

Seeking Bread and Missing the Bread of Life

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[0:00] I want you to turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 16.!

I'm going to be up here and appeal to you to have the Scriptures resonate when we're singing. Everybody look up. I ought to be able to make a biblical argument for that. Would you agree to that? I should be able to point to a passage of Scripture and say, well, here's why I was thinking that way. Sidebar, just so you're following me here, and it'll come together. You can be here and not be full of the Holy Spirit. Would you agree with that?

And should the believer be filled with the Holy Spirit? What's the answer from the Bible? Absolutely! We're commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

[1:22] And how many of you have on occasion been uncertain that you were filled with the Holy Spirit? Besides me, I'm just wondering.

You know, one of the things that we know from the Scripture is that now you can sing and not be filled with the Holy Spirit. How many of you would agree with that? But the Holy Spirit does prompt the believer to sing.

That's what it tells us in Ephesians chapter 5. And I want you to understand that another indication of the working of the Holy Spirit is that when we are thinking and when we're, let's try singing, the Holy Spirit, when He's at work in us, He's bringing up passages of Scripture.

Because listen, nothing magnifies Jesus more than this Bible. And so, the Spirit of God says, hey, Tim, hey, what about that passage?

Click. And Christ is amplified or glorified in that. Okay. Bible passage. Ephesians. John chapter 6.

[2:34] My Bible went to Acts by my hand, by the way. Okay, here we go. John chapter 16, verse 13 and 14. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come.

So the Holy Spirit speaks, and how do we know that He speaks? We don't have these little whispering words in our ears, but we have the Word of God. This is God's Word. Verse 14. He will glorify me, for He will take that which is mine, Bible, and declare it to you. So, there's nothing wrong with when you come to corporate worship saying, Holy Spirit, would you help me this morning that as we are singing, you would enable me to sing joyfully, enthusiastically, with an affection for the Lord Jesus Christ and an ambition for heaven.

And would you bring to mind, and would you bring to mind, passages of Scripture that relate to what we're singing? Okay, enough of that. John 6.

We'll get there. John 6. As I preach, you have a very active responsibility.

[4:13] What is that, too? You are to pray. And I trust you will do that. That the Word of God might have free course and make a difference in your life.

And that God would use this very earthen vessel to remind you of the glory and the supremacy of Christ, and that you would have a desire to see Him face to face. And that the day you live in the day to come would be a tangible evidence of your walk with Christ.

Let's pray. Our hearts this morning are reminded of the passage in Zechariah where the prophet penned these words, says, to be the physical manifestation of His character and nature and affection for lost mankind.

And that those who are here that do not know Christ would be drawn by His grace to cry out for salvation and for deliverance from their sin.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I have to tell you that I remember at a point in my life being very, very hesitant to launch into the book of John.

[6:07] Early in my ministry, I was intimidated at the prospect of John in particular because it is a gospel different from the others in that it doesn't have so much of the narrative.

You can't kind of follow the history of Jesus as you're working your way primarily through the gospel of John. There are only a certain number of incidents that kind of follow a narrative.

Much of the gospel of John gives to us a picture of the person of Christ and draws us to recognize that He is the Savior of mankind and the one with whom we have to do.

As I have been working my way in private study and prayer through the book of John, I have grown to look back in retrospect and say, why didn't I do this earlier?

Because John is such a rich picture of who Jesus is that it is helping me in my process of growing to love Him more.

[7:08] And I trust that is what is happening to you. We saw last week in particular the heart of our Savior in not only meeting the needs of a hungry and very, very shallow crowd, and we know that He fed how many?

About 20,000 is the estimate. He fed 20,000 people. And on the heels of that, you remember if you look back just a little bit in John, you'll pick up there that what He did after the feeding of the 5,000, the people were ready to come and take Him by force and make Him their king.

And we know that in His sympathy and sensitivity for the weakness of the disciples in particular, in facing that fickle and selfish crowd and their own spiritual frailty, He pushed them off into the boat and sent them into a storm.

And then He delivered them from the storm. What we are looking at this morning as we pick up in John 6, verse 22, is the next day.

And I want you to recognize as you look at this extended passage that it is a lesson for us of the heart of our Lord Jesus for people that can be profoundly frustrating.

[8:30] And I preach to you, primarily, who are part of our fellowship, and know the Lord Jesus Christ, because you are here by assignment and appointment to minister to other people.

Do you recognize that? I mean, it'd be better to be in heaven. Would you agree with that? Truthfully, it'd be better to be in heaven. Nothing wrong with that place. The reason I draw breath and the reason you draw breath is He left me here to be His ambassador, His representative, and doing that means that He wants me to be in direct contact with broken, wounded individuals whose hearts are an absolute mess.

And I need to be reminded of how Jesus dealt with those people because every now and then, in my flesh, I would like them just to get entirely sanctified the moment I give them a Bible verse or two and leave it go at that.

I want you to look at what we find here in this passage, beginning there in verse 22 as we work our way through and kind of see the heart of Christ towards unbelievers in particular.

Let me begin reading. John 6, verse 22, it says, On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away.

[9:53] Other boats came from Tiberias, came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum seeking Jesus.

I want us to look this morning at a picture of the Lord Jesus ministering to some very short-sighted individuals. Our lesson starts there in verse 22, and we recognize that as we kind of pick up the narrative, we find that Jesus, after having ministered to these 20,000 or so people, you'll remember that they had followed Him into the wilderness because they'd been impressed with His miracles. I mean, He'd done some things that were stunning, and they were intrigued, they were interested. I'm certain there were ones in the crowd that wanted healing and things done for them.

And Jesus, after He had taken them out there in the wilderness, at least they'd followed Him, He saw their need, their very physical need, and He was willing to feed them. When they decided that they would force Him to be king, Jesus sent His disciples out of harm's way into a storm, and then

He went off to pray.

So what we find in verse 24, and I want you to kind of put your finger on 24, it tells us that after the crowd found that Jesus wasn't where they had anticipated Him, they went looking for Him, and they went to the reasonable place, at least in their thinking, back to the city of Capernaum, and they were going there with the expectation of finding Jesus.

[11:31] That's their goal. When they found Jesus, I want you to mark His conversation with them, because instead of complimenting them on their pursuit of Jesus, He exposed the shallowness of their ambition and their interest.

It serves us well to remember that Jesus loved these people, and that He would weep for them later on, as we read that on the day of His crucifixion, as He looked upon the crowd, His heart was deeply touched by them.

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Earlier than that, when He'd come into Jerusalem for the last time, it says that when He looked upon the city, He wept. Jesus had a heart for these unsaved, lost, blinded individuals, and we see that even here.

Listen to what He says. He says, I want you to stop and think just for a moment that Jesus, as He was speaking of this, He started out by reminding them of what had taken place, and there wasn't a heart on the part of Christ that says, I should have never fed you.

He was willing to do that for them. And so I want to recognize that genuine love willingly does meet physical needs, but it doesn't stop there.

[13:03] And what Jesus said was very convicting, because what it did was expose the most ancient trap that Satan has used in all of our lives, including Adam and Eve, to draw us away from our Creator and our Savior.

And what do I mean by that? Satan relies upon the things that we're interested in that are of superficial and temporal worth to draw our affections and our attentions away from Christ.

He seduces people today to choose jobs that enslave them for no other reason than accumulating material goods that will not satisfy and ultimately will end up in a dumpster.

You know, one of the things that I hear families say, I've got to be careful here when I say this, but I've got to tell you the truth. I've heard more than one family say, when my mom and dad die, I'm going to rent a roll-off and we're going to clean the house out.

Has anybody ever said, don't raise your hand, but just kind of nod very, very carefully so nobody else knows that you and me understand each other. When mom and dad die, we're going to rent a roll-off.

[14:21] You know what that's an indication of? What they put their energy into really didn't last. Agreed? We can all do that.

And Jesus, as he looked at this crowd that had come to them, he says, hey, you're here just because I fed you bread. He misleads people also into thinking that the time they invest in consumptive pleasures, activities, and entertainments, sometimes in the name of their children. Did you realize that doing something in the name of your children is Trump in our contemporary culture? How many of you realize that? It's amazing. You can do all kinds of things for your children, and everybody just kind of nods.

Yeah, I mean, I understand. I'm with you there. I remember parents several years ago who commented to me that they were really in a financial bind.

And I, you know, curiosity. I'm a pastor. I'm a shepherd. I care about people's hearts. And I said, what's the problem? Well, it's going to cost me \$1,800 to send my daughter to the travel team for volleyball.

[15:33] I hope nobody plays volleyball here, you know, that level. I mean, I wasn't thinking of you. Not thinking of you. Okay? Being an older man and moderately mature pastor sometimes, I just kept my mouth shut and I just let the person go on.

You know, hey, listen, we have come a long way from where Eric Liddell was who was unwilling to run on Sunday.

Do you follow that? Oh, we like watching Chariots of Fire. I mean, hey, the music is outstanding. But really, if it comes down to us deciding if we're going to choose between corporate worship and some physical activity for our children, children trumps.

We've fallen into the trap of Satan, of thinking that things that are of no eternal value are significant and supreme in comparison to the glory of Christ and the body that he loves.

I remember another parent. I'm on volleyball today, so you can kind of pass if you're not. Another parent that came to me, their home was just an absolute disaster.

[16:52] It was, the wheels had come off. I'm not talking about one, you know, and a little bit of the retread popped or something. All four wheels were off and the marriage was an absolute disaster. And I said, listen, I want to minister to you guys.

And so let's set up a time for counseling. I mean, you know, let's work at this marriage. And the guy grabbed his calendar and you know what? He couldn't pull it off because his daughter was in a travel league.

Cincinnati this weekend, Cleveland the next, somewhere in West Virginia. And he says, you know, I don't think I can work this out for the next three or four weeks because every single night I got to get my daughter to volleyball or I have to get her to a game some other city.

And I thought to myself, well, I guess your marriage isn't very important, right? That's Satan. And here were people coming to Jesus and saying, hey, listen, what we'd really like you to do for us is kind of help us with the things we think are important.

He snares people into thinking that the answers to life's problems really can be found in things or causes that are not of eternal worth.

[18:08] I choked this week in anger and I was kind of worked up over the fact that so many people were just absolutely traumatized by the slaughter, and I think a senseless slaughter of Cecil the lion, you know, whatever, hang it on your den.

But you know what? Not a peep of concern for what Planned Parenthood has been doing of harvesting unborn babies and selling their parts for profit.

So what's our Savior want us to focus on? You look at the passage here and He says, you ate your fill and that's what you're interested in. So listen to what Jesus said as He follows.

See there in verse 7 He says, Do not labor for the food that perishes. Now stop, just for a moment. You might underline that in your Bible because that is Jesus speaking to you about your agenda, your checkbook, your life.

And He says, Do not labor for things that will perish. If God's people put as much time into things that are of eternal worth as they do into all the other activities that they engage in, I tell you what, it'd be a different world that we live in.

[19:38] And here's Jesus. He says, work for the food that endures to eternal life and that's the food that the Son of Man will give you. So ask yourself the question, did these people believe in Jesus?

And in one sense, I want you to follow this, they did. They did. They believed that the guy who had fed them yesterday could pull it off again today.

and they were insisting what we want you for is for our own personal benefit and we're pretty interested in you taking care of some of the superficial things that we're interested in but don't mess with the others.

I've got to tell you that the health and wealth, the prosperity gospel that is pervasive in our culture is a gospel that proposes fundamentally the value of Christ is in relationship to what He can do for you.

Jesus says to the people that had come gathering around Him for the sake of a meal or for the sake of whatever was of their own personal interest, they do not labor for the food that perishes but for the food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give to you for on Him God the Father has set His seal.

[21:02] I know, I know, that most of you who are here this morning are believers and you're not here to hear about better food or better government or better health but let me ask you this.

Does your belief in Christ lead you in a different path than the world's? Truthfully. Does it? How substantially different are your affections and the use of your energy in comparison to the unbelieving world that we're all exposed to all the time?

If you're caught up by the world's magnetic pull and belief that what the world has to offer is so worthy then you have to recognize that what you're doing is you're devaluing the significance of the cross.

Well let's go further in the text because we need to understand the point that Jesus is making here and you look there in verse 33 and 34 it says for the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

[22:08] Here's Jesus ministering to the unbelieving. I love the way things move here. Instead of having humbling hearts or humbled hearts when the people heard what Jesus had to say they kind of respond back to Him and they say something pretty crass.

Listen to this. Look at the passage. He says Sir give us this bread actually going back a little bit verse 30 it says Then what sign do you do that we may see and believe in you?

What work do you perform? By the way what had He done yesterday? Huh? He'd fed them. Now agreed that it wasn't manna and I don't really know what the relative food value between manna and fish and bread I'm not into that.

I really don't know whether manna was a more palatable and a more enjoyable thing than fish and bread but I got to tell you the scripture tells me that people got pretty sick and tired of manna. And here they are having had fish and bread they turn around and say hey what can you do for us? And then they go on and they make their argument verse 30 says what sign what work are you going to do so we can believe?

[23:26] And then they step into it in a really bad way in verse 31 our fathers ate manna in the wilderness as it is written but don't you love it when people recite scripture for their own benefit? that little phrase it is written was Jesus' favorite zinger to the Pharisees do you follow?

Whenever Jesus said it is written you could hear him bringing down the eight pound sledge on whoever else he was dealing with you know what an eight pound sledge is? I'm talking about a big piece of iron on the end of a long stick and he put the whop he said it is written here they're playing that game with Jesus of all people it is written you know listen to what Jesus says in verse 32 truly truly I say to you it was not Moses you see the Jews had the idea that Moses was the one who brought it to them oh Moses by the way how did the people that Moses actually ministered to in flesh and blood really like him?

Does anybody know? What was their attitude towards Moses? somebody would get up in the morning and say oh Lord we are so thankful for that servant you brought us that Moses he is by the way he was the most humble man do you understand that?

that's what the Bible says and how did the people handle Moses? the incessant grumbling and complaining and whining they were just always livid at Moses because Moses wasn't cooperative do it my way well here's Jesus dealing with these people's attitudes and he makes a point here ultimately Moses wasn't the key to the whole thing look at the passage again there in verse 32 Jesus said to them truly truly I say to you it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven where'd it come from?

God not Moses and so I want you to remind yourself of this no human being can bring eternal blessing to this world no one there is no human being that is the remedy to the brokenness and the messiness of the world we live in I really am not looking forward to the next political cycle but what I do know is that as we get closer and closer to 16 there are going to be people even professing believers who become kind of apoplectic in their ambitions that certain people come into government because if they are elected guess what the millennium is coming surprise not true not true don't post anything on your Facebook at least that I will read that says anything like that because that just kind of it kind of wigs me out it's like stop salvation does not come in the form of mere human individuals listen again to what

[26:24] Jesus said there in verse 33 for the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world what was Jesus saying he was saying that salvation and blessing comes from God through Jesus Christ alone I got to tell you as I think about this passage I am struck by how patient and how tender Jesus was in dealing with very very carnal short sighted narrow minded self focused unhappy can I keep going people listen up as I was praying and thinking about what this passage really says to

Tim Knoyer I suppose to some of you here I was reminded that this is an example for Tim Knoyer of the heart he wants me to have for the people that I minister to every day and the people you minister to every day don't put your head down listen up because

I want you to hear this if you are employed by Jesus he kind of expects you to have the attitude he had towards other people agreed!

Everybody smile and say yeah I hear you and he doesn't want you to get discouraged or overwhelmed or a little embittered just because they're not cooperating and just falling all over you in appreciation for the significance of your ministry stay with it why because Jesus did I gotta tell you something he never turned away in disgust or irritation never stopped reaching out to these shallow narrow minded self focused people now he did tell them the truth but how many of you know the difference between having an edge when you're dealing with people and having an affection even when you tell them the truth how many of you know the difference he loved them and when he dealt with their shallowness it was not with this bitter negative hardened heart like Jonah you ever stopped and thought about why Jonah actually ended up being instructed by God to write a book about what a jerk he was no I'm think with me I do you understand that there's not one verse that gives us any ambition of thinking Jonah really ever got it now he has it now but do you follow me I think the reason that book was written is to remind us you know what if God can use Jonah there's hope for me you know now it's not an endorsement of being a jerk I do get that I'd like to test God and see how much he can use me being that way no it's God can use us but hey have the heart of Jesus not Jonah so I got to come around on this so you understand the point that we find can I say that again we ought to be more like Jesus in dealing with those who have been snared by sin let our compassion let our humility let the gentleness of our heart reflect the heart he had there's no place for sarcasm everybody say that out loud

I want you to say that! There's no place for sarcasm in the heart of the servant of the king there should be tenderness if Jesus dealt with a crowd that was going to crucify him we ought to be a little more gentle with the people that we sit next to that are part of the family that are going to be next door in eternity and the unbelievers that he puts us face to face with day after day that don't get it we ought to have the same affection and compassion for them that Jesus had oh can I tell you something you're ultimately not going to do very well outside the family if you can't handle it inside the family write that down I get a kick out of people who talk to me about evangelism but they can't get along with people inside the fam huh everybody you heard me didn't you you understand what I'm saying

[31:12] I want to close with what we find in verse 35 you know they said to him sir well that's formal sir give us this bread always isn't that just kind of hokey and when stop and think about this this is the crowd sir give us this bread always here's what Jesus said promising the bread of life I am the bread of life whosoever comes to me shall not hunger and whosoever believes in me shall never thirst what he was saying is this is I'm the only one who can really make a difference isn't that true when you hear that said does your heart kind of rise up within you and say yes do you follow that look at me if your heart is connected to that statement do you know that unbelievers can sense it what it says in first Peter is that when they see it they're going to ask you what's the reason for the hope that lies within you well it's the new therapy that

I've been involved in you know I'm taking these pills and they're just doing I got to tell you something why is it that more believers are not impassioned and enthusiastic about Jesus are you listening you're thinking with me it's because they have fallen into the ancient trap of Satan remember Adam and Eve could you have had it any better than Adam and Eve did I mean in some senses you know it's because many of us have been seduced by the lie of Satan that things that do not last forever are worthy of our ambitions and our affections of our checkbook and our time our devotional lives are almost close to bankrupt our prayer time is close to zero and then we go out into an unbelieving and a broken world and we think that just by dropping a couple surly words we can make a difference in the lives of those who are broken by sin it isn't going to happen but when our hearts are lifted up because

Jesus is the way and Jesus is the one who can take away the thirst and satisfy the hunger and we know that we know that then our testimonies are powerful so where's that put you where's that put you you see when we talk about Jesus you have to ask yourself a very very basic question number one do I know him right I mean that's important do I know him and you could be sitting here and you don't know Jesus the fact of the matter is if you leave this place and you don't come to grips with the bankruptcy of your own soul and the darkness of your heart there is no hope in eternity and you desperately need Christ and I would plead with you this morning the scriptures make it profoundly simple all you have to do is come to the point of saying yeah what Jesus says about me is true I am a hard hearted unrepentant sinner and the only thing I know now is that I'm a hopeless mess but I hear what Jesus says that he can help me and I come with a broken and a contrite heart to say Jesus save me but most of you that are sitting here this morning are people who know Christ you do and so here's my question do you love him as much as you love the things of the world check your agenda check your wallet check your affections where's Jesus in relationship to those things if we want to take it from the words of Jesus he says this do not labor for things that perish labor for the food that endures to eternal life let's close in prayer