



## **[John 6:32-33, 41-59](#)** **[Exodus 16:1-19](#)**

### **Jesus is the Bread of Life**

Many years ago there was a Scotsman who traveled to America. He took almost all of his money and purchased passage on a great ocean liner. In preparation for his trip he stocked up on crackers, cheese and fruit before departure so he would have a good stash on board for the trip. After the ship set sail he did fairly well for the first four or five days. However, the crackers became stale, the cheese soft and moldy and the fruit began to spoil. Finally, the old Scot got so hungry he took some of his money and headed to the dining room for a good meal. Imagine his surprise when he found out that everything in the dining room was included in the cost of the ticket. All that he could have ever eaten was already included in the price of his ticket from Scotland to America.

God has provided you with all the essentials for eternal life without price and without cost. Jesus Christ is the bread of life.

Among the vital signs of physical life are the pulse, blood pressure, and respiration. Breathing may be absent, shallow, convulsive, or it may be deep, regular and life sustaining. To sustain life we need a balanced diet. Bread is called the staple of life. Men die without it.

What are the essentials in your life? What do you really need in order to exist? What do you think you need to be a happy, healthy, meaningful person? Jesus made an interesting observation: Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal (John 6:27). The food that Jesus gives remains forever and has the effect of producing life forever.

Is Jesus Christ as real to you spiritually as something you can taste? Is He as much a part of you as that which you eat?

### **BREAD IS THE SYMBOL OF THE ESSENTIALS IN LIFE**

The LORD God who created us is able to satisfy our greatest and most important needs in life. He is able to satisfy, and will always satisfy the deepest longings of the soul. Moreover, He has demonstrated His faithfulness in the history of Israel.

#### ***Need for bread (Exodus 16)***

God miraculously delivered the Israelite slaves in Egypt. They hadn't finished singing praises to God for His sovereign deliverance before they started grumbling at Moses. They came upon bitter water and the Lord showed Moses a tree which he was instructed to throw it into the waters and the waters became sweet. The LORD demonstrated Himself as, I,"the LORD,

waters became sweet. The LORD demonstrated Himself as, I, "the LORD, am your healer" (Exodus 15:22-26).

They wandered around in the wilderness of Sin and after about fifteen days they started whining, "Remember the good old days?" The people began to grumble against Moses and the LORD because their food supplies were running out. The LORD rained down bread from heaven. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the grumbings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'" (16:11-12). At evening God provided quail and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp, and "When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground" (v. 14). For the next forty years God fed them as much as they could eat (v. 35). Moses said it "was like coriander seed, white; and its taste was like wafers with honey" (v. 31). It may have been like corn flakes, or sugar frosted flakes.

They could have said the same thing the apostle Paul said, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). Jesus said, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:33). Hanna Amada says, "When the Lord has His hand in your mouth you are fed generously."

### ***Jesus fed 5,000 (John 6:1-15)***

A great multitude of people kept on following Jesus because they were continually seeking the signs He was continually performing on the sick (John 6:1-15). A great multitude was coming to Jesus, and He said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?" Jesus knew what He was intending to do. Philip said we have two days wages on hand to buy food, but that is not sufficient for such a number of people. Andrew said, "There is a lad here with five barley loaves and two fish; but what are these for so many people?" Matthew 14:21 tells us there were about 5,000 men who ate, aside from the women and children.

Jesus gave thanks for the little mess of fish and bread and began distributing it to those who were seated. They didn't just get a taste of fish; John tells us they ate as much as they wanted. He provided all they could eat. When they were filled, satisfied with enough to eat, they gathered up twelve baskets of leftovers. These were not scraps on the ground, but pieces, broken by Jesus in the baskets. He always provides more than enough. I wonder who ate the leftovers.

A. T. Robertson once said, "If Jesus is in reality Lord of the universe as John tells us (Jn. 1:1-18) and Paul holds (Col. 1:15-20), why should we balk at this miracle? He who created the universe surely has power to go on creating what He wills to do."

After feeding the people Jesus withdrew to the mountain away from the people because they were ready to seize Him and make Him king (v. 15). The next day Jesus used this miracle to teach a great spiritual truth about Himself.

## **JESUS IS THE TRUE BREAD FROM HEAVEN**

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We all know that bread is necessary for life. In the time of Christ bread was the only staple in most people's diets. Without bread, men died.

Jesus now sets forth clearly that He is the One whom men and women could not do without. You cannot do without Him. You remain spiritually dead without Him. He is the life, and He in truth is all you need.

### ***Jesus is the bread that satisfies (John 6:32-33)***

The next day when the people found Jesus they wanted another free meal on wheels. If He did it once, can He do it twice? Go ahead and show us! The rabbis had taught that when the Messiah came He would duplicate the miracle of giving the manna. The Midrash Rabba taught, "What did the first redeemer do? He brought down the manna. The last redeemer will also bring down manna."

Jesus knew they were out to manipulate Him, so He offered them food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal (v. 27). They then insisted on another sign to prove His credentials. Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat (v. 31). Jesus spoke of the fact that He was God's gift to men and that God desired men to believe in Him. They said they would believe in Him if He could do what Moses did and feed them again.

Who gave the manna? Not Moses, God. Moreover, the manna was not true bread from the true heaven. It was earthly bread from a visible sky that God provided. Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world" (vv. 32-33).

Their immediate response was to ask Him to give them more of this bread. Jesus then clarifies the kind of bread He is offering which is true bread that alone satisfies the genuine hunger of the human soul.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day" (vv. 35-40).

That was one piece of bread that was hard for the crowd to swallow. They wanted fish now, not eternal life.

"I am the bread of life that came down out of heaven," Jesus said. He was claiming that He alone could meet the essential needs of our lives. "I am the bread of life. In chapter four He said He was the living water;" now He is the living bread.

This is the first of the seven "I am" sayings in the gospel of John. In seven passages Jesus provides a clear predicate noun to describe Himself in these solemn pronouncements.

- · I am the bread of life (6:35; cf. vv. 41, 48, 51)
- · I am the light of the world (8:12; cf. vv. 18, 23)

- · I am the gate for the sheep (10:7, 9)
- · I am the good shepherd (10:11, 14)
- · I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)
- · I am the way and the truth and the life (14:6)
- · I am the true vine (15:1, 5)

The great multitude of people desired heavenly bread as the rabbis had interpreted. Jesus is the precious gift of eternal life. I‘am the bread of life (v. 48). I‘am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh (v. 51).

Just as the water Jesus offers quenches all thirst, so the bread He offers banishes all hunger.

Since God is truly the source of true heavenly bread, and since God has sent Jesus, therefore the bread of God is *a person*, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who comes down from heaven.

The Jewish people understood that Christ was saying He was of divine origin. I‘am the bread which came down from heaven. His I‘am is a solemnly emphatic statement. Jesus took the name of God at the burning bush and linked it with the symbol of perfect sustenance for human life. No one but Jesus Christ can make that claim. He is identifying Himself with the Jehovah or LORD in the Old Testament. He is demonstrating absolute deity. He is saying, I‘am what every sinner needs, and without what I provide he will perish eternally. I am alone that which can satisfy the soul and bring eternal life. ‘Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and are dead. In contrast, I‘am the living bread which came down from heaven. The inference is that we should feed upon Him and grow. He alone is what is necessary for our spiritual life.

Jesus words are strong and emphatic. No room is left for the spiritual hunger and thirst after receiving Christ. Jesus said, I‘am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst (v. 35). Weymouth translates the double negative, shall never, never thirst. That does not exclude the reality for spiritual things, but it does rule out the possibility of unsatisfied spiritual hunger. As we sense fresh new spiritual needs in our lives the Holy Spirit satisfies those needs as we feast on the living bread. Jesus is the bread of life and we are invited to come to Him, and to believe on Him.

### ***Eternal life***

Eternal life is the life of God. It is without end because He is without end. It is His kind of life. Nothing will ever separate the believer from God once we receive it by faith in Christ. When we are saved we enter into a life-transforming, vital union with Christ. This new life Christ gives us is His life and we go on receiving it in increased abundance from the moment we are regenerated throughout eternity. We are filled with all the fullness of God. According to Ephesians 3:19, God promises to enlarge our spiritual capacities until the full life of the infinite Christ is reproduced in us. As we feed upon Christ, we receive strength for daily living. Our daily life is to be lived in Christ’s power after we receive Him as our Savior.

Jesus said, All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out (v. 37).

Jesus keeps the believers whom the Father has given into His care. The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out is about the protecting and nurturing ability of Jesus. Jesus adds, For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me (v. 38). Jesus will never lose a

down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me (v. 38). Jesus will never lose a single one of those who have come to Him (cf. 10:1-18). My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand (10:29; cf. 17:2, 4, 6, 9).

The emphasis Jesus is making is that all those who have come into Jesus and believed will never be lost. God the Father gives divine bread, and whoever eats of it will live forever. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day (v. 40).

Jesus will not lose a single one the Father gives Him. No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day (v. 44). Because we are dead in our trespasses and sins we cannot come to Him unless the Father draws us. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to change our hearts and bring about spiritual birth so we can come to Him. The Father draws us to the Son in order to be saved. When man fell every part of his being was affected. No one can influence God in any manner, or merit a right relationship with Him. We are all slaves to sin, estranged from God. Our only hope is in God. We need His help. Unless He takes the initiative we can never be saved.

The unregenerate sinner is so depraved that unless the Holy Spirit changes the heart and mind he will never come to Christ. It is absolutely essential that this change comes about and only God can produce it. It is, therefore, by divine drawing that anyone comes to Christ. It is the power of the Holy Spirit awakening within him a sense of need, overcoming the arrogant pride of the natural man so that he will humble himself and believe on Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who creates within the lost person a hunger for the bread of life.

No individual can come to Jesus unless the Father draws him. God takes the initiative in salvation. This is one of the great essential doctrines of the Gospel of John.

The natural man likes to feel independent. They think they have the ability to come to Jesus on their own volition, but Jesus assures us that this is an absolutely impossible. No man can come to Jesus unless the Father draws him. This impossibility is explicitly clear here.

The approach of the soul to God or Christ is not initiated by man himself, but by a movement of God's grace. God brings men to Himself. The work of the Holy Spirit is triumphant.

Calvin speaks of an effectual movement of the Holy Spirit, turning men from being unwilling and reluctant into willing. Godet said, "The God who sends Jesus for souls, on the other hand, draws souls to Jesus. The two divine works, external and internal, answer to and complete each other. The happy moment when they meet in the heart, and in which the will is thus gained, is that of the *gift* on God's part, of *faith* on man's part. In reality faith is also from God.

Since Jesus is the true bread—the individual who is spiritually hungry must consume this bread.

## **APPROPRIATING THE TRUE BREAD OF HEAVEN**

This living bread has to be eaten. Jesus explains:

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who 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 which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh (vv. 47-51).

Jesus emphasizes in verse fifty that this eating is a singular event, a decision to believe and appropriate the gift of eternal life. Jesus is the living bread that came down through His incarnation, and the sinner must eat

gift of eternal life. Jesus is the living bread that came down through His incarnation, and the sinner must eat this bread which is the decisive moment he believes. It is a once for all decision. Eat refers to appropriating Christ. It is believing on Him as your Savior. Any person who takes this decisive action will live forever.

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 yourselves. He who eats 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. He who eats 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 he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever (vv. 53-58).

Referring to His incarnation, Jesus said He is the living bread that came down from heaven, and it is His blood that we drink. He is referring to His death. Jesus is flesh offered in sacrifice. Jesus is giving Himself for the world. He offers Himself up as a sacrifice (10:11, 15; 11:51-52; 15:13; 17:19; 18:14). His gift is a sacrifice, a blood sacrifice that will atone for the sins of the world. Earlier Jesus was described as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. Our salvation depends on the sacrificial death of Jesus. That is the living bread.

We have hope because Jesus Christ died for our sin and rose from the dead. In His resurrection we now have eternal life. In His righteousness, through His sacrificial death, we are now reckoned righteous in the sight of a holy and loving God.

When we eat His flesh and drink His blood, we assimilate by faith the great provision God has made for us in the death of Christ. He is not referring to sacraments, but to those who see Him and believe in Him. This is a powerful and vivid metaphor teaching us how to come to Christ and believe on Him. It is a picture of appropriating Him by faith.

His death is mine when I believe on Him. It becomes life to me. I make Him mine forever by an act of faith. I cannot receive Him a second time because He never leaves me.

### *Have you eaten?*

A. W. Pink suggested several practical applications of this figure of speech.

Eating is *essential* if we are to take advantage of the bread freely offered. Unless I eat the bread will not nourish me. I may examine it, study it, smell it, read up on it, but it is useless unless I eat it. I will not be nourished unless I eat it. All the knowledge in the world about Jesus Christ will avail me nothing until I eat Him. Knowing the truth about Him, speculating and arguing about it, talking about it will do you and me no good until we believe on Christ.

When we eat we *answer* to a hunger. When we are really hungry we don't grumble and complain; we eat. When the Holy Spirit awakens our spiritual need we feast on Christ. Without the bread of heaven Jesus offers we perish eternally. When the Holy Spirit creates the hunger within us we promptly and gladly receive Him.

Eating means *appropriation*. I do not assimilate the bread into my body until I eat. I must make the food my own. When it becomes a part of me through the digestive process I gain strength. Christ may be beautiful, attractive, and appealing to me, but until I humble myself and receive Him as mine, I am still without spiritual life He gives. Not until I appropriate Him, not until I receive Him as mine, shall I be saved. Then, He who before was outside, will indwell me. Only then can I know Him as the bread of life, nourishing my soul.

Eating is an *individual* activity. It is something no one else can do for me. Watching others eat a nourishing meal will not do anything for me. No one can receive Jesus Christ for you and me. It is a personal act.

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Unless you have eaten the Bread of life, unless you have personally received Christ as yours, it has all availed you nothing. Jesus said, "If any man eat this bread, he shall live forever."

There are many strong believers in hell, and on the road to hell; but they are those who believe a lie, and not the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Christ crucified, who is now alive for evermore is the only one who can save you. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

If you are only eating physical food you will only prolong your earthly life and die. However, when you eat the bread of life you obtain the bread of God and you will never die spiritually. In verse fifty Jesus emphasized the once-for-all action of receiving Christ. I eat His flesh and drink His blood when I believe that His death is the perfect sacrifice for my sins. I believe in His vicarious substitutionary atonement for my sins. In that moment He saves me for all eternity. In that moment that I believe what Jesus did for me I spiritually eat His flesh and drink His blood. In that moment God give us eternal life and we are regenerated spiritually.

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 yourselves" (v. 53). Christ is referring to His vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of Himself for us that we receive by faith. To have no life in Christ is to continue in spiritual death. To believe on Him is the means of receiving eternal life.

Jesus said you must feed upon Him. We eat Him by believing on Him, committing our lives to Him, taking Him into ourselves so that He becomes a part of you and you of Him. We eat and drink Christ when we say, "Lord Jesus, I want You as my Savior. I realize that You died for me on the cross and I want Your death to stand in for my death. I give myself to You. Receive me as Your follower. Faith in Christ means to commit yourself to Christ.

## **OUR DAILY BREAD**

When we appropriate Jesus Christ by faith as our Savior He gives us assurance that He will raise us up at the last day (v. 54). He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. When you trusted in Christ God placed His eternal life within you and will keep you until the last day. But Jesus is also emphasizing that this heavenly bread is to be enjoyed here and now as we also anticipate the age to come. The true sustenance and refreshment of our spiritual life are to be found only in Him who died that we might live. We feed on Him by faith in the reading and the hearing of the Word of God.

The believer must feast on the bread of life. Jesus lived in humble dependence on the Father and set the example for us. We, too, must live our daily life in total humble dependence on Christ.

The marvelous thing about the life in Christ is that He is great enough and glorious enough so that you will never exhaust Him in this life or in the next. He knows you and what you need and how to meet it. There is power in the name of Jesus Christ. It is His life that sustains us in our most difficult journeys through life. We come to Him when we are tired, weary and exhausted and He gives us our daily strength. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). You don't get that strength in human teachers. Christ alone gives us this daily supply. Come feed upon Christ in His great glory.

Is Christ as real to you spiritually that sometimes you can taste Him? Is He so real to you at times that if it were possible you could reach out and touch Him? How few Christians really feed upon Christ. He is the only One who can make us grow spiritually.

***How do we eat and drink Christ daily?***

## *How do we eat and drink Christ daily?*

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Give us today our daily bread." When you believe on Christ as your Savior, it is the beginning of a whole new life that brings about a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ which is to grow by feeding upon Him every day. Give us today and do it daily stresses the idea of repeated requests. He can give us our daily bread because He is the bread of life. He invites us to come daily with our most important needs. Do you pray daily, "Lord, give me the spiritual bread that comes down from heaven and satisfies my soul?"

He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him (v. 56). There is no mystical power, or something meritorious in the act of eating. The nourishing spiritual power is in the food eaten. The object of our faith is Jesus Christ. Jesus is using language that denotes a faith-union by a mutual indwelling. The apostle Paul spoke of a coinherence of Jesus and His believers. We are cocrucified, coburied, coresurrected with Christ. John repeatedly expressed this experience by use of the verb *meno*, abide, "remain, or dwell" (15:4). Again, the apostle Paul says the same thing when he uses the phrases "in Christ" or "Christ in me." In 1 John 2:24 the apostle John tells us believing in Christ and keeping Jesus' commandments are two things which cannot be separated. There is no true faith in Christ without obedience. John places a great emphasis on this mutual indwelling of Christ and the believer in 13:31-16:33.

The saved sinner is brought into a vital union with Christ whereby we can enjoy the most intimate fellowship with Him. It is only the one who eats and drinks constantly that abides in unbroken fellowship with Christ. We feed upon the risen Christ.

The true bread of life feeds our souls eternally. He gives us supernatural food (1 Cor. 10:3). It always points to Christ. Every time we remember that Christ died for us we feed on Him in our heart by faith with thanksgiving. Jesus stresses the continuous appropriation of His flesh and blood. To eat and drink for a Jewish person was to share in and partake of the privileges of friendship. It is our responsibility to daily eat, appropriate the spiritual food Jesus provides through His sacrifice on the cross. He has made a perfect daily provision for our every spiritual need. He invites us to come daily and feast upon His marvelous provision.

How do I eat my daily bread?

You can't appropriate Christ daily until you get to know Him daily. You have to get into the Scriptures that tell about Him. Has Jesus Christ become your daily bread? We feed ourselves on Christ daily by cherishing and obeying His Word. His words are spiritual, life-giving food.

Read the Gospels out loud to yourself. Read it repeatedly. Read it with emphasis and feeling. Pause and think about what you just read. Pray over what you have read. Ask the Holy Spirit to make your mind receptive to the word of God. Pay close attention to words. Never miss the significant ones. Use your dictionary if you do not know what it means. Trace the meaning of the key words with the marginal references and your concordance. Talk the words through; think the words through. If you are extroverted talk out loud to yourself. Compare one word with another. Look it up in another place in the Scriptures so you can begin to see the meaning of the passage. Go back and read the passage over and over and over until the focus of your concentration is upon Christ and the Scriptures. Become so familiar with the passage you can see it in your mind's eye. Use your sanctified imagination and make Jesus Christ preeminent in your mind and heart. Don't forget to yield to Him and do what you know is the right thing to do.

We need to meditate often on the meaning of His death and resurrection for us.

We need to get into His Word daily and find Christ in it. Check out the [Christ in the Old Testament](#) series on this website which are short studies on the person and work of Christ. The daily devotional series [Selah](#)

is also good starters.

Develop an intimate, personal, communication with Jesus on a daily basis. Learn to talk to him through out the day. Draw from His person by abiding in Him.

The very life I live now I live by faith in Christ. It is His life in me. The apostle Paul wrote, I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me (Galatians 2:20). Paul was feasting on Christ.

How is your spiritual appetite? Do you find yourself grumbling and complaining or feasting on Christ? Do you find yourself grumbling in a spiritual desert of your own making? To what extent are you feeding on Christ? We eat His flesh and drink His blood by meditating on Him, by dwelling on His Word, and by resting our faith on Him.

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

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Series: Life of Jesus

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