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The Bread of Life John 6:36-40 Part 3

This weekend we will be continuing our examination of **John 6** which began with two very familiar miracles. The first miracle that we considered was the "feeding of the 5,000" in **John 6:1-15**, and the second miracle was "Christ walking on water" in **John 6:16-21**. The Apostle John used the "feeding of the 5,000" and "Christ walking on water" as a transition into the "Bread of Life" discourse in **John 6:22-71**.

Because of the length of this discourse, we have broken it into several different parts. The first part of the "Bread of Life" discourse began with a *challenge* in John 6:22-27. But had it begun with a challenge?

Hopefully you remember that the Jewish multitude, which had been miraculously fed by Christ, was relentlessly pursuing Him. And the sole reason why they were pursuing Him, according to **John 6:26**, was because they had eaten the loaves and were filled. In other words, they were focusing on the here and now rather than on the hereafter. In light of this fact, Christ challenges this Jewish multitude to not focus on the things that are destined to perish but rather on the things that will endure to eternal life, the very things which He was prepared to give them.

Let me once again read for you **John 6:27**. **"Do not work for the food which perishes, [all those things connected with the here and now] but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal."**

What is the heart of this challenge? The heart of this challenge is about getting our priorities right. In other words, we should not be living our lives for the here and now but rather for the hereafter. How are people to do this? They are to do this by making sure that they have received from Christ the food that endures to eternal life. This will lead them to focus on Christ today, tomorrow, and the rest of their lives. They will be thinking about who He is. They will be thinking about what He has done. They will be thinking about how they can please Him in the way they live their lives. They will be thinking about that future day in glory when they will be standing before Him face-to-face.

Obviously, if we respond to this challenge, it will mean that huge changes will need to take place in the way we conduct our lives. But certainly it will be well worth it. And this leads us to the second part of the bread of life discourse that we considered last week. The second part of the "Bread of Life" discourse consists of a *promise* in John 6:28-40.

And what is that promise. The promise is very succinctly stated in **John 6:35**. Let me read this verse for you. **"I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."** What is this promise offering us?

Those who respond to Christ's challenge and are willing by faith to come to Him to receive the bread that He is offering and will continue to work for that food by making Christ the focus of their lives will for the first time in their lives be truly satisfied.

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In what way will they be satisfied? Christ is talking about spiritual satisfaction. Jesus is not talking about the food destined to perish. He is talking about the food that endures to eternal life. He is talking about a personal relationship with Christ that results in peace with God. Feasting on the food that this world has to offer may satisfy us for a while in the most superficial way, but feasting on the food that Christ is offering at His banqueting table will satisfy the deepest longings of our soul both now and forever.

We have been talking about the second part of the bread of life discourse, which concerns His promise. Last week we were able to consider Christ's promise in **John 6:28-35** but were unable to consider Christ's expanded comments about that promise in **John 6:36-40**. This week we will complete those comments. In Christ's comments in John 6:36-40, He will reveal to this Jewish multitude where they *stand* in light of the promise He extended to them in John 6:28-35.

Let me read these verses for you. **"But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. (37) All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. (38) For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. (39) And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. (40) For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."**

My hope as we consider where this Jewish multitude stood with God, based on the comments in **John 6:36-40**, that we will better understand where we personally stand with Him and would again commit ourselves to respond to Christ's challenge to work for the food that endures to eternal life rather than for the food which perishes.

Let us now look at the very first part of **John 6:36**. **"But I said to you, that you have seen Me."** What does Jesus mean when He tells this Jewish multitude that they had seen Him? When He tells them that they "have seen" Him, He is most likely referring to the "feeding of the 5,000" when He *revealed* Himself as "the true bread."

Since Christ, "The Bread of Life," had revealed Himself to this Jewish multitude in the "feeding of the 5,000," it would have seemed very likely that they would have become beneficiaries of the promise that He had given them in **John 6:35**. But this did not happen. Why? It did not happen because of their unbelief. Let us continue to read the verse. **"But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe."**

Because the Jewish multitude had an opportunity in the "feeding of the 5,000" to believe in Him as the "true bread" but rejected Him as such, they are *not* beneficiaries of His promise. They are in essence, because of their lack of faith, on the outside looking in.

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There may be people here this weekend that are doing the same thing as these Jews. They may have "seen" Christ through our study of **John 6**. They may have seen His miracles and even found those miracles intriguing, but unfortunately like this Jewish multitude, they may have been unable to reach out by faith and take the bread that He is offering while their lives remain fixated on the food destined to perish. And in essence, just like these Jews 2,000 years ago; they, because of their lack of faith, will be on the outside looking in.

But now let me ask you this question. Whose fault is it when people see Christ and are even intrigued by Christ but stubbornly continue on in their unbelief and fail to reach out and take the food He is offering? Is it Christ's fault, or is it their fault?

What did Jesus say in **John 6:36**? "**But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.**" Jesus is placing the responsibility for their failure to believe squarely on their shoulders. Jesus, in essence, is saying to them, "You had every opportunity to believe but you chose not to believe." And of course this has ramifications for others.

Those who choose not to believe in Christ as the "true bread" will be held *responsible* for that choice just as Christ held these Jews responsible for their choice in John 6:37. This means that those standing condemned before Christ at the final judgment will not be able to blame anyone but themselves.

But now let us me ask you this question. If those who choose not to believe in Christ as the "True Bread" are held responsible for their unbelief, who should get the credit for those who believe?

If we were to lean upon our own understanding I would think many of us might say, "Well, if the people who choose not to believe in Christ as the "true bread" are held responsible for that choice, it would seem that those who choose to believe in Christ as the "True Bread" are the ones that should get the credit."

But if this is what you are thinking, you are completely and totally wrong. Though individuals who choose not to believe are held fully responsible for that choice, individuals who choose to believe can take none of the *credit*.

Let us read **John 6:37**. "**All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me.**" Obviously the inference that Christ is making is this. The reason why these Jews had chosen not to believe in Him was because the Father had not given them to Him. If the Father had chosen to give them to Him, then of course they would have turned their backs on the things that are destined to perish and pursued the food that He was prepared to give them. But this is not what they did, and the reason was because God the Father had not chosen to give this Jewish multitude to Him.

If these Jews were not given to Christ, then who is given to Christ and when? Those given to Christ are those who are called in eternity past according to His own purpose and totally apart from any redeeming quality in the individuals called.

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Let me read for you **2 Timothy 1:8-9**. "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, (9) who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity." These verses reinforce what is inferred in **John 6:37**.

This might be difficult for some of you to accept, but you must remember that the Scriptures teach us that everyone who has ever been born into this world came into this world spiritually dead. And therefore the only way for any spiritually dead person to respond to Christ would be by God, according to His own purpose and grace, purposing it so.

Or in other words, apart from the Father's sovereign choice to give certain select individuals to His Son, no one would be able to exercise faith and receive the bread that endures to eternal life (2 Timothy 1:8-9).

Over 40 years ago God initiated His eternal plan for my life. He reached down into the depths of my wicked heart and ministered the truth of His gospel through the mighty outstretched arm of His Spirit and I was born again. If God had not done this, I would have remained spiritually blind and destined for judgment. The same thing is true for each one of you here this weekend. If you have come to Christ's banqueting table in order to partake of the food that endures to eternal life, you are at this banqueting table because God reached down into the depths of your wicked heart and ministered the truth of His gospel through the mighty outstretched arm of His Spirit and you were born again.

So let me ask you this question. Who should get the blame when someone chooses not to believe? They should get the blame. And who should get the credit when someone chooses to believe? God should get the credit.

Both of these truths, human responsibility versus God's sovereign choice, receive emphasis in the Scriptures. Can our pea-sized brains reconcile these two truths? No! But it does not change the truth of it.

The Bible, in a sense, is visually picturing the world as passing by the entrance of heaven; and on this entrance in plain view of each one of them is written these words, "Whosoever will may come." This is a wonderful invitation, which renders each person passing by that gate fully responsible. But what is the inscription on the other side of the gate that can be read by those who have chosen to enter as they pass through? "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world."

God's sovereign choice, to give certain individuals that are called the elect as a gift to Christ for the purpose of salvation, is an extremely important doctrine. Not only is it a doctrine that places God in His rightful place as the sovereign of the universe able to express mercy to whomever He chooses, it is also the reason why we can be confident that once a person receives the gift of salvation he can never lose it. This will be clearly seen in the last few remaining verses. Let us continue to read **John 6:37**. "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."

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Christ makes it very clear that all those that His Father gives Him will not be cast out. And what does this exactly mean? Some people have taken the phrase "I will certainly not cast out" as meaning "Whoever comes to me I will certainly welcome." Though this is true, it is not the specific meaning of the words. If this is not the specific meaning of the words, then what is the specific meaning of the words?

The word "cast out" (EKBALLOO) almost always presupposes that what is "cast out" is already "in". Christ is not commenting on how He will receive those who come to Him, but rather He is commenting about how He will treat them after they have come. And how will He treat them? He will not cast them out.

Christ's statement that He will not "cast out" those that the Father has given Him is not speaking about their "reception" but rather about their "preservation". This will continue to be emphasized as we continue our study.

Let us go on to read **John 6:38** and the first part of verse **39**. **"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. (39) And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing."** What is Jesus telling us in this verse? Jesus is saying that the entire purpose of His incarnation, of His coming down from heaven, was not to do His own will but the will of His Father who sent Him. And what was the will of His Father who had sent Him? It is the will of His Father that every person that He has given to His son will be preserved and none will be lost (John 6:38).

If any person that the Father has given to the Son is "cast out," or is able to walk away from Christ's banqueting, it would be to the Son's everlasting shame. It would mean either that He was incapable of performing what the Father willed Him to do, or that He was flagrantly disobedient to His Father. Both alternatives are unthinkable.

Do we have to fear that somehow we will be removed from Christ's banqueting table? Or that someone could wander away from Christ's banqueting table? And the answer is absolutely not. Those whom God has chosen before the foundation of the world for salvation are given to Christ. And it is Christ's responsibility to not lose one of them but rather to preserve them.

And what is the particular event that Christ is pointing toward that will demonstrate His faithfulness in fulfilling the will of His Father? Let us read **John 6:39-40**. **"And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. (40) For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."**

Those who have come to Christ to partake of the food that endures to eternal life are immediately blessed, and the deepest longing of their soul is satisfied. But let us not forget the dessert. And what is the dessert? It is the event that Christ is pointing toward in **verses 39-40**. And what is that event?

The particular event that Christ is pointing toward that will demonstrate His faithfulness in preserving what His Father had entrusted to Him will be the *resurrection* (John 6:39-40).

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When we come by faith to Christ's banqueting table and receive the bread that He is offering, we immediately experience peace with God and the deepest longing of our soul is satisfied. But even though our soul is satisfied, the Bible tells us in **Romans 8** that our bodies still groan, longing for their future redemption. When will that future redemption of our body be accomplished? It will be accomplished at the resurrection.

When Christ offered the Bread of Life to this Jewish multitude, He was not only offering them a place at His banqueting table that would satisfy the deepest longing of their soul; but He was also offering them the certain prospect of an impending dessert, the resurrection of their body.

Is responding to Christ's challenge to work for the bread that endures to eternal life worth it? Absolutely! According to Christ's promise, not only will working for the food that endures to eternal life satisfy the deepest longing of our soul, it will eventually satisfy even our body.

And what is the first step in working for the food that endures to eternal life? We must be willing to respond to Christ's offer and come to Him in faith to receive the bread He is offering.

CONCLUSION

For those of us who believe that we have received this bread, is our work now over? No! It has only just begun. Why? Because our love for Christ, in light of all that He has done for us at such great personal expense, drives us forward. And if this is not what you are experiencing this morning perhaps you need to once again receive what bread is truly most important to you.