sinner that is drawn to Christ.

Not one for whom Christ died shall perish. They each shall be drawn to Christ of the Father. Christ shall not lose one. It is because this is God the Father's will.

PROOF OF DEPRAVITY

John 6: 41: The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42: And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

Do we need more proof that only God can give us faith? Do we need more proof that natural man is spiritually incapable of receiving and believing spiritual things?

Christ declared the gospel clearly to this multitude. But as clearly as Christ declared this message what was the response of those who merely heard his words in a natural way? They murmured at him in unbelief.

Every sinner reading this now who does not believe on Christ is murmuring this same word in their heart. They are saying, "This Jesus was only a man." They are saying, "I don't believe he came down from heaven." Unbelief calls God a liar.

1 John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

NO MAN CAN EXCEPT

John 6: 43: Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46: Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

Christ declares that the only way a sinner is given spiritual life and faith to come to Christ believing is by God. He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." But all who God chose before the foundation of the world by his free and sovereign grace shall be taught of God effectually and shall come.

What is the evidence that I have everlasting life? What is the evidence that God has drawn me and taught me?

FAITH IS THE EVIDENCE

John 6: 47: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48: I am that bread of life. 49: Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50: This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51: I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The one way of knowing I have everlasting life is faith in Christ. Christ said, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that Bread of Life.*"

Look at verse 51 “*the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*” Christ gave his flesh—he gave his body to be broken under God’s justice in place of guilty sinners. He gave his life for the life of his people throughout the world. He shed his blood unto death which ended death for his people. He gave his life for the life of elect Jews and elect Gentiles. He did not give his life to make it possible for his people to have life—*he gave his life for the life of his people.* It means giving his life to die he gave his people life. Our Substitute accomplished abolishing death and bringing in everlasting life for all for whom he gave his life.

Again, we see how incapable a spiritually dead sinner is of believing on Christ. This is why we must be taught of God and quickened to spiritual life and given faith as the gift of God. Christ declared plainly that the work of God is to believe on him. He declares he is the living bread we must eat by believing on him. But listen to the response of dead sinners.

John 6: 52: The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat? 53: Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54: Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; [get that: your believing on him, is due to you having life in you by him] and I will raise him up at the last day. 55: For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. [his broken body and shed blood is life indeed] 56: He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. [this is how we have spiritual life—how we drink—how we believe on Christ—Christ takes up his dwelling in the sinner in Spirit and makes us dwell in him in Spirit—the result is we eat his flesh and drink his blood—that is, we believe on Christ] 57: As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58: This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

We are about to eat a broken piece of unleavened bread and drink a thimble of wine. It is an ordinance Christ gave us to remember him. It pictures Christ’s broken body and shed blood which he gave for his people. Eating this bread and drinking this wine is a picture of believing on Christ. Just as this bread and wine will be in us by us eating and drinking it so by believing on Christ it is evidence that Christ dwells in us and we in him.

How can I know God elected me and Christ died for me and I have eternal life? Faith is the evidence. “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you...He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him....he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.*”

THE DIFFERENCE IS BY GRACE

John 6: 59: These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60: Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61: When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62: *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? 63: It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. 64: But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65: And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66: From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67: Then said Jesus unto the

twelve, Will ye also go away? 68: Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. 69: And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. 70: Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? 71: He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

What made the difference between those who walked away in unbelief and those who believed on Christ and continued believing on Christ? They were all sinners. There was no difference in them in their sin-nature. Who made the difference? The grace of God bestowed freely and sovereignly upon whom God will is the difference. To God be the glory for his amazing grace.

Our Lord is not begging sinners to let him save them. He knew from the beginning who they were that believed not. Christ even knew who would betray him. But it is not merely hearing his gospel that saves. It is Christ speaking the word into us—“*the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*” They did not believe because they were not his therefore the Father did not draw them savingly. Christ did not speak effectually into their hearts. Therefore, they did what spiritually dead sinners do—they rejected the gospel of Christ.

Christ said to the twelve that it was not they who chose Christ. He said, “I chose you.” They did not walk away. Why? The Father had chosen them and drawn them to Christ. Christ has spoken the words of eternal life effectually into their hearts so that they believed on him. It was God’s grace that made them to differ.

But Christ did not choose all of the apostles to save. One was Judas who Christ chose to work the will of the Father which was to betray him. This even more emphatically declares that Christ is God who is sovereign to save whom he will and pass by whom he will. Yet even those who betray Christ only fulfill the will of God.

Salvation is according to God’s eternal purpose. He gets all the glory for making his people righteous. God gets the glory for drawing us to Christ and teaching us the gospel in our hearts. Christ is the Redeemer who accomplished the salvation of his people and shall lose none. If we can believe on Christ and rest in him our God-given faith is the evidence that Christ did it for us. Believe on him and give him the glory! Salvation is of the Lord!

Amen!