

Heaven's Food For Your Hungry Soul

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[0 : 00] As I read the Word of God, you follow along with your eyes. Remember, this is God's very own Word. It is inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and it is sufficient for you and for me today.

Let's read. After this, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.

Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, Where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat?

He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon's brother, said to him, There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?

[1 : 15] Jesus said, Have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given things, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost.

So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten them. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.

Verse 15, When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum.

It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat.

[2 : 43] And they were frightened. But he said to them, It is I. Do not be afraid. Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

Verse 22, 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 that his disciples had gone away alone.

Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread and 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.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, Rabbi, when did you come here? Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

Do not work 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.

[4 : 00] Then they said to him, What must we do to be doing the works of God? Jesus answered them, This is the work of God, that you believe in him who he has sent.

So they said to him, Then what sign do you do that we may see or believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness, as it is written.

He gave them bread from heaven. Verse 32. Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. They said to him, Sir, give us this bread always.

Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.

[5 : 03] All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life.

And I will raise him up on the last day. This is the word of God. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Well, let's pray.

As we sung a moment ago, Speak, O Lord, as we come to you, to receive the food of your holy word. Take your truth, plant it deep in us, shape and fashion us in your likeness.

May now through the sermon, May the light of Christ be seen by everyone here today who has an ear to hear. Amen. Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the message for today is the best news I can bring to you for the new year.

[6 : 33] There is food from heaven for your hungry soul. Look at verse 35. Jesus says, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger.

And whoever believes in me shall never thirst. So my proposition for us today is exactly that. Your soul will hunger until you feast on Christ.

We see in this chapter, our Lord moving mightily upon the earth. And then he moves mightily over the waters. He takes a little boy's Lunchable and he distributes it to feed a multitude, 20 to 25,000 people.

If there are 5,000 men, 20 to 25,000 people as they follow him and his disciples along the bank of the Sea of Galilee. Your creator knows what your soul needs to live.

He made you. He knows. And he built you with a hunger in your soul that only he can satisfy. So I want to show you today two things.

[7 : 47] Number one, the manner in which you must come to Christ. There's a certain manner in which those who come to him get fed. And then secondly, number two, the means by which you feast on Christ.

We see these two things in this passage. So first, the manner in which you come to Christ. How do you go to Christ? Well, first you go to Christ with a hungry soul.

That's simple truth. It was those that came hungry that Christ fed. There were probably others that stayed back in the city. They had plenty.

Their souls were not hungry and they did not get fed by the Lord Jesus. They did not get to be a participant in the great work he was doing. New creation work.

And I need you to get the setting in your mind. If you can travel to Jerusalem in your imagination. So here's this sea. They call it a sea because they're a desert people.

[8 : 44] They're not used to much water. The great sea is the Mediterranean. This sea we see in verses one, two, three, and four. This is the sea of Galilee. And the big city on the west side of the sea is Tiberias.

Now I'm going to give you some context here that will be significant. I believe for what Christ teaches. Tiberias was a new city. It wasn't founded and didn't begin being constructed until about the year 20 AD.

So Christ during his lifetime would have seen the city of Tiberias being built up. The emperor of Rome at the time was named Tiberias. The Roman Empire dominates this region.

And they put a puppet, a vassal king over the region in the north of Galilee. And it was no longer Herod the Great. Herod the Great was truly great. I mean, what he did with architecture and aqueducts, he created a mini Rome inside this Galilean region.

Herod the Great was incredible. He was twisted and cruel and killed his own family, but he was a pretty good dictator. Now there are other dictators that were lesser. And so his son was Herod Agrippa.

[9 : 49] Herod Agrippa was a fool. And it was Herod Agrippa who started this city of Tiberias. Herod Agrippa is important at this time, even though John here doesn't go into detail.

Herod Agrippa was throwing a feast for the wealthy and for the elite. And at his feast, there was drunkenness, debauchery, and a teenage girl practicing sensual dancing.

And because John the Baptizer accused Herod Agrippa of his sin, of taking his brother's wife, Herod Agrippa has John the Baptist beheaded.

It's that same Herod Agrippa who built this city of Tiberias. Jesus is traveling in this region. And so that's our setting. Now notice we see in our context, verse 3, we're told Jesus went up a mountain. Well, there are no mountains in this area. Verse 3, we read that they were preparing for the Passover. Well, the Passover happens in the spring. That's when we celebrate Easter now.

[10:51] And so we know that in the springtime, the waters of the Sea of Galilee, which was also now changed the name to Sea of Tiberias, the waters in the springtime recede. And it leaves a silt plain where fertile grass will grow on a wide area right next to the sea.

And then climbing up of that, the bank coming out of the lake is what you could call a mountain. So as Jesus and his disciples are in this region, we get from the other gospels what else they had been doing.

In Matthew, we're told that Jesus had just sent his disciples out on a ministry mission. He sent them out proclaiming the gospel. And by his power, they were performing miracles as well. Well, with every disciple that went out, a group came back following them and spreading the word to others. We read in Luke that even as the crowd was following him, Jesus was performing miracles, healing and, you know, taking care of these sick, lame and infirm people. Now, remember, this is ancient Israel under the Roman Empire.

And it's about a thousand, eight hundred years before medical diagnoses existed or psychological issues and all kinds of ways in which the human body is broken.

[12:01] They had no way to be cured of that. They would die early. Children were infant mortality, it was extremely high. So all those different types of infirmities, you can imagine this vast multitude following the disciples in Christ.

It's their only hope. And these would be the poor. While here at Agrippa's over here, having this luxurious feast, lavishing his wealth on his little inner circle, the poor, they're just living a subsistence life.

I mean, to have a little bit of protein and a little bit of carbs to get them enough energy for tomorrow is all that they really can hope for. Can you picture that scene on the side of the lake?

Now, what's the manner in which you go to Christ? You go to Christ hungry. These people were hungry physically. They were also desperate for someone to reverse this broken system.

Could there be hope beyond my next meal? And you see, with the Passover approaching, these are Jews. What would they be thinking about with the Passover? They would be preparing themselves for a reminder that we serve a God who will deliver us.

[13:07] And it's not Egypt any longer. It's Rome. And we need a second Moses figure. And you see the, how John is painting with these broad strokes with the scene, the crowd needing deliverance, thinking about the Passover.

Jesus goes up a mountain, we can call it, and he's teaching them. In fact, we read in Mark chapter six, the same account, right before he feeds the multitude.

Jesus said to them, to the disciples, come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while. Jesus was physically tired.

The disciples were tired. They needed a break. And for many, we're coming along and going and the disciples and Jesus had no leisure even to eat, we read in Mark.

And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now, many saw them going and recognized them. And they ran there on foot from all the towns and got ahead of them.

[14:11] And when they went ashore, they saw a great cloud, crowd. The disciples and Jesus saw this great crowd coming. And Jesus had compassion on them.

We read from Mark six. Because why? Why did Jesus have compassion over this multitude? Because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

So Jesus begins to feed them, to look over their souls. We read in Mark that he began to teach them many things. You know, when Jesus gave what's called the sermon on the mount, a great multitude gathered.

He went up on a mountain and sat down. It's the same language. Jesus is the true and greater Moses. He is the second lawgiver. He's coming to declare the new kingdom of God.

That God is now inaugurating spiritually. And what was it that Jesus proclaimed in the sermon on the mount? Matthew 5, 6. You're blessed, he said. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

[15:20] That's what Jesus is teaching. Will he be good to his word? Will he satisfy them if they come to him hungry? Jesus said in verse 26 of our text, Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

So even as they continued to follow him along the coast of the lake, they were seeking Christ with hungry eyes. They wanted to see signs. And with hungry stomachs, they needed food again the next day.

Just keep following him around. He'll provide. And Jesus calls true believers to hunger for him with your soul. That's the first way in which you come to Christ is with a hungry soul.

The second way you go to Christ is confessing your need of his provision. We learn this lesson from a dialogue between Jesus and one of his disciples named Philip.

Look at verse 7. Picture Jesus and the disciples. They're tired. They're fatigued. And they had not had anything to eat themselves. We just read. So he sits there in the bank and he looks at the disciples.

[16:32] And now we know his heart is to have compassion for the multitude. And he's fed them and taught them. But now he turns to the disciples and he asks them, how are we going to feed these people? And Philip says, we couldn't even do that with 200 denarii.

How much is that? If we convert that currency, it's one year's wages for a skilled worker. And he says, even then, they'll just barely have enough to eat. We cannot do that, he says.

Well, Jesus brought Philip to confess his need for Christ to provide. See, he wanted him to put in his words what would be very obvious to everyone else.

Because when Christ did provide and multiply the food and nourish this crowd, he didn't want Philip or anyone else to forget that they could not do it on their own.

On their own, they had a deficit. They had more than nothing. They had starving themselves. They were hungry. They didn't have enough for themselves, much less anything to give to others.

[17:32] One ancient commentator, Chrysostom, said the reason he has this dialogue with Philip is to drive away the memory that he had confessed so that Philip could never say, I forgot that I actually confessed that to you.

And he would learn by contrast the greatness of the miracle. Think about it like this. Jesus has compassion. He knows these sheep need food.

They need a shepherd. And if these are like the spiritual children that many will believe in him, they will be adopted. He knows the love of the father. And he knows the father wants to nourish his children, these babies in the faith.

But he will not pour his father's milk into cups unless those cups are empty. If those cups are full of everything else, then they can't take the milk that he's going to provide from the loving father.

So Philip confesses, we can't provide. God must do it. My encouragement to you is the same. Maybe you're feeling your soul is empty.

[18:37] your soul is depleted and it's in need. That is a blessing. Blessed are those who hunger. You will be satisfied.

If Christ has caused your soul to hunger, it's because he is preparing you to receive his provision. But first, you must come to the end of yourself.

And you must do like Philip. You must confess your deficit that you need the provision of God.

That's really the simplest way to explain what is saving faith.

John Calvin described faith like this. Faith is a poor beggar's empty hand outstretched to God.

That's what faith is.

You don't bring anything to God except for your empty beggar's hand hungry for him to provide. So you must come to Christ with a hungry soul.

[19:37] You must come to Christ confessing your need of his provision. And number three, you go to Christ with faith in his power to provide. Why would you go to him if you don't trust that he will meet your every need?

Look at verse nine. They say, there is a boy here who has five barley loaves. Now the word loaves, in Greek it's arpos.

It's really a barley wafer. So you can picture like a little barley cracker that's not going to perish. You could carry it with you for several days and it would still be a good way to get some carbs. And the two fish most likely are sardines.

On the lake of Galilee, the Sea of Tiberias, just north of Tiberias, is a town, you can search it now on your map. It's a town called Migdala and that's where Mary Magdalene is from.

And that city imported salt from the Mediterranean Sea and they would take all the fish that were fished out of the lake of Tiberias or the lake of Galilee and they would stack it with layers of salt and it would drain out the moisture out of the fish and it would preserve it kind of like beef jerky, like dried fish.

[20 : 50] And even today, half of all the fish that is fished out of the same Sea of Galilee is sardines. And so picture a boy, it's exactly a lunchable. It's five little barley crackers and two little dried fish.

That's all he's got. So the disciples, I mean, I'm sure it was even humorous. You look out the crowd, 5,000 men, 20,000 adults. That's if the ball arena where the Nuggets play is packed.

20,000 people. We have, you picture the disciples, we have a lunchable. You know, it's a joke among them. And John, he doesn't upplay this miracle.

See, here's the thing. No one, no one at this time or later discredits the miracle. It was obvious that Christ performed a miracle. 20,000 witnesses not only saw it, they participated in it.

They tasted it. No one says it was not a miracle. What they have an issue with is Christ and his teaching and his claims. So this miracle happened. Again, as Christians, we are unashamed supernaturalists.

[21 : 51] And you just, you have to trust that God, taking this little lunchable, he began distributing it to them. That's all John says. He distributed. And everyone's eating.

And I bet it was, it was delicious. You know, he's just enjoying it. And everyone kept eating. And these are starving, hungry, poor people following him around. And everyone had their fill. And there are 12 baskets left over.

See, not only does Christ provide, he shows you, I have much more in reserves for you. If you just come to me hungry, I will satisfy you.

You come to Christ trusting he has the power to provide. See, what Christ is doing is fulfilling this pattern that has been set up all along.

Adam and Eve banished out of the garden into the wilderness. But yet, even in the wilderness, God provides. There's food they can shepherd. When God calls Abraham, he leaves the luxury of his wealthy father's home.

[22 : 55] And he becomes a sojourner, a man with no land, traveling in the wilderness. With Moses, the people of God travel in the wilderness. And God feeds them.

He provides manna. He even brings birds that they can eat meat. Well, the prophets, Elijah, Elisha, they're chased away by the wicked kings living in the wilderness.

And God provides. So God loves to provide for his people in the wilderness. We're told by the New Testament apostles, this life in Christ right now for our flesh, for our body, it's the wilderness.

But Christ will provide for you, his people. He will feed your soul. He loves to provide for you in the wilderness. Deuteronomy 8.3 says, here's why God does that.

He humbles you and he lets you hunger, but he feeds you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

[24 : 05] Our Jesus himself, our Lord, experienced this. And that's exactly what he recited back to Satan under attack and temptation in the wilderness.

So you must trust in his abundance to provide pardon for your sins, to clear your conscience, to restore your soul, to reform your life.

He can do it. He is not a God who is scanty and miserly. He is a God who has reserves in store waiting for you to come to him that he can feed you once again.

Milton Vincent, a pastor, reflected on this gospel truth of God's provision. He said, God's heart pulses only with passionate grace, which jealously wants me back in his embrace.

See, forgiveness has been in God's heart all along. And when I approach him to make right my wrong, he runs up to greet me and draws to me near, embracing and kissing and ready to clear.

[25 : 18] What a generous God we serve. Your soul will hunger until you feast on Christ. Christ. Well, the fourth observation on the manner in which you go to Christ is you put your body where Christ will feed your soul.

Let's read that passage in John 6, verses 16 through 21. When the evening came, the disciples went down to the sea.

They got into a boat and started across the sea to Capernaum. See, Capernaum is further north on the Sea of Galilee. Remember, they are tired and this crowd keeps following them.

And we read that Jesus had gone out away into the wilderness to a desolate place by himself. Now the disciples, they also need to get away from these crowds so they get in the boats to travel north along the Sea of Galilee.

We read that it was dark now and Jesus had not yet come to them. Verse 18. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing.

[26 : 26] We know about strong winds in Colorado. They'll push over anything. And the Golem Heights are just a little bit further to the north of this region and it forms a perfect little tunnel where the winds gather.

They pick up speed and they come shooting through onto the lake and it creates massive waves. Now these were Roman fishing boats and what we know of those is that they would have had sails and when the winds were favorable you could use them.

But with mighty winds that are against you, the winds coming from the north like that, it's going to send you in the wrong direction. They would have put their sails away and we read them, they had rowed about three or four miles against the wind.

Because you might be wondering, what does this little story in the middle of the feeding of the multitude have to do with each other? Are they related or not? Well, you get the scene. The disciples too had to come to the end of themselves again and trust God to be their Savior and their provider.

They've been rowing. They've been in fear and they've had the stress of laboring in this little fishing boat not making any progress. And then they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat.

[27 : 35] What was their reaction? They were even more frightened. They used to be afraid of the sea and they're going to drown. Now they're afraid of this appearance that's walking toward them.

Now remember, these are fishermen. They'd seen their buddies probably die in the waters drowning. And you know, fishermen have all kinds of myths they believe. We know that this Greco-Roman world, they believed and the bodies of those who had died at sea would come back as ghosts and haunt those on the ships.

So for them, this is probably like one of their worst nightmares, a ghost walking on the waters toward them. Now notice what Jesus says to them. Verse 20, It is I.

Do not be afraid. In the Greek, Jesus says to them what they've heard him say two other times. I am. And then we're told the waters settle and instantly the boat is where they needed to be.

Do you get the picture? The multitude came empty. They've got nothing on their own. He's their only hope. The disciples, empty.

[28 : 43] Christ, you are our only hope. And yet in the midst of that, I am. in the image of Christ, moving on top of the waters.

That should take you back to Genesis 1 and 2. The Spirit of God hovered over the surface of the deep. Jesus Christ, I am.

The new creation is coming. Hear the words of life from God himself. He walks among you. What did the multitude do?

That's what I want to apply for us. Look at verse 24. When the crowd saw that Jesus was not there in this region where they were in the south, nor his disciples, what did the crowd do?

Here's what we must do. They themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum seeking Jesus. Jesus. See, as empty as they were, as messed up as their lives were, their bodies were so broken by the fall, they found a way to put their bodies where Christ could feed them once again.

[29 : 54] And that's the application for us. You and I, we need to put our bodies where we know Christ will feed our soul. Your flesh will fight it. You won't want to do it.

You keep putting your body where you need to be. He will show up to satisfy you again and again faster than you can confess your need of Him.

He will meet you every time when you're on your knees through your tears. And you will say, just like the disciples did in verse 25, where did He come from?

Where did He come from? You go to Christ empty. So let me recap our first point. In what way do you seek Christ? If your soul is hungry for more of God, this is God's kindness to you.

He only stirs up hunger in your soul that He will also satisfy. Don't let your mood or your weak body command how your life goes, but by faith in Christ's strength, take the steps you need to get fleeing from temptation and running instead to Christ.

[31 : 03] Believe that promise in verse 35, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger. Whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

Your soul will thirst and you will hunger unless you are feasting on Christ. This was true of Eve in the garden, wasn't it? Eve believed that lie.

The lie was this. My soul won't be satisfied unless I eat that forbidden fruit. It's so good to look at. My heart desires to take it and eat it more than anything else.

You see how powerful the deceit of sin is? And the cost is so high. Think about the result for Adam and Eve.

They were banned by the sword of God from reentering the garden where all the fruits of the garden that God himself placed there for their enjoyment were laid out for them.

[32 : 06] That's a high cost of their sin. And because of that curse of sin, your soul too now hungers unless you feast on Christ.

But the good news for us is this. That sword that stood between sinners and the garden where bounty and abundance of food existed, Christ took that sword for you and for me who believe in him.

Christ took the sword on the cross and he became the gate back into the garden to his father's garden. And in his garden are the trees the spiritual fruit of heaven already opened up and ready for you to eat.

He is the gate into the orchard. The curse of sin is still so strong that we often feel like eating garbage rather than the spiritual fruit of heaven.

And the filth of sin it tempts our fallen flesh. Just like Eve the secrecy of stealing the forbidden fruit makes us feel like we're free if I could just do that.

[33 : 16] And then we can do whatever we want. That's the lie. And the slimy slithering Satan smiles because that's exactly how he enslaved God's image bearers to sin by deceiving them.

And then the stench of sin sticks to people. And then Satan accuses you even worse. And he says God the Father he does not love you.

He doesn't want you around. You stink. You smell like sin. You can't be near the holy God. You are like the trash you eat. But Jesus came to repel the lies of Satan and to unveil to you the true nature of his Father.

Look at verse 32. Jesus says truly truly I say to you it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven but my Father my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

that's what my Father is really like. So you come to God hungry and knowing that your soul needs provisions that only he can give.

[34 : 26] And his Father gives in the present active tense he gives you the bread of heaven Jesus Christ himself. So that's why you need to put your body where you know he will feed your soul.

And even through our bodies fallen as we are God can stir our hearts and our affections. Some of our liturgy you know when we stand out of reverence for God's word that's our body telling your soul this is good for you you need this.

And when we get low even down on your knees it's you saying look I am under the lawmaker the lawgiver Jesus Christ I need to receive from him.

And when you receive the benediction we stand with open arms because it's our body telling our soul believe this spiritual truth. It is food for your soul and your soul will hunger unless you feast on Christ.

Well I want to I promise to do this quicker. I'm going to do the four ways the four means by which you need to come to Christ. Okay I don't want you leaving here feeling like you can't access him.

[35 : 39] You can and he tells you exactly how. What are the means by which you feast on Christ? Number one you feast on Christ when you hear his word. Look at verse 33 he tells you exactly what it is.

The bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. How do you feast on God? By the bread of heaven by Jesus Christ.

Well how do you know Jesus Christ? By the word of God. Jesus is the bread from heaven. The work he did in his flesh, in his body, it is the substance of the spiritual life for your soul.

And they said to him in verse 34, Sir give us this bread always. This is the same truth that God has always revealed and always shown to believers who he's given a hunger for him.

It's what Jeremiah confessed in Jeremiah 15 16. Your words were found and I ate them and your words became to me a joy, the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord God of hosts.

[36 : 48] How do you feast on God through his word? Well you take a copy of the ESV Bible right there from the book table, you go home today and you turn to Philippians and you read Philippians 1 today as slow as you like.

Don't even need to finish the whole chapter, it's not homework. When God gives you a truth in his word by the help of his spirit, you close your eyes and you pray that truth, help him to teach you to understand it and you work your way through the book of Philippians and then talk to me and I'll tell you the next thing I want you to read and you take a book from that book table and you know how much of that you read?

Just as little as possible until you have a desire to go read more of God's word. That's what good books do. And you say I'm not a good reader, I'm slow, that's okay. You can also talk to me and on our website I'll send you audio, you can listen to good audio, you know how much of a good sermon or audio you listen to?

Just as little as it needs to until it makes you see I need to go spend time with the Lord in his word and in prayer. You're feeding your soul on God's word. Number two, you feast not only by his word but you must feast by faith.

See it's possible to be very close to Jesus and starve your soul. Look at verse 35. Jesus said to them I am the bread of life whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

[38 : 16] But look at verse 36. I said you have seen me yet you do not believe. See putting your body near where you know Jesus will be feeding is one part but you must receive by faith.

You can be that close to him and not believe because you being in church or you spending time in the Bible in prayer that does not save you or me. It's your faith that unites you to Christ.

That's the only way you are fed is through union with Christ by faith. You know why you come up here in just a moment and take the Lord's Supper? It's because the Lord's Supper will grow your faith.

It will strengthen your faith where you're weak. That's what one of our catechisms says. As bread nourishes our temporal life so too his crucified body truly nourishes our soul for eternal life.

Through the Holy Spirit's work we share in his true body. All of his suffering and obedience are as definitely ours as if we personally had suffered and paid for our sins.

[39 : 26] You are united to Christ by faith and the Lord's Supper reinforces that glorious truth to you. You feast on his word. You feast by faith. Number three, you feast in assurance.

Assurance. You will taste how the gospel is a feast when you have assurance of your salvation by grace alone. That's when you know that Christ will never cast you out.

Look at verse 37. Jesus says, all that the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

Never. You go to Christ again and again and yes again today and you trust in God's faithfulness. Charles Spurgeon said, we come to him in weakness and in sin with trembling faith, small knowledge, and slender hope, but still he does not cast us out.

[40 : 33] Look at verse 38. I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And what is the will? Look at verse 39. This is the will of him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me.

Spurgeon again, we come with prayer but those prayers are broken. We come with confession but our confession is faulty. We come with praise but our praise falls short of his merits.

Don't you feel that even today? We come diseased and polluted, worn out and worthless. We are no better than that ancient crowd. But still he does not cast us out.

Your soul will hunger until you feast on Christ. Christ. How do you know that you are one that the Father gave to Christ?

How do you know that? You know it by the evidence of assurance. What is the evidence of assurance? It's your sanctification. And that's my fourth point.

[41 : 38] You feast on Christ in sanctification. Sanctification is not a burden for this life. It is preparation for eternity. Your soul will dwell immediately.

The moment you die, the moment your body releases your spirit, your soul will be united to Christ if you are in him by faith and you will be with Christ for eternity.

That's what sanctification is preparing you to dwell in such a way with Christ. Look at verse 27.

Jesus says, now pay attention carefully to his words here.

do not work for the food that perishes. But for, in other words, you do work to feed your soul on spiritual food.

What is that? It's the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. You work for that that he is giving to you.

[42 : 36] He gives it. And you work for what he's giving you. He gets all the glory. But you work for what's going to last for eternity. For on him, God the Father has set his seal.

The hot wax is poured. The king's signet ring stamped down on the life of everyone given to Christ by the Father. So pay attention to this.

Union to Christ. This is what it all hinges on. It is evidenced by communion communion with Christ. Union with Christ.

That's the hope of your soul from life and in death. It's evidenced by, here's the fruit of assurance, communion with Christ. Feeding your soul on Christ is evidence of union to him.

If you are united to Christ, then God's, the Father's seal is upon your life. And the will of the Father was what fed Jesus.

[43 : 40] In John 4, 34, Jesus said, my food is to do the will of my Father. And if your will is now bound up with his, that will be your desire as well.

Your will will be to do the will of the Father. Our remaining sin is at enmity with God. It hates to do God's will. If you are not saved by grace alone through faith alone, sanctification sounds like a lot of work and your flesh will never want to do it and you will be doomed to fail.

So is there any hope? The hope is this. If God has given you a hunger in your soul and he's united you to his son through faith, you now are his project.

He owns your sanctification. See, Jesus was the carpenter. He was a builder. Nazareth is only about 11 miles from Tiberias. He saw the city being built.

He would have contracted out in all the areas surrounding that. And it probably annoyed him when someone would start a project and then run out of money. But that's exactly what Herod Agrippa did.

[44 : 44] If you were to travel through Tiberias, you would have seen these buildings only half built. What a joke that was compared to Herod the Great, his father, who built amazing things in the style of Rome.

Herod Agrippa, he would abandon his projects. And for a carpenter, a builder, there's nothing more annoying, unprofessional. He knew that. And at the same context, Luke 14, 8, Jesus says, which of you desiring to build a tower, probably looking at Tiberias in this exact moment, everyone looking and knowing exactly what Christ is talking about, who doesn't first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it.

But listen to what God says in Philippians 1, 6 through Paul. I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Jesus Christ.

Your sanctification is his project. He is building you up as his holy temple, so he will dwell in you for eternity, church. That's your hope. You do not have to fabricate your own spiritual food.

You do feed your soul on the spiritual food which the Son of Man will give to you. Trust that he will. Verse 27, he will give you the food that your soul needs every day.

[46 : 04] Let me recap this point. By what means can you feast on Christ? Number one, by his word, by faith, by the evidence of assurance, and by your growing and sanctification.

You feast on the eternal life that God has laid out for you like a banquet feast. Your soul will hunger until you feast on Christ. You rehearse the gospel and your soul is fed.

Milton Vincent again, how shall I thank God for this gospel of his, a gift that keeps giving? Each time I rehearse, deserve it, I don't on my holiest day, but this is salvation, and herein I'll stay.

I want this last little illustration to be impressed on your mind to remember this. On a piece of printer paper, blue marker, these words were written and then taped outside of a restaurant on the alley side facing the dumpsters.

The sign read, to the people eating to the people eating out of my garbage. I have more love for you than you can think. Please just come in and tell me you're hungry.

[47 : 19] I will forever give you a fresh slice of pizza and fresh water to drink. God bless. your soul will hunger until you feast on Christ.

But Jesus says to you, I am the bread of life. If you come to me, you shall not hunger. Whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

Enjoy the bounty of God's kingdom. Enjoy your fill of every spiritual fruit he provides. make use of all the means he has given you and feast until you are completely satisfied over and over again in Christ.

Christ alone is heaven's food for your hungry soul.