

Bible Study

Gods Word in Focus



Week Twelve
Gospel of John
John 6:22-40

“Work the works of God“

John 6:22-29

What do you most hunger for – health, wealth, love, truth, life? Jesus addressed this issue with those who sought him after the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. Where they simply hungry for things which satisfy the body or for that which satisfies the heart and soul?

Jesus echoes the question posed by the prophet Isaiah: *“Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy” (Isaiah 55:2)?* There are two kinds of hunger -- physical and spiritual. Only God can satisfy the spiritual hunger in our heart and soul -- the hunger for truth, for life, and for love. Jesus also spoke about the *works of God* and what we must do to be doing the *works of God*, namely to *believe in God's Son whom he has sent into the world.*

"Lord, give us this bread always"

John 6:30-34

Do you hunger for the *bread of life*? The Jews had always regarded the mana in the wilderness as the *bread of God* (Psalm 78:24, Exodus 16:15). There was a strong Rabbinic belief that when the Messiah came he would give manna from heaven. This was the supreme work of Moses. Now the Jewish leaders were demanding that Jesus produce manna from heaven as proof to his claim to be the Messiah. Jesus responds by telling them that it was not Moses who gave the manna, but God. And the manna given to Moses and the people was not the real bread from heaven, but only a symbol of the bread to come.

Jesus then makes the claim which only God can make: *I am the bread of life*. The bread which Jesus offers is none else than the very life of God. This is the true bread which can truly satisfy the hunger in our hearts. The manna from heaven prefigured the superabundance of the unique bread of the Eucharist or Lord's Supper which Jesus gave to his disciples on the eve of his sacrifice. The manna in the wilderness sustained the Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land. It could not produce eternal life for the Israelites. The bread which Jesus offers his disciples sustains us not only on our journey to the heavenly paradise, it gives us the abundant supernatural life of God which sustains us both now and for all eternity.

“The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out”

John 6:35-40

Why did Jesus call himself *the bread of life*? The Jews understood that God promised them manna from heaven to sustain them on their journey to the promised land. Bread is the very staple of life. We could not live without food for very long. Bread sustains us.

But what is *life*? Jesus clearly meant something more than mere physical existence. The life Jesus refers to is connected with God, the author of life. Real life is a relationship with the living God, a relationship of trust, love, obedience. This is what Jesus makes possible for us -- a loving relationship with the God who created us for love with Him. Apart from Jesus no one can enter that kind of life and relationship.

Are you satisfied with mere physical existence or do you hunger for real life? Jesus makes three claims here. First he offers himself as spiritual food which produces the very life of God within us. Second, he promises unbroken friendship and freedom from the fear of being forsaken or cut off from God. Third, he offers us the hope of sharing in his resurrection.