

G R A C E

Reformed Baptist Church

Soli ♦ Deo ♦ Gloria

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Sermon Notes

Jesus Addresses the Crowd

John 6:22-29

May 8, 2005

BACKGROUND

○ Verses 22 – 24

- Read the **English Standard Version** (John 6:22-24)

²²On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea [the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee] saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. ²³Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

- **Verse 23** is the first time Jesus is called “Lord” (κυριος, *kurios*) in the Gospel of John

○ Verse 25

- Interestingly, the crowd recognizes Jesus as a teacher [Rabbi]; yet they deny his teaching. This is like them attempting to crown Him king, while rejecting the fundamental nature of His kingdom.
- They asked Him, “Rabbi, when did You get here?”
 - This question means both “When did You get here?” and “How long have you been here?”

○ Verse 26

- Notice: Jesus does NOT answer their question. If Jesus would have revealed how He walked on water and immediately brought the boat [carrying the disciples] to shore, they would have definitely followed Him.
- However, this would have been because of *what* He did [and can do in the future for them], NOT *who* He is.
- Notice also the **humility** of Jesus – that He refused to reveal a truth that would have surely won their praise.

- Jesus states, “...you seek Me, not because you saw signs...”
- Read John 6:14. Does 6:26 pose a potential contradiction? Why or Why not?
- The statement of Jesus goes back to the purpose of **signs** in the Gospel of John: to **reveal** something that was previously hidden (i.e. that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, the fulfillment of the Law, and the Old Testament, the perfect revelation of and exegesis of the Father – He is the Son God)
 - Recall the purpose of the Gospel of John, “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” John 20:30-31
- What Jesus is stating is this: “The crowd does not come to Him because they *see* the *true meaning* and *significance* of the signs.” [For they only see through **physical** eyes.]

- Jesus says, “...you seek Me, not because you saw signs, **but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.**”
 - The basis of the crowd following Jesus was as base as an animal seeking a master because of food!
 - The crowd was even willing to crown Jesus king because He filled their bellies!
 - They could see no further than the physical significance of His sign / miracle.

○ Verse 27

- John 6:59 states, “These things [the Bread of Life Discourse] He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.”
- It is very possible that the “speech” Christ gives in the synagogue, referenced in 6:59, begins here, in Verse 27.
- “The ‘discourse’ itself is in reality dialogue in which one side provides such extended answers that they become monologue. Such exchanges were not uncommon in synagogues.”
D.A. Carson

- Jesus states, “**Do not work for the food which perishes...**”
- Colossians 2:22 speaks of those “things destined to perish with use”
- Read [Matthew 6:19-21](#)

○ In his book, *Finding God*, Larry Crabb writes:

As we explore our own lives, we must never get so immersed in ourselves that we fail to remember that there is something far more wonderful to ponder...I must surrender my fascination with myself to a more worthy preoccupation with the character and purposes of God. I am not the point. He is. I exist for Him. He does not exist for me.

The question we need to ask is this: Are we merely living, or are we walking with God? Are we merely committed to...arranging our lives around getting our needs met, to building our cities [i.e. feeding our bellies and working for food which perishes]? Or are we committed to knowing God...to becoming like the Son whom the Father adores, and to waiting for the city that Christ is building right now?

- Notice, Jesus’ emphasis on “working.” This will be significant, given the audience He is addressing.

- “Do not work for the food which perishes, **but for the food which endures to eternal life...**”
- Feasting upon Him is our greatest satisfaction.
- Every other form of satisfaction is temporary and will perish.

- Think of this in terms of a legacy – what inheritance would you want to leave with loved ones, children, etc. [physical inheritance or spiritual inheritance]

- Jesus said, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, **which the Son of Man will give to you...**”
 - This “food” is not only *given by* Jesus, it *is* Jesus.
- Jesus, here, refers to himself as the **Son of Man**
 - Turn to John 1:51 [also Genesis 28:12]; John 3:13; John 5:27
 - As it is primarily in the Gospel of John, “Jesus prefers not to use a term such as ‘Messiah’ in the context of such heated messianic/political expectations; he opts for *Son of Man*, a more ambiguous term which nevertheless is increasingly laden, in John, with associations of revelation brought from heaven to earth.
 - Jesus is the apocalyptic *Son of Man* (of Daniel 7:13-14) who has received from the Ancient of Days complete authority and dominion.
 - The term “the Son of Man” is Jesus’ favorite self-designation.
 - The term is used in this way over 80 times in the Gospels.
 - J.P. Hickinbotham states, “the Son of Man is a title of divinity rather than humanity.”
 - “The term ‘the Son of Man’...points us to Jesus’ conception of himself as of heavenly origin and as the possessor of heavenly glory.” Leon Morris
- “Jesus said, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, **for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.**”
 - The Son of Man, Jesus Christ, is certified and approved by the Father, as His exact representation
 - This is also, perhaps, a reference to the baptism of Jesus (John 1:31-34)
 - However, Jesus did not become the Son at the baptism. He is the eternal Son. He did not receive the Holy Spirit at His baptism. He

was always the Son in perfect unity with the Father and Holy Spirit as the Eternal Triune God (the Trinity).

○ Verse 28

- “Therefore they said to Him [Jesus], ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’”
- Notice, the crowd in the synagogue completely misunderstands the words of Jesus.
- His statement, “[work] for the food that endures to eternal life...” was not a statement on the **nature of work**, but rather, what the focus of our lives should be.
- “His point was not that they should attempt some novel form of work, but that merely material notions of blessings are not worth pursuing.”
- Notice the arrogance in the reply of the crowd. Basically, they are telling Jesus, tell us what works that God requires, and we will do them.”
- “They display no doubt about their intrinsic ability to meet any challenge God may set them; they evince no sensitivity to the fact that eternal life is first and foremost a gift within the purview of the Son of Man.” Carson
- **Do they sense their need for a Savior?**
- **As possible “experts” in the Law, they completely missed the purpose of the Law.**

THE TIMES IN OUR LIVES THAT WE REALIZE THE GREATNESS OF GOD IS IN THOSE TIMES WHEN WE REALIZE OUR GREAT DEPENDENCE UPON HIM FOR EVERYTHING!

- We must pray for a sense of dependence upon the Lord Jesus; an awareness that apart from Him we can do nothing.

○ Verse 29

- Jesus answered and said to them, **“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”**
 - Is simple, esoteric believe in God sufficient.
 - The world says, “Just have faith, and things will work out.”

- In other words, is this what He requires?
- What God requires involves a **specific object of our faith**.
- Many who call themselves Christians often say that they have “accepted God” or “believe in God”; yet, have **they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ?**
- Notice the **irony** in Jesus’ work. What he is calling “work” is no work at all – even it is a gift!
- WORK for the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is truly a REST, a TRUST – this another great paradox of Scripture
 - READ **Matthew 11:28-30**
- Turn to **Ephesians 2:8-9**
 - FAITH is not something that fallen man simply exercises one day out of his own free will – it, too, like all other aspects of salvation (repentance, justification, sanctification, glorification), is a **gift** that is given to us by the **grace of God**.
- Turn to **Hebrews 12:2**
 - The Puritan Matthew Henry, in his commentary on Hebrews, states,

“He [Jesus Christ] is the purchaser of the Spirit of faith, the publisher of the rule of faith, the efficient cause of the grace of faith, and in all respects the author of our faith.”
 - Jesus Christ is not only the **object** of our faith, but He is the **originator** of it.