

John 6: 22-59

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[0:00] 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. 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 whom God has sent.

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

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

[1:03] Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whomever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me, and yet you do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whomever 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. So the Jews grumbled about him, because he had said, I am the bread that came down from heaven.

They said, Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, I have come down from heaven? Jesus answered, Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God.

[2:04] Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God. He has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

So Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks on my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father.

[3:05] So whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate

and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.

Jesus said these things in the synagogue as he taught them at Capernaum. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Thanks for reading, Ashlyn. Let's pray this morning. Heavenly Father, these are lofty things from your word.

We pray, God, that as we were singing earlier, that you would fill this place with your spirit. God, we are desperately in need of you. If we're going to hear and understand these words, unlike the Jews of the first century, then we are desperately in need of you to teach us, to instruct us, to open up the eyes of our hearts and give us insight into the deep things of God this morning.

So we come, Lord, that we are.

[4:44] We're ready. crew arrived. I know there's a crew doing a try. We got some of them here in the room. Hope you all had fun out in the rain. So, John 6, 22-59. Oh, we're...

I think that is last week's from Matt Landek. You've got time. If you could get this week's up on the screen. Matt did a great job. We don't need to re-preach what Matt preached on.

Actually, ironically, we preached on this passage January 8th this year. Ian Pollock, who's over in Shoreline Kids right now, preached on this passage earlier this year. So, why am I preaching on it again? Honestly, so I re-listened to his sermon yesterday, and I was thinking the same question, actually, because he did such an awesome job. Why am I actually going to re-preach on this?

Two reasons, though. Two reasons. First, we are a church that preaches expositionally. So, that means that our aim is for the message of the sermon to be consistent with the message of the biblical text, because we want to preach this will be a good spot for an amen. We want to preach God's wisdom and not ours.

Amen? That's what we want when we preach. And we believe this happens best when we preach through books of the Bible. One text after the other. So, last week we preached on the passage John 6, 1-21.

[5:59] So, I'm going to preach on John 6, 22-59. Right? Secondly, this passage, as you probably noticed as you read it, is so rich and so profound, and we will never plumb the vast depths of what Christ has here for us in this life, much less with only two sermons.

So, I encourage you, if you're interested in learning more, check out Ian's sermon from January 8th, which is on our website. There is some, there's, you know, obviously there's overlap between our two sermons, but there's also some differences and things that he highlights that I'm just not going to highlight today.

So, I mentioned Pastor Matt last week walked us through John 6, 1-21, which is the immediate context for the Bread of Life discourse, which we're reading about today. So, we learned last week that the Passover was at hand, right? And that the Passover was a time where thousands, maybe even millions of Jews, would come into Israel to celebrate God's mighty deliverance of Israel from Egypt, you know, generations earlier.

So, a large crowd had been following Jesus because of the miraculous signs that he had been performing, and they gathered on a mountainside beside the shore of the Sea of Galilee, and there we saw last week Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 people using one boy's meal of five loaves of bread and two fish.

And then after that, Jesus' disciples, they set across the Sea of Galilee to go to Capernaum, and a squall arose, and Jesus miraculously walks on water, calms the storm, and then brings them safely to their destination, literally in God's speed.

[7:35] Matt said last week, I think we just saw it on the screen, Matt said last week that if we only remember two words from his whole sermon, we should remember, does anybody remember?

Anybody? Yes, thank you, Kevin. He saw the screen. Good thing Matt's not in the room. Jesus provides. That was last week. Now, this week, I want to add two words to that.

So believe. Jesus provides. So believe. Belief and trust. So those are actually things Matt was beckoning us towards last week.

This week, I'm going to do the same, because this is consistent with the theme verse of John's Gospel. Let's see. Does this thing work? No? Come on, clicker.

You can do it. Is that a... Well, next slide, please. Oh, did I do that, or did you do that? Yes.

[8:34] Okay. I have a lot of slides, so it's easier if I've got the clicker. This is the theme verse. We keep coming back to this over and over again, and rightly so. John 20, 30 through 31. Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

Our text for today, the Bread of Life Discourse, it drives home this theme. And actually, so my main point is not the short phrase I stated above. It's not just two words. I'm sorry to lead you astray. It's this. This is the main point. We're going to keep coming back to this. Jesus is the vital soul nourishment that we can receive eternally by grace when we believe in him.

This is it. Jesus, not Moses, not some Messiah of our own making, but Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Word made flesh.

Vital. It means absolutely essential, indispensable, needed, necessary. Soul nourishment. That's spiritual life. Inward sustenance for the soul, without which you have no life.

[9:49] we can receive. So this is not something to abstract. This is not some vain spiritual mysticism. This is real. We can actually take hold of it.

Namely, he is real. We can actually take hold of him eternally. This spiritual life that is found in Christ is spiritual life which endures on forever.

By grace. You can't work for it. You did nothing to earn it or to deserve it. It is sheer grace, the grace of God, who offers his Son and who draws us to him.

And then finally, when we believe in him, through faith in Jesus, this happens through faith, our part in receiving Jesus, the vital soul nourishment, is believing in him.

So that's it. That's the main point. That's the answer key. This is the direction that we're going to go today. And we're going to piece this main point back together as we go through the text. So let's jump in.

[10:51] I'm going to reread verses 22 through 24 here. 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 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.

So this is all context, right? We find ourselves following some of the crowd of people who had been there the day before. They had seen the feeding of the 5,000. And remember from last week, it said, John says, the people were exclaiming, this is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.

And they were about to take Jesus by force and make him king, right? If Jesus can perform that kind of miracle, then he must be the prophet foretold by Moses.

He must be the Messiah come to rescue God's people. So this crowd is looking for Jesus. They don't know where he went and they're a bit mystified at his whereabouts. And rightly so, because they had seen the disciples get into the boat without Jesus and the disciples went across the sea and now they're looking for Jesus and he's not there.

[12:04] So where did Jesus go? So they themselves sailed to Capernaum probably because they had either heard the disciples talking about going there or they knew Capernaum was a home base for Jesus and for his disciples, some of whom lived there.

So they're seeking Jesus. That's a good thing, right? Seeking Jesus. Well, let's see what happens when they find him. 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, and remember this is verily, verily or this is really important so listen up. Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw the 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. So Jesus doesn't answer their question, does he?

Right? They ask him, when did you come here? And he's not really interested in answering that question. See, they're thinking on a purely physical level and Jesus wants to engage them on a spiritual level.

[13:10] So instead of answering their question, what does Jesus do? He exposes their heart motivation for seeking him and he tells them that they're seeking him for the wrong reason.

And that's our first sub-point today. Merely seeking Jesus is not enough. See, these people are seeking Jesus not because they've seen his signs that point to his true identity and they've come to believe in him.

They're seeking him because he filled their bellies. Right? He gave him food to eat. They're seeking Jesus for food that perishes. That's earthly, temporary things. They're not seeking Jesus for food that endures to eternal life, for heavenly, eternal things.

So their understanding of the Messiah is that he's going to come and he's going to lead the Jewish people in a revolt over the tyranny of Rome and he's going to reestablish the kingdom of Israel on earth and there's going to be peace and prosperity.

They're thinking on a physical level. That's the level of their expectations of the Messiah. But that's not the kind of Messiah that Jesus has come to be.

[14:19] And this is so important. Jesus has his eyes set on a far grander plan, a heavenly, spiritual, eternal plan. So, as Andrew was preaching earlier, we ourselves ought to consider why are we seeking Jesus?

What are we seeking Jesus for? Are you looking to Jesus to fix your broken relationships? To heal your marriages?

Are you here at church because you have friends here? Is it because you were expecting the delicious stale crackers and juice that we have sometimes? Probably not. Is it because it feels good when you sing and you just love to sing?

Is it because you learn something every week? Why do you go to community group? Is it because you feel accepted there? Now listen, these are not bad things. I'm not saying that you shouldn't have those as reasons for coming to church, for reading the word, for going to community.

Those are good things. But, and Andrew said this too, if those are primary things, they're the primary things you're seeking Jesus for. If you're only pursuing Jesus to receive earthly, temporary things, then that's all you're going to get.

[15:32] That's what you'll get. You will get earthly, temporary things. But listen, that's food that perishes. That's not food that endures to eternal life. Jesus wants to give you this morning and forever.

He wants to give you food that endures to eternal life. And that's why we should be seeking him. So you ask, what is the food that endures to eternal life?

And how do I get it? Awesome questions. We're going to keep reading. Verse 28 to 29. 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 whom he has sent.

Now notice, the people had latched on to the word work that Jesus said in verse 27. They missed the point of what he was trying to say. Jesus was trying to say, look, the son of man, which is a term he's used for himself a few times now, offers you food that endures to eternal life.

But they want to know what work they need to do to earn this special food. So see, they're still thinking on a physical level. But note this, Jesus is patient and kind, isn't he?

[16:40] And he forbears with their and our slowness to learn. Okay? So he answers their question and at the same time he redirects the conversation where he wants it to go. He's basically, okay, listen, I'm going to tell you exactly what work you need to do.

Okay, you ready? Here it is. Here's the work that you need to do. Believe. Believe in him whom he has sent. That's the work that you need to do. And we're thinking, okay, believing does not sound like working.

And that is exactly the point that Jesus is making. Stop working and believe. That's his point here. See, you and I, the Jews there listening to Jesus, could never work hard enough, could never do enough good things to earn this food that endures to eternal life.

Now, on the flip side of that, this is beautiful, you could never do so many bad things, you could never commit so much sin that the food that endures to eternal life is not still within your reach if you believe in Jesus.

And this is marvelous grace. Marvelous grace. And we're going to talk about grace later. But how does the Jewish crowd respond to this offer? So they said to him, then what sign do you do that we may see and believe you?

[18:04] What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness. As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. Okay, wait a second. This is the crowd that was there yesterday, right?

Like, they were on the mountain, they didn't have food, 5,000 people plus didn't have food, and then Jesus took this meal and gave them all food. Like, they were there, right? A little confusing.

It's like, did they forget about the feeding of the 5,000? Did they forget about all the healings that they've seen and heard about in the land? Are they really asking Jesus to perform another sign?

No, and yes.

No, the crowd actually didn't forget. They did not forget the feeding of the 5,000. That's what I thought at first, but when you spend a little more time on the text, you realize they didn't forget.

They are asking for another sign, and this makes sense because it all has to do with expectations.

And as Ian said in his sermon, Jesus is, he's overturning the cultural expectations of the Messiah. I talked about this earlier, but the crowd, they're expecting the Messiah to perform visible, physical signs like those performed by Moses, right?

[19:12] Under Moses' leadership, the Israelites had manna from heaven for how long? Anybody know? 40 years. 40 years. Every single day, manna from heaven, manna from heaven.

40 years, right? And so the crowd is thinking if the Messiah is going to be like that, then he needs to keep performing signs. If he's going to come and overthrow Rome and he's going to reestablish the peace and prosperity, and the kingdom, and reestablish the kingdom of Israel, then, and he's claiming right now to be the Messiah, then he'd better produce some more signs if they're going to believe him.

I want us to consider this. Our expectations of Jesus drastically affect the reasons we come to him, right? What do you expect Jesus to be for you?

Who do you expect Jesus to be for you? What kind of Messiah do you expect him to be? And he's going to reveal this to us. We've got to keep moving. Jesus then said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you 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. So Jesus is continuing to lovingly and patiently correct their misguided expectations.

[20:40] First of all, Jesus says, you ascribe too much value to Moses. It wasn't Moses that fed Israel the manna from heaven. It was my Father, right? And secondly, there is another kind of bread that the Father offers.

true bread of an entirely different quality than the manna. This true bread is also sent from heaven, but it's actually a person sent from heaven.

And it gives life not just to the Jews, but to the entire world. Now this is radical. This is radical. We should look at this and say, that's, like Tyler was saying, this is crazy.

This is a pretty big claim here. And Jesus is moving us in these verses, he's moving us into the heart of his message if we would have the ears to listen. And this is the message that he was communicating when he performed that miracle the day before.

But it seems the crowd gathered there, they don't quite have the ears to listen. On their response, they say, sir, give us this bread always. Which might sound nice, but the thing is that they're still thinking on the level of the physical.

[21:47] Right? In their question, it is apparent that they think, they think Jesus is still offering some sort of physical bread when he's actually offering himself. Now this is pretty similar to a previous

passage we saw, the Samaritan woman, right?

Jesus was offering that woman, what? Living water. And then the woman says, sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.

Like she's still thinking on the level of the physical. But Jesus, in John 4, he continued to lovingly press in, right? And he revealed himself explicitly to her and she responded in faith.

So Jesus does a similar thing with these Jews gathered in Capernaum in the synagogue there. He is pressing in and he's going to make it real explicit. Here we go, 35 to 40.

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.

[22:46] But I said to you that you have seen me and yet you do not believe. 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. Now there are so many glorious things in these six verses and we don't have time to impact them all but I hope I hope that we're able to see and savor the main things that are here for us.

So Jesus makes explicit here what he was saying in verse 33. The Father offers food that endures to eternal life. Right? He offers bread from heaven that gives life to the world.

That food that bread is Jesus himself. Right? I am the bread of life. And this here this is the first of seven I am statements that we see throughout the book of John.

All of them beautiful and I'm excited to keep moving forward in John and see the rest. This is the first one. I am the bread of life. So what does that what does that mean? What does it mean that Jesus is the bread of life?

[24:07] Well first I want us to consider the fact and realize the fact that our 21st century middle class American mindset it colors the way that we understand what Jesus is saying.

Okay? What does bread mean to me and to you? What is bread? Bread is one of thousands of options that I have on a given day for what I can eat. Bread usually for me it's a carrier for something like my spaghetti sauce or meat and cheese especially or garlic.

I mean that's what bread is to me. If I don't get bread I don't really care. Like I'm going to eat something else I'm still going to be full. Most of the world doesn't live like that.

I don't know if you know that. According to World Vision there are 690 million chronically hungry people in the world. Always hungry. Always hungry. What do you think bread means to them?

Right? Bread means life. It means life. If they don't eat bread they're going to die. That's what bread means to them. And for most of the world even if they're not chronically hungry they do not have the options that we have.

[25:15] Most of the world their option for food is rice. That's it. It's rice. Maybe rice and beans. Maybe rice and fish. Maybe. They don't have the vast infrastructure that we have in the western world or they can't afford to benefit from it because of all sorts of reasons.

Rice to them equals life. And friends this is how the first century Jews living in an agrarian society would have heard and understood Jesus' words I am the bread of life.

If you eat bread you live. If you don't eat bread there are no other options. There is no life. So Jesus is saying then listen Jesus is saying he himself is the bread of life.

The bread of life for your soul. There are no other options. It's not like you can refuse Jesus and then have something else to get life. There are no other options.

If you get Jesus you get life. If you don't get Jesus he says later on then you have no life in you. Jesus is himself vital essential needed soul nourishment without which there is no life.

[26:27] And so this is getting back to our main point here. Jesus is himself the vital nourishment of our souls which is the first part of our main point. In verse 32 he called himself true bread.

And then in the next section which we haven't read yet he calls himself true food and true drink. In other words this is not just some vain mystical religious idea that is out of touch with reality.

No, no. This is actual reality. There is a spiritual dimension to this universe. Right? God has made us and he has made us for fellowship with him but we are dead.

So Paul says in Ephesians 2 and you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you once walked. We are dead and therefore unable to have a relationship with God. We need to be made spiritually alive.

And Jesus is saying he himself is the spiritual life that we need. Moses said in Deuteronomy 8 3 man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

[27:41] And John said in chapter 1 that Jesus is the word made flesh. Right? Jesus is the bread by which men actually live.

So there is true real authentic nourishment to be found in Jesus for your soul for my soul this morning.

And the metaphor again that the next section has a bunch of other language. It talks about eating and drinking which Ashlyn read before. Feeding on the flesh of Christ. This metaphor of eating and drinking we believe is a metaphor and is also not referring to communion.

There's a large debate about that. But that's what we believe. One commentator writes this. John 6 is not about the Lord's supper. Rather the Lord's supper is about what is described in John 6.

When we partake of communion we're reenacting the things that Jesus is talking about. This passage though it's all about belief. It's all about belief.

[28:52] Jesus is speaking on a spiritual level. That's the whole point. Like Jesus said you guys are missing it because you're thinking on a physical level. I'm speaking on a spiritual level. So much deeper than you realize.

The metaphor of eating and drinking is helping us to understand that salvation and true life is a radically internal thing. It's not external. I can't do things for it. I can't work for it.

It's an internal thing. We have to receive Christ within. Ingesting him and assimilating him, his person and his works into the core of our being.

Now Ian did a great job talking about this. I will refer you to his sermon to hear more on that. We're going to come back to some of the other things going on in this section, but I want us to move forward into the next section.

How did the Jews respond to Jesus' claim? Wrong way. The Jews grumbled about him because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven.

[29:51] They said, isn't that this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, I have come down from heaven? So they're starting to realize the claims that Jesus is making.

And they respond with grumbling. They understand to some degree, they're still missing it, but they kind of understand the claims that Jesus is making. They understand that they're radical and they don't believe it and they don't understand how it could possibly be true.

And what does Jesus say? He says, do not grumble among yourselves. Cut out the grumbling.

Right? No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day.

It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the father, except he who is from God. He has seen the father.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

[30:58] I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

Now, I wanted us to make it through this next section because we can see all the more the repetition that Jesus is using. There are words and phrases that pop up over and over and over again. Side note, when we're studying our Bibles, it's really good to look for repetition because it helps us to understand, to interpret what God is trying to communicate to us.

So, I want us to specifically look for repeated words and phrases that answer the question, how does one actually receive the bread of life? If Jesus is actually vital soul nourishment that we need, that we desperately need to know how we can receive him, right?

So, what repeated words and phrases do we see in 35 to 51 that answer that question? Look at this.

Believe. It showed up two times in the passage before this, and then another four times right here. Believe, believe, believe, believe. Here's another one.

[32:14] Come to me, or comes to me. One, two, three, four, five times in this section. Relatedly, right, Jesus says twice here, he says, eat of it, talking about the bread, eat of this bread, and then in the next section that we haven't reread yet, feed on my flesh, or drink my blood, the more cryptic way of saying a similar thing here, eight more times.

So, believe, come to me, eat of this bread, feed on my flesh, drink my blood. They're all actually one and the same. They're basically saying the same thing.

They are all about belief, about faith, about trust in Jesus. How do we receive Jesus, the bread of life?

By faith. By faith. We receive Jesus when we come to him and believe in him. We receive Jesus' vital soul nourishment when we believe in him.

You see, we're still kind of piecing together this main point. If you notice, a lot of my sermons are a little bit more linear than this one, but we're kind of working all over the place to get this main point, which Jesus is driving home.

[33:31] Believing in Jesus, it means coming to him, not on our terms, but on his terms. It means believing Jesus to be the Messiah that he actually is.

Not the one that we want him to be, right? This was the stumbling block of the Jews. They wanted to believe in the Messiah of their own making, right? They had devised a God of their own making. And when we do that, friends, when we do that, when we devise a Messiah of our own making, that is idolatry. That is the core of idolatry. We are then worshipping and trusting in a God who is not the real God, who is not the real Jesus.

See, Jesus beckons us to himself. He is an actual person. He himself beckons us to come. He beckons us to believe and to trust in him, to assimilate all that he is into our being.

And when we do, we will find him to be the vital nourishment of our souls. See, he is himself, food that endures to eternal life, true, actual food giving life to our souls.

[34:46] Now this brings us to another group of related words and phrases that we see in our next point. Jesus is our vital soul nourishment eternally. Eternally.

So what words or phrases having to do with life or eternal life are in here? Let's take a look. Eternal life, eternal life, not die, live forever, live, five times in this section.

It showed up twice in the section before, three more times in the section after this, ten times Jesus is talking about life. Relatedly to that one, he will raise it up on the last day.

I will raise him up on the last day. That shows up those times and then three more times in the next section. This passage has a lot to do with belief. It has a lot to do with life.

This is juxtaposed against the bread that the Jews' forefathers received in the wilderness. He says, where is it?

[35:45] Verse 49, your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. That's not the kind of bread that Jesus is offering. You see what he's doing here. The Jews are saying, hey, look, if we're going to believe you, you need to do something for us as amazing as what Moses did in the wilderness with the manna.

And Jesus is like, no, no, no, you look. Your forefathers ate that manna and died. I'm offering you something.

Yeah, listen, man, I'm offering you something infinitely greater. That's what Jesus is doing. He's offering something, bread, that when you eat of it, you will never die.

I'm offering you bread that satisfies the hunger in your soul forever. and that bread, it's myself.

That's what Jesus is saying. Friends, when you come to Jesus and you receive him by faith, you receive life eternal, not life for four hours or two weeks, like life everlasting.

[36:51] That's what you receive. When we trust in Jesus, our souls are satisfied to their core such that we will never again hunger or thirst. And Jesus, he promises here to keep us until the end and then to raise us up on the last day.

I can't wait for that day. We're going to die physically. We're not talking on the physical level here. This is spiritual. We're probably all going to die physically unless Jesus comes back. But someday when he comes back, he's going to raise us up to be with him.

Our souls that have been glorified in this life will be united with our bodies that are going to be raised in glory. And forever more, we are going to be with God and the saints.

How amazing is that? That's what Jesus is saying here. Now, there is a sense to this in which we must keep coming to Jesus for life. Jesus gets at that in the next section of the dialogue.

But right now, we're focused on the eternal life that we receive at conversion, right, when we put our faith and trust in Jesus. I want to read another text here.

[37:59] Surely, when the Jews were gathered there in Capernaum listening to this, they would have understood his words to be pointing back to something from the Old Testament. Isaiah chapter 55.

Now, Pat Shufflin was here at the beginning of July and preached on this. Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, and he who has no money, come buy and eat.

Come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me and eat what is good and delight yourselves in rich food.

Incline your ear and come to me here that your soul may live, and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

The connection from Isaiah 55, John 6 is readily apparent. All right? Jesus is inviting all who come to him to receive this eternal food that he offers, that he himself actually is.

[39:01] Food that satisfies and nourishes the soul forevermore. Food that is available at no cost. Not from us. It's received by faith.

So let me put the main point back on the screen. Jesus is the vital soul nourishment that we can receive eternally by grace when we believe in him. Now there's one part to this that we haven't touched on yet.

Does anybody know? What have we not talked about yet in this? By grace. You guys are listening, you're paying attention, yes. This brings us to our next point here.

We receive Jesus' vital nourishment by grace. Okay, Mike, where are you getting this from?

Because I didn't see the word grace anywhere in that passage. You are correct.

The word grace does not appear in this passage at all. But it is strongly implied by the many repeated phrases that we see that talk about the divine sovereignty of God.

[40:02] See, this passage, it holds up two truths. Two truths that our little human brains have a very difficult time reconciling. Divine sovereignty of God and human responsibility.

responsibility. Both of them play out in salvation. We've talked about our human responsibility.

Believe, come to me, eat of this bread, feed on my flesh, right?

Human responsibility. But I want you to see this. Phrases having to do with the divine sovereignty of God. I'm going to march through them. He says, which the Son of Man will give to you.

My Father gives you true bread from heaven, gives life to the world. He says, all that the Father gives me, I will never cast out, verse 37. I should lose nothing, verse 39, of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

Which he says multiple times. Verse 44, no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. All right? You see, I will give, I will raise him up, he will also live because of me.

[41:04] It's because of Christ we're going to live. All of these phrases, they show us that from first to last, salvation is by grace. It is a sheer act of divine grace.

Grace in the sending. The sending of Christ. Only by the Father's grace did he send Jesus to earth to become for us the bread.

Grace in the sending. There's grace in the coming. Talking about us coming to Christ. Only by the Father's grace do we actually come to Jesus by faith. Now this is a divine mystery, but it is true nonetheless.

Mike, so you're saying it's our responsibility to come to Jesus and believe in him? Yes. And you're saying that God sovereignly draws us to faith in Christ?

Yes. Right? Well, which one is it then? Like, which is it? And the answer is yes. It's actually both. Like, we cannot in our brains reconcile these things in this life, but we understand them both to be true.

[42:11] That Jesus, that we are drawn to Christ by a divine act of grace, the Father drawing our hearts to Jesus. And at the same time, we come to Jesus in faith.

Right? And we uphold these two things because God's infallible word upholds both of these truths. And so on the one hand, we thank and we praise God for his grace. We worship him.

And we are grateful forever more. And at the same time, we ourselves go to Christ. And we seek him for the vital soul nourishment that he gives us. So there's grace in the sending, there's grace in the coming, there's grace in the keeping.

Right? Only by the grace of God are we guarded and kept secure in our salvation now and into eternity. See, from first to last, salvation is by the grace of God.

God. So that is our main point again. We have pieced our main point together. Jesus is the vital soul nourishment that we can receive eternally by grace when we believe in him.

[43:25] But there are a couple more points that I want to draw out from this text. So hang with me. We still haven't actually read the last section. So here it is.

The Jews then disputed among themselves saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat? So Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him.

As the living father sent me and I live because of the father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate and died.

Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever. Jesus said these things in the synagogue as he taught at Capernaum. So when using this language of feeding on his flesh and drinking his blood, Jesus is deepening the scandal that already exists in this text and he's deepening the offense of his message that the Jews are hearing.

[44:47] Where did it go? I thought I had a scripture quote here. Lost my spot. I guess not. For the Jews, it was against the law of Moses to drink blood.

This was an offensive message to them. But again, they're continuing to hear this in a physical sense, but Jesus does not mean it in a physical. He means it in a spiritual sense.

And this language that we see here, Jesus not only offers a metaphor to understand what true belief looks like, we talked about that earlier, but he's also pointing forward to the means by which he would become life to the world.

So he's doing a few things. He's showing us how we are to believe, but the feeding on flesh, the drinking his blood, it's also pointing forward to the cross. That's something else he's doing here, which we haven't even talked about yet in the sermon.

Jesus' death on the cross is the means to our life. See, there on the cross of Calvary, Jesus would give up his flesh and blood, right?

[45:52] Bearing the penalty for our sin, securing our forgiveness and our redemption, securing our spiritual life. So Jesus laid down his life on the cross so that he could then become the bread of life for us.

So that's the first thing I want to draw to this last section. And there's one more thing. There's another new concept that shows up in these verses, and it's the concept of abiding. See, before we were talking primarily about conversion, when someone for the first time puts their faith in Jesus,

they come to him, they receive of the life now and forevermore.

This word abiding, it also refers to an ongoing shared life, an ongoing mutual indwelling between Jesus and his followers.

So we see here that believing leads to abiding. Or if you prefer, faith leads to fellowship. Similar ideas. And we're definitely going to talk about this idea more when we get to John 15.

Jesus says, I am the true vine, you know, abide in me and I in you. We're going to talk about that. But for now, suffice to say this, one who abides in Jesus is one who remains in fellowship with him, right?

[47:06] It's one who continually depends on Christ for life and for nourishment. So my question for the saints that are gathered here is, are you abiding abiding in Jesus?

Are you daily feeding on him in prayer and through the word? Are you depending on him for sustenance, assimilating, ingesting, you know, all that he is, his person, his works into your being? Or are you seeking daily life and nourishment from other things? Because we seek life and nourishment from all sorts of things. And the call here is to seek it from Christ alone.

Hey, we've covered a lot of ground today. 38 verses of scripture. But I hope that as we've moved quickly through this text, we haven't missed the hope that rings through this whole passage.

And so I want to conclude by helping us, hopefully, to see this, to feel this, this glorious hope that is offered to believers. So this is where we're going to land the plane for today, with a hope and a call.

[48:17] And so here's the first thing here as we end. The hope for things those who believe in Jesus will never experience. The first one is hunger.

Jesus says, whoever comes to me shall not hunger. Thirst. Jesus says, whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Rejection. Those are all ones.

Whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. I just realized that. And death. Right? He says, so that one may eat of it. He's talking about the bread and not die.

Hunger, thirst, rejection, death. If you believe in Jesus this morning, it is promised to you that you will never experience these things. Remember, Jesus, remember though, Jesus is speaking on a spiritual level.

He is not speaking on a physical level. Hunger. Hunger and thirst. What are those? Our souls are constantly hungering. They're thirsting. They're longing for something. Right?

[49:15] They're longing for meaning and for purpose and fulfillment. They're longing for satisfaction. The text for today shows us that the only one who can satiate that hunger, the only one who can quench that thirst is Jesus.

And those who believe in Jesus, they will find that he actually is vital soul, nourishment, satisfying the deepest longings of our soul. Right? Rejection.

Right? One of those things that our soul longs for is acceptance. Right? We want to be welcomed into a group of people. We want to be known fully and loved fully. The promise here, the hope here, is that for those who believe in Jesus, you are accepted by God himself.

And he will never cast you out. You will never experience rejection from God because of what Christ has done in offering us himself.

Death. See, we instinctively fight against the natural process of aging. I'm only 35 and I'm getting like, you know, white hairs in here. That's why I keep this pretty short.

[50:23] My coworkers make comments to me when I start growing it out. They're like, oh, you got a lot of white hairs there. We want to fight against that. The natural process of aging and death, right? And we have this longing in our souls to just live forever.

Jesus promises here that for those who believe in him, you will never die. Yes, all of us will taste death, physically speaking, right?

Again, if Christ does not return, we will face death. But afterwards comes glory. Our glorified souls, right, our glorified bodies will be united with our souls in a beautiful resurrection forever more.

If you believe in Jesus, you will never experience these things. That is a promise. That is a guarantee. Now, I suppose the flip side of the deepest longings of our souls are also the greatest fears, right?

We fear meaninglessness. We fear rejection. We fear death. And Jesus is saying that in him, all these fears are completely allayed. And how is this?

[51:30] How is this possible? We will never experience these things. Friends, if you're here this morning, whether you believe in Jesus or you don't, listen to this. We will never experience these things in Christ if we believe in Christ because in an act of unrivaled and boundless love for us, Jesus experienced all of them for us, on our behalf.

Right? He bore our sin and our shame upon himself on the cross, the rejection of the world, the rejection of the Father. He experienced hunger and thirst. And he died on the cross so that we would not have to experience any of these things ever again.

Our deepest fears are now powerless Because of what Christ has done for us on the cross, our deepest longings are satisfied eternally because of Jesus' work on Calvary.

That's the hope. That's the hope that this passage offers us. And finally, I want to end with a call. A call to offer this hope to the hopeless.

Right? If you and I have been given such a great hope, how could we then not offer this hope to the world? How could we not bring hope to the hopeless?

[52:50] We've found an unending, soul-satisfying source of life. How could we not lead others to this fountain? That's our call. That's our mission in this world.

As believers in Christ, as the church, we are ambassadors for God, reconciling the world to him.

Right? And we want to lead others to Jesus so that they can also find that he is their vital soul, nourishment.

Right? That they can receive him eternally by grace when they believe in him. The spirit and the bride say, come.

And let the one who hears say, come. And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

Heavenly Father, what a great hope is offered to us in Jesus. What grace that you have sent your son to be for us soul-satisfying bread without which there is no life.

[54:00] God, we thank you. We praise you for your grace. And God, we come to you this morning by faith to receive this vital soul nourishment.

Lord, I pray that you would take these profound and rich truths and plant them deep into our hearts.

God, we want to be changed by your spirit and by your word.

God, we want to receive the life that is offered to us in Jesus. We need your help to do that. So help us, Lord God. We pray this all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.