

John Ch6v25-58 - Bread For Life

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[0 : 00] Turn in our Bibles to John's Gospel. If you need a Bible and you haven't got one, it'll be helpful for you, so please feel free to get up out of your seat and get one.

Sam is at the back there. Are there any notes left if anybody needs notes and a pen if you want to follow along? So John chapter 6, we're going to be reading from verse 25 down to verse 40. I'll just give you a second to find it.

John chapter 6, verses 25 to 40. So let's hear God's word to us.

When they, that's the crowd, found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they asked him, Rabbi or teacher, when did you get here?

[1 : 26] Jesus answered, very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, for on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.

Then they asked him, what must we do to do the works God requires? Jesus answered, the work of God is this, to believe in the one he has sent.

So they asked him, what sign then will you give us that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness.

As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jesus said to them, very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven, for the bread of God and the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

[2 : 45] Sir, they said, always give us this bread. Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me, and still you do not believe.

All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.

[3 : 52] So, please keep your Bibles open, and if you need the bathrooms at all, just feel free to go to the back and follow the blue path all the way around to the ladies and to the gents if you need them.

Let's pray and ask for God's help. Father, thank you for your words.

Thank you for its truth. And we pray that your word would feed us this morning, that it would have an impact upon each of our lives, and that it would help us to depend upon Jesus more and more.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. And Gorta Moore, that's about the only Irish I know, I think, the Great Famine, the Great Famine of Ireland.

Over a period of seven years, from 1845 to 1852, one million people died, and a further one million had to flee the country.

[5 : 09] The cause? A disease known as the potato blight, which killed off the annual potato harvest. It was devastating, because the vast majority of people living in Ireland at that time were dependent on the potato for food.

You had potato for your breakfast, dinner, and tea. So without the potato, you died. Now what the potato was to the Irish in the mid-19th century, bread was to the Palestinian people of the first century.

Bread was your staple diet. You had bread for your breakfast, dinner, and tea. In fact, you literally worked for your crust.

80% of your income would be spent on food, which was primarily bread. It was essential to life. If you had no bread, you died. But you could imagine, then, the delight of the crowds when Jesus turned up and did one of his signs.

[6 : 27] Let's pick it up in chapter 6, verse 5. We didn't read this, but we're going to read it now. Chapter 6, verse 5. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming towards him, he said to Philip, Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?

Jesus asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. And Philip answered him, It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one just to have a bite.

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, perhaps a little bit sarcastically. Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish.

But how far is that going to go among so many? Jesus said, Make the people sit down. There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down.

About 5,000 men were there. So that's not counting all the women and children. So we could say at least 10,000. Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted.

[7 : 53] An abundance of free bread. It's no wonder then that wherever Jesus went, the crowds were not far behind.

So look at verse 25. When they found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they asked him, Rabbi, when did you get here? Jesus answered, Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

You see, Jesus had already performed a number of signs. Remember, he had turned the water into wine. He had healed a man who had been paralysed for 38 years.

And now he was providing free food. But the signs Jesus did were not an end in themselves. They were always pointing beyond the miracle itself and pointing it to Jesus about who he is and what he had come to do.

So what was this sign, this free bread sign, all about? Well, that's what we're going to look at together.

[9 : 15] This sign will teach us, first of all, that Jesus is the bread from heaven. Jesus is the bread from heaven.

The crowd naturally thought that, well, if this guy Jesus gave us bread yesterday and we didn't have to even work for it, maybe he's going to give us bread tomorrow.

All they could be thinking of was filling their bellies. Just give us bread bread and we'll be satisfied. Well, Jesus had something better to offer and we need to know and see the difference.

First, Jesus talks about bread that spoils. Verse 27, do not work for food that spoils but for food that endures to eternal life.

Now, bread mightn't be the top of our wants and desires list. Thankfully, we live in a part of the world where we have an abundance of food. We throw away bread.

[10 : 24] However, we do hunger for other things. Don't we desperately try to fill our lives with all kinds of stuff in an effort to find satisfaction?

It can be physical things like the pursuit of sports and fitness and well-being. It can be material, a desire for more money or that job or that holiday.

It can be relational, the desire for a friend or to get married. We work, we put in lots of effort chasing that one thing.

If only I could grasp it and have it, that if it was in my life, it would satisfy me. What Jesus is saying, all of these things, the physical, the material, the relational, they can be all good.

They're wonderful, good gifts from God to you. But get this, they don't last. They'll all spoil.

[11 : 34] Every one of them will perish. because everything that we desire in this life has a shelf life. In fact, when we have it, we find that it leaves us empty.

We're only grasping for more. So Jesus, right from the outset, is saying to us, stop thinking about the physical and the temporary and reorder your lives and your heart and start thinking about the spiritual and the eternal.

Verse 27, don't work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life. So what is the food that Jesus offers?

What is the bread that endures to eternal life? Well, there's the bread from God. It seems the crowd are still thinking in physical terms.

Look at verse 31. They remind Jesus of their history and their past. Our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness. As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat.

[12:56] You may remember the account in Exodus when the Israelites were rescued from their slavery in Egypt. They found themselves in the wilderness, in the desert.

Well, there was no food there. So God said to Moses, you can follow it on the screen, God said, I will rain down bread from heaven for you.

So in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost appeared on the desert floor.

The very first frosties. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, what is it? For they did not know what it was.

And Moses said to them, it is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. bread. Now this went on for 40 years.

[14:01] Every morning they would go out into their camp and there would be a fresh supply of bread that they would gather. So the crowd are thinking, you can imagine their minds whirring, hey Jesus, can you do what Moses did?

Can you give us this food continually? Verse 32, Jesus said to them, very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, in fact it was God who had done that, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. You see, the bread that God is giving, that he offers, is not the physical bread that you'll get in Lidl that fills your belly one day and leaves you hungry the next.

It's not the material temporary stuff that we squeeze into our hectic lives. The bread that God gives is Jesus who comes to give life to the world.

Jesus who was sent from heaven provides life in all its fullness forever. Bread for our bellies is important.

[15:31] We'll enjoy our food today, but Jesus who is the true bread sent from heaven is essential. What the world gives, what this life offers us, will spoil and perish, but what God gives endures.

Jesus says, I am the bread from heaven. And Jesus also says that he is the bread of life.

Now like the crowd, we can perhaps miss what Jesus is saying. Verse 34, sir, they said, always give us this bread. You see, they're still focused on their tummies.

They can't see past the physical and the temporary, so Jesus makes it abundantly clear. Verse 34, I am the bread of life.

It's me, the food you need, the food that you desperately desire, it's me. You see, all these material longings that we have, the relational desires that we all have, well, they're just signals, they're just a taste of something much deeper down in our life, which is only filled by Jesus.

[17:02] Augustine famously wrote these words. Speaking of God, he says, you made us for yourself as our goal, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.

In other words, our aching appetites are only ever truly filled in the person of Jesus. And Jesus goes on to show us two ways in which we can find life in him, the kind of life that he gives us.

First, there is the bread that satisfies. Look at verse 35. Jesus declared, I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. The life of Jesus fills us and quenches us.

There is no need to go looking and searching for anything else or anyone else, that magical thing, if only I had it. No, we have got it in the person of Jesus.

[18:29] You see, we all crave joy and happiness and we long to be satisfied, but whatever we have and wherever we go, it seems it's just never enough.

We're always chasing our dreams. Isn't this what the writer to Ecclesiastes teaches us? Follow on the screens there what he says.

He says, I denied myself nothing my eyes desired. I refused my heart no pleasure.

My heart took delight in all my labour and this was the reward for all my toil. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless.

A chasing after the wind, nothing was gained under the sun. Do you see that word meaningless? It's emptiness.

[19 : 40] It's like trying to grasp a cloud. There's nothing there. And all this chasing and all this looking for things ultimately leaves us empty.

But look what Jesus promises. He says, come to me and you will never go hungry. Come to me and you will be forgiven of all of your sin, all your guilt and all your shame can be dealt with.

Come to me and you will never be condemned. Come to me and you can be a child of God with access to the Father. Come to me and you will never be thirsty.

me and who satisfies completely. We don't need to go looking to anyone else or anything else.

So he is bread that satisfies and he is bread that secures. Look at verse 37. All those the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me, I will never drive away.

[21 : 00] Jesus is giving the invitation. All who come will not be driven away. It's a solid and sure guarantee that the life he offers is forever.

Well, how can we be so sure? Well, look at verse 38. Jesus says, I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

And what is the will? What's the desire of the Father? Verse 39. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

Those who come to Jesus are secure in Jesus. Last week we looked at the phrase about crossing over from death to life.

It's like we go through a door and we come into life. Well, you know what? There's no way back through that door. We are secure in Jesus forever.

[22 : 20] In fact, as the end of verse 39 tells us, a day is going to come when all who have died in Jesus and are trusting him will be raised up, will be given brand new bodies, and we will enjoy an eternity with Jesus forever in his new creation.

You see, everything that we can see, every possession that we own and touch and taste and hear, it will all spoil.

It neither lasts nor satisfies, but to have Jesus is to have life that is eternally secure and will never perish, spoil, or fade.

Verse 40, for my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life and I will raise them up at the last day.

How amazing that will be. Come to me, says Jesus, because I am the bread of life.

[23 : 36] life. So how do we receive this life-giving bread? How can we experience it for ourselves? How can we enjoy it on a daily basis?

Well, Jesus is the bread from heaven, he's the bread of life. And Jesus is the bread we eat. Jesus says something quite shocking.

Look at verse 51. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever.

This bread is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world. We are to eat Jesus.

We are to feed on him. we say that sounds an awfully bit strange. Can we really eat him? Well, we are not to literally eat, so what does it mean?

[24 : 46] Well, I think two things. I put it like this. First, it is bread that we can trust. Suppose you have never seen or tasted bread.

bread. And someone comes up to you and offers you a bread roll, a nice crusty roll. And in an effort to convince you of its goodness, they explain, well, Johnny, it's made of flour, it's got some water in and it's put in the oven and it's baked and when it comes out, it's chewy on the outside and soft in the inside.

Try it, one bite of it and it will melt in your mouth. How do you know if it's good? The only way you know if it's good, the only way you know if they're telling the truth is if you taste it yourself.

You must eat it. Well, in the same way, Jesus is calling us to not just hear his words, but to believe him, to trust in him.

Verse 53, Jesus said to them, very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

[26 : 13] Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise them up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

You see, to eat and drink of Jesus means we're to trust in him. We're to believe in him. It's to place all our hope in Jesus because we don't get to experience the life Jesus gives by simply knowing about him and getting an A in your religion test or just having information about Jesus. No, we experience the life he gives to us by having faith in him, by committing ourselves to him fully and completely.

I wonder if we've all experienced this life. You can trust him but don't take my word for it.

As we read in Psalm 34 earlier, taste and you will see that he is good. He is good.

[27 : 34] So Jesus is bread that we can trust and then second bread we can feed on because not only are we to taste, there's the implication here as we read on that we're to keep on eating, we're to keep on feeding.

Verse 56, whoever eats or feeds on my flesh and drinks of my blood remains in me and I in them. The crowd that were following Jesus they needed physical bread, we need bread, if we don't have it we die, none of us can survive without eating.

Well it's the same for us spiritually, we must continually feed on Jesus because he not only satisfies and secures, he sustains us through all of life.

Do you see what it's saying in verse 56? You will remain in me and I in you. It will maintain, it will grow our relationship with him.

[28 : 47] Verse 57 Just as the living father sent me and I live because of the father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.

So how do we feed on Jesus? How are we going to feed on Jesus together? Father? Well as we close I want to suggest two things that we can do.

Here's the first one. No, it's not there, I forgot to write it. I'll tell you what it is. First we feed on Jesus by reading his word.

We feed on Jesus by reading his word. It's the word of God, the word of Jesus that will nourish us and grow us.

And that's how we become fruitful. That's why we come together on a Sunday to hear the word of God. Because without a daily regular diet of God's word we become unhealthy.

[29 : 58] We become malnourished. We become sick. And we'll find ourselves seeking and searching for all the things and placing all our confidence and our hope in things that spoil and perish.

Just as we need to eat to be healthy and strong physically so we need to depend and feed on God's word. That daily diet so that we become mature and strong together and live in a vibrant communion with the Lord Jesus.

So first let us gather together. let us meet with one another and on ourselves let us read his word. We feed on Jesus by devouring the word of God.

And second we can feed on Jesus by remembering his death. We feed on Jesus by remembering his death.

death. Now I'm not suggesting that Jesus is talking about the Lord's supper here. I think that comes later on in John's gospel and we'll get to that when we get there. However I do think these remaining verses verses 53 through to the end are a picture of what we do when we do remember Jesus' death.

[31 : 27] as we physically eat the bread so as we gather around the Lord's supper as we share communion together as we physically eat the bread as we drink the juice we are spiritually feeding on the flesh and blood of Jesus.

We're saying as we come to the table that I need Jesus that we're depending upon his very death for us in our place.

A death that secures forgiveness and secures our eternal life with him. Life with him forever. We feed on him as we remember his death.

Verse 51 Jesus says I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world.

[32 : 48] Trust in him. Feed on him. Taste and you will see that he is good. he will satisfy you. He will secure you and he will sustain you in that beautiful communion one with the father.

Eat continually and you will experience life in all its fullness. I am the bread of life.

let us feed on him who gives us life. Let's pray together. Father we thank you for physical food that we have had this morning.

For food that we are going to eat throughout this day. food and drink that we will have tomorrow. And yet above all of this we thank you for the most precious and wonderful gift of Jesus the bread of life sent from heaven to give us life in all its fullness.

Father will you help each one of us to feed on you continually you father will you grow us as we read your word and would you cause a greater dependence upon you as we gather around your table.

[34 : 34] Father may our communion with you increase and deepen as we eat of Christ. Please help us we pray.

for we need it. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. We're going to sing together what grace is Jesus my redeemer.

He is the gift. He is the bread we eat. Let's thank him through our song as we praise God together. Let's stand together as we sing.

shall Wass for 50 not to be for he Thank you.

Thank you.

[36 : 45] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[39 : 15] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

So if you have one there, we can read. Let me pray first and then we'll close with the blessing.

Father, thank you.

Father, thank you for your goodness to us today. We ask for your continued help to us in this coming week. Thank you for one another.

[41 : 10] Now let's say the blessing. Now let's say the blessing. Now let's say the blessing. And may our hunger for God, amen.

Amen. Amen. Well, it's good to see you today. But please do stay in the same thing. My house, it's my house, it's not my house.

And I'll be here for you. And I'll be here for you for a while if you want to chat to me to get directions and stuff. We'd be delighted to have you. Please come younger and older and everything in between.

Please come. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. .

[42 : 44] . ment . . Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.