

Sermon Follow-up | March 29, 2020

4 Gospels — John: The Bread of Life

Focus Passage: John 6:22–36

Additional Context: John 6:1-71

Other Passages Referenced: Exodus 3; Isaiah 55:1–3

Sermon Recap: Throughout John’s Gospel, Jesus uses the Greek word *zoe* in speaking of giving life to people. There is another Greek word, *bios*, that refers to the existence of biological life. In the Gospel of John, Jesus always speaks about *zoe* life—the real authentic and abundant life He came to give. In saying, “I am the bread of life,” Jesus was saying, “I am the bread of real living that moves people from mere existence to life.” Jesus is the key that moves people from existence to true life as God intended it. Both the “I am” and the “bread of life” phrases would have reminded the original Jewish readers of God delivering His people from slavery in Egypt in the Book of Exodus. There, the LORD introduced Himself by His special name, “I Am”, and also provided *manna*—bread from heaven—and water from a rock to sustain His people. Jesus warns people not to work for food that perishes but to do the work of God which leads to real and eternal life. That work is to believe the One whom God has sent (John 6:29). After seeing Jesus and hearing Him clearly declare that He was the bread of life that came from heaven, some still did not believe (John 6:36). As created image-bearers of God, every human being was created for and is hardwired to yearn for *zoe* life. Jesus came from heaven to give that life to those who receive and abide in Him.

Introductory Comments

- “Life”—*zoe*—is a dominant theme in the Gospel of John. The English word “life” translates “*zoe*” 47 times in 39 verses in the ESV. The Greek word “*bios*” denotes the life of a living organism. The sermon referred to *bios* as “existence” in comparison to authentic “life”. John does not use the word *bios*, but repeatedly speaks of *zoe* life that goes beyond mere existence. That *zoe* life is found in the person of Jesus Himself. In addition to Jesus being the “bread of life” in John 6, here are a few other examples to consider:
 - John 1:4 – “In him was **life**, and the **life** was the light of men.”
 - John 10:10 – “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have **life** and have it abundantly.
 - John 11:25 – “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the **life**. Whoever believes in me, though he die yet shall he live.’”
 - John 14:6 – “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the **life**. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”
- Last week we noted that John’s Gospel is structured around 7 signs and 7 “I am” statements of Jesus. The sermon passage touches on the first “I am” statement in which Jesus declares, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35, 41, 48, & 51). During the week, you may want to look at the other 6 “I am” statements in their contexts—“Light of the world” (John 8:12), “Door of the sheep” (John 10:7–9), “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25), “the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14), “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6), and “the true vine” (John 15:1, 5).
- We’re going to connect a few dots to show how God’s deliverance of His people through Moses and the Exodus was pointing to Jesus who would deliver His people from sin and into the Kingdom of God. One subtle point to note is the parallel between the people grumbling against Moses in Exodus 16:1–4 and the people grumbling against Jesus in John 6:41, 43.
- As the pastor mentioned in the sermon, the pastoral staff are receiving calls for pastoral care 24:7. If you or someone you know needs pastoral care, do not hesitate to call.

Group Gathering Interaction

Connect: Making Honest Connections with One Another (Pick one)

1. Please share briefly one of the following:
 - a. What was a highlight from your week?

- b. What has been hard for you this week?
- c. What has God been saying to you through His word, the sermon, or other people?

Grow: *Listening to and Learning from God's Word*

Read John 6:22–36

1. In John 6:30–31, some people asked Jesus, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? 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.’” Considering that Jesus had fed some of these same people the day before in the miraculous feeding of more than 5,000 with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, why would they be asking for a sign in order to believe? John clearly called the miraculous feeding a sign in John 6:14, and Jesus refers to signs they had already seen in John 6:26.

READ John 6:37–51

2. What comparisons can we make between the manna, as bread from heaven God sent to the Israelites in the wilderness, and Jesus as the bread from heaven that brings *zoe* and eternal life?
3. How many times do we read Jesus saying He is “the bread that came down from heaven?” How did his original hearers respond to those claims? ... Looking back from our perspective, how are those claims significant to our faith?

Serve: *Serving King Jesus and Others, By Living Out and Letting Others Know God's Word*

1. Do you find yourself asking God for signs in order to believe? What signs can you go back to that God has already given that can reinforce your faith?
2. The truth that, “you could lose all of this at any moment” has been driven home in a tangible way in recent weeks. Jesus warned of this reality in saying, “Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you” (John 6:27), and again, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt 6:19–21). How is your heart dealing with the uncertainty of potential losses?
3. In John 6:35, Jesus says, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.” Coming to Jesus and believing in Jesus are related. However, the sermon noted that believing results after drawing near to Jesus. We do not have to believe before we come, but we come and then believe. At this time, many people are more open to words of hope and life from the Bible than at other times when life is going smoothly. Will you make a list of friends and family, who to your knowledge are not pursuing a relationship with Jesus and His Church, and then pray for them? Will you send them a link to our online worship services, devotionals, or another resource you think might encourage them to come near and believe in Jesus?
4. What creative ideas can your group come up with that might keep us together and encourage one another in this season of social distancing?

Further Resources

- Bible Project –
 - John Part 2 – <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/Series/181310?episode=47>
- Illustrations and quotes from the sermon can be found on the “Sermon Slides” link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org