

NOURISHMENT FOR LIFE Sunday School- May 6, 2012

Unifying Topic: THE BREAD OF LIFE

Lesson Text

I. The People Seek Jesus (John 6:22-24)

II. Jesus' Request Of The People (John 6:25-29)

III. The People Ask For A Sign (John 6:30-35)

The Main Thought: 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. (John 6:35, KJV).

Unifying Principle: Many people are hungering for what will make their lives complete. Where do we find what is missing in our lives? Jesus promised His followers that they would never be hungry or thirst if they would come to Him.

Lesson Aim: To shed light on what Jesus meant when He called Himself "the bread of life."

Life aim: To help the students to understand that only Jesus can satisfy the cravings of our souls; only He can meet every one of our spiritual and physical needs.

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;

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:)

6:24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

6:25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

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.

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.

6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

6:30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

6:31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

6:32 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.

6:33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

6:34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

6:35 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.

HISTORY:

Chapter 6 reveals Jesus to be the Provision for every human and material need. Jesus first demonstrated the truth, then began to preach and teach it. He showed that He was...

- concerned with every need in life (even a missed meal, Jh.6:1-15).

JOHN Chapter 6:1-15 Jesus being tired and weary from the pressure of facing the crowds day after day, He crossed over to the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias where the great multitude of people still followed. Why? Because they saw with their own eyes His miracles. This is what Jesus had done for the diseased. He then takes refuge in a mountain sitting with his disciples. The Passover season was near, a time when thousands of pilgrims flooded Jerusalem. Jesus seeing a great company of people still coming to Him, He uses this occasion to demonstrate two concerns:

1. His concern for meeting the needs of man, even the minutest need of missing a meal.
2. His concern to test and strengthen the disciples' faith.

In Mk.6:35-36, the disciples wanted to send the crowd away. In Matt.15:23, they said get rid of them. Here in John 6 Jesus posed the question to Philip: "*Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?*" Philip quickly gives Him the financial assessment. This is pessimistic faith where you say show me the money or resources available; and feel that the problem is too big for God to move in or remove. Jesus wants to teach Philip and the rest of us that our financial resource is not walking by faith; it's not our only dependency; it will not keep us stable because after

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getting it, it is fleeting! Don't let your estimate of what can't be done keep you from depending on the One, that can do it all. God can do the miraculous. Trust Him to provide the resources. Andrew speaks up about a little lad with five barley loaves of bread and two small fish. At least he was looking for a way out. But then he adds, "*but what are they among so many?*" This is optimistic questioning faith; positive and hopeful yet he negates it with a question. You know how we do, we trust God in prayer, but we say the opposite of the Word in our conversation. Jesus didn't mince words but teaches what faith is; unswerving. He tells the disciples to make the men sit down; a number of about five thousand. He took the loaves, gave thanks and distributed them to the disciples to give to the people. It didn't say they didn't have enough or that they ran out. No, "*when they were filled*" (so you know there was enough). The disciples were to "*gather up the fragments that remained and nothing was to be lost.*" It would be used at some future date. Although Jesus used the help and aid of His disciples, the miracle was always in His hands. He multiplied the food; they passed it out. As they gathered the fragments, it came to twelve baskets. There is a lesson in leftovers. Think about it. Don't waste God's blessing whatever it may be. The people saw and believed Him to be the "*prophet that should come into the world*", but they were thinking of an earthly, materialistic king, a Messiah who could meet both their personal and community or national needs. Therefore, Jesus knew their intention to take Him by force, so He goes into a mountain alone away from all. They didn't know His kingdom was not of this world.

- **concerned with every overpowering need (the calming of a storm, Jh.6:16-21).**

Chapter 6:16-21 That evening the disciples went down to the sea to enter a ship to go toward Capernaum. It had become dark and Jesus was not with them. According to Mk.6:45-46, Jesus told the disciples to get into the ship and go to the other side; that is, away from the crowd. He was going to send the crowd away and withdraw to pray. Well, a storm arose on the sea. The great and violent storm had caught the disciples by surprise and they had rowed about three or four miles out into the sea. The storm had pushed them out into the middle of the sea. They being tired and gripped with fear sees Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the ship causing fear among them. Yes, he was actually walking on water.

1. Being in the dark will cause fear.
2. Being without Jesus will cause fear.
3. Being caught in a great and violent storm will cause fear.
4. Being tired and gripped with impending death will cause fear.

Remember they were physically exhausted and mentally drained. And when you're like that you sometimes can't think straight and fear will begin to take over or faith will rise to the occasion. The answer to fear is Jesus Himself and He was right there before them.

1. The Word of Jesus delivers from fear. In order to ease their minds, He said, "*It is I; be not afraid.*"
2. Receiving the presence of Christ delivers from fear. Hearing His Word is not enough; you have to willingly receive Christ into your life. Deliverance came to the disciples only after they had received Jesus into the ship.
3. The results of receiving Christ were twofold: deliverance from fear and the calming of the storm. Jesus Christ gives the strength to row through all the storms of life. He has the power to erase fear and calm any storm!

"It is I" (*eimi*) is the one word in the Greek which is simply "I AM." Jesus was saying, "I AM" has come—fear not. He was reminding the disciples who He was, the Son of God Himself. He possessed all power; therefore, there was no need to fear.

LESSON:

John 6:22-24 The People Seek Jesus

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; The following day, those who had been fed by Jesus began looking for Him. Remember there were more than five thousand people and actually there were five thousand men alone. Since they knew He had not crossed the sea with His disciples, they were puzzled at His disappearance. He did not

leave with the boat.

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:) The place where Jesus had multiplied the loaves and fishes, there came other boats from Tiberias. It appears that they supposed that Jesus had entered one of those boats and gone to Capernaum after His disciples had departed.

6:24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. The people believing that Jesus was the answer to their need, they did what they should have done: they sought after Him. Other boats had drawn up to shore during the night, probably seeking refuge from the storm. Therefore, the people immediately took passage on these boats to cross over to Capernaum, hoping to find Jesus. Their search ended in Capernaum

John 6:25-29 Jesus' Request Of The People

6:25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? The last time they saw Jesus was when He dismissed the crowd, now He's on the other side of the sea. They have to ask, "*Rabbi, how did you get here?*" They knew that the disciples had left alone; without Jesus.

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. Jesus didn't answer the question they asked. Instead, He rebuked their motives. He stated that although the people had seen the signs, they had not accepted them for what they were (proof of His true Messiahship). They were only interested in the physical (the need for food), not in the spiritual. Jesus uses every opportunity to teach. They really had a selfish agenda.¹ Many seek religion from no better motive than this. They suppose that it will add to their earthly happiness, or they seek only to escape from suffering or from the convictions of conscience, or they seek for heaven only as a place of enjoyment, and regard religion as valuable only for this. All this is mere selfishness.

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. "*Labor not*" means to "*stop working for*" or be in anxiety for the physical bread which perishes. Rather, they should work for that meat which endures eternally, or work for the real food which produces everlasting life. That food is Christ Himself. His authority to give everlasting life rested in the seal (testimony) set by the Father through His signs and miracles. The meat that spoils can't endure to nourish a person but the meat which is the Son of man is the one to labor for; He endures to nourish eternally. He is the One who can give life that is both abundant and eternal. Our nourishment for life is in Jesus Christ not in our temporary labor that perishes.

6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? The people thought in terms of work. They thought that by doing good works they could win the approval and acceptance of God. We are still believing we must work to please God. There is nothing you can do to earn it, but there is plenty that you can and must do once you have believed.

6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Jesus is saying, '*I'm going to let you in on a secret, just believe on Him whom the Father sent.*' Jesus corrected the people's thoughts, their concept of salvation by works. They did not secure the favor of God and were not acceptable to God because of works. They received God's favor and acceptance because of a work, one work (singular). The work of God is the only one to believe—believe on Him whom God hath sent—the work He has done!

¹ <http://www.studylight.org/com/bnn/view.cgi?book=joh&chapter=006>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

John 6:30-35 The People Ask For A Sign

6:30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

The people demanded proof. Jesus had just made some phenomenal claims. He claimed to be...

- The Son of man (v27).
- The One who feeds man, who gives man bread which issues forth eternal life (v27).
- The One whom God had sealed (v27).
- The One whom God had sent into the world (v29).
- The One upon whom men were to believe (v29).

So the people demand a sign to all these claims. Jesus had just miraculously fed 5,000 plus people and yet they ignore the witness of that particular sign. It was not enough. After all God has done for us, after all we have seen Him do, do we still require a sign?

6:31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. To them they see that...

- Moses had fed Israel for forty years in the wilderness; Jesus had fed them only once.
- Moses had fed Israel with manna falling out of the sky from heaven. Jesus had merely multiplied bread from a few loaves in His hands.

This is like a slap in the face, comparing the forefathers to Christ. Even though manna was supplied in the wilderness, they didn't want it after awhile; never satisfied. They wanted more.

6:32 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. Jesus lets them know that it wasn't Moses who gave them bread from heaven; Moses was not the life sustainer or source of life, but it was His Father. God alone provides true bread; true satisfaction. Jesus is saying, that there is something more than manna; there is "*true bread out of heaven*" and 'this is what you need.'

6:33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.² Jesus, again, here is speaking of Himself being the Bread which brings eternal life. Jesus came down from heaven and took on the flesh of man. God was going further to sustain them with bread from heaven, in the form of His Son.

- The Bread of God is a person. He came down out of heaven; out of the very presence of God Himself.
- The Bread of God gives life to the world by...
 - Nourishing and sustaining
 - Satisfying
 - Energizing
 - Creating desire
 - Being partaken on a regular basis

6:34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. Like the Samaritan woman at the well saying, "*give me this water;*" they too are saying, "*give us this bread.*" There are two significant points:

1. The people called Jesus Lord, but how much they understood of His deity is not known. It may have just been an address of respect.
2. The people requested the Bread of God.

6:35 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. There are five significant points:

1. Jesus identifies Himself as the Bread of Life.
2. Jesus needs them to come.
3. You will never hunger.
4. You must believe on Jesus.
5. You will never thirst.

² <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/john/17.html>

As one is coming and believing, Jesus speaks of that person will never hunger or thirst. Every need of life, of nourishment, and of growth is met. Nothing is left out of lacking when a person comes to Christ and believes (a continuous action, meaning continuing to believe). Of course, this does not mean he will never hunger after righteousness. He will, but his hunger and thirst will never go unsatisfied.

SUMMARY:

Five thousand plus people were fed and the following day the people were still following after Jesus. That evening the disciples got into a ship heading toward Capernaum and Jesus did not go with them. He dismissed the crowd and headed into mountains. As the disciples were in the ship, a storm arose which brought fear upon them. Jesus was seen by them walking on the water. He brought peace by letting them know it was He who was in their midst and to not be afraid. The crowd on the other hand, had come to Capernaum and finds Jesus there, but still wondering how He got there when they hadn't seen Him embark onto a ship (**v22-25**).

Jesus answers them as to why they were constantly looking for Him. Yes, they had seen the miracle of Him feeding the five thousand, but it wasn't because of the miracle but because of their bellies being full. Jesus had nothing against food but they are not to labor or live in anxiety over the perishable food. Their meat should be labored for the Bread of Life that endures forever. The Son of man whom the Father has already sealed and given authority to is the one that will fill and nourish them. The Father had commissioned, authorized, and stamped His seal upon the work of the Son. His miracles were a divine seal. After hearing that, the crowd was eager to work the works of God. They really wanted to please Him but they were really thinking of the physical and not of the spiritual. The work was not something man does for God. It's something God has already done—sent His Son into the world. Jesus informs them that they would have to believe on one man's work— that is God; and believe on the one God sent into the world— Jesus (**v26-29**).

Jesus had made certain claims and now they are demanding a sign. It wasn't enough to see the sign the day before. They even bring up their fathers eating manna in the desert. They believed the manna came from Moses. Jesus explains that Moses didn't supply the bread from heaven; it was from His Father, the supplier of true bread from heaven and He gives life to the world. They now want this Bread of Life. Well they are in for an awakening. Jesus says, "*I am the Bread of Life.*" All they had to do to receive is believe on Him, and they will never hunger nor thirst (**v30-35**).

APPLICATION:

The people were looking for Jesus for the wrong reason. Jesus is able to supply every need. All we have to do is believe on God who sent His Son, the Bread of Life, who gives nourishment in our everyday life. Whenever circumstances come up and we find ourselves hungering and thirsting, we should remember that our life is in the authority of the one who came from heaven and He supplies every need.