

3.4

THE BREAD OF LIFE

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus is the true
Bread of Life.

TRUTH FOR MY LIFE

I will never turn from
Jesus.



FOCUS VERSES: John 6:68-69

⁶⁸ Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

⁶⁹ And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

LESSON TEXT: John 6:25-69



BIBLICAL OVERVIEW

Lesson Text: John 6:25–69

Jesus' statement "I am the bread of life" is the first of seven "I AM" sayings in John's Gospel. Later Jesus would proclaim: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5). "I am the door" (John 10:7, 9). "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11, 14). "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25). "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). "I am the true vine" (John 15:1, 5).

All these statements served a common purpose. First, they were a revelation of Jesus' power, authority, and deity by directly identifying Him as Jehovah of the Old Testament. When God revealed His name to Moses, God said: "I AM THAT I AM . . . say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you" (Exodus 3:14). Jesus was the I AM incarnate in human form. Second, these statements demonstrated Jesus was the only source of salvation and eternal life. All the "I AM" statements contain the message of Christ's priority. No one will ever achieve salvation without Christ.

The crowd in John 6 did not understand this message. They did not want life transformation and commitment to Christ. They wanted to see signs and receive blessings, whether healing or free food. Their focus was selfish and temporal. After one of the most profound miracles in Scripture, well over five thousand individuals abandoned Jesus, leaving only twelve disciples at His side.

No wonder Jesus asked if the disciples would leave as well. Peter, at least, had received a revelation of Christ's deity and the eternal life He offered. In verse 68 Peter questioned, "To whom shall we go?" demonstrating he partially understood Christ's meaning. No one or nothing else in the universe could offer what Christ was offering that day and continues to offer today. The same question could be posed to believers today. Where else could you go to receive the eternal life Christ offers? The implied answer is simple: nowhere.

JESUS' STATEMENT "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE" IS THE FIRST OF SEVEN "I AM" SAYINGS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL.

DAY 1

John 6:26-30

²⁶ Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

²⁷ Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

²⁸ Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

³⁰ They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

Biblical Insight

Jesus, being able to see the crowd's intentions, immediately perceived their motivations were impure. The crowd was interested primarily in what they could receive, such as free food. Humorously, the onlookers asked for another sign so Jesus could prove who He was, as if the miraculous healing of a man with a disability (John 5:1-15), feeding five thousand (John 6:1-15), and being transported miraculously across a sea (John 6:21-24) were not enough.

Daily Devotion

In 2001, Glen and Gloria Sims entered the H&R Block Million Dollar Giveaway. When an H&R Block representative called with the good news they had won, the Sims hung up the phone, believing the call was a prank. Additional attempts by phone and mail failed to convince them they were winners. The Sims believed they were victims of a scam. As the deadline to accept the million-dollar prize was approaching, H&R Block's final attempt to contact the Sims was successful. They finally claimed their prize.

A million-dollar prize was waiting for the Sims to claim, but they were too skeptical to believe the evidence. Just as skepticism kept the onlookers in John 6 from understanding who Jesus was, skepticism and doubt hinder many today from experiencing the gift of the Holy Ghost, miracles, and deliverance. We must not allow skepticism to keep us from experiencing what God has for us.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 2

John 6:34-35, 41-42

³⁴ Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

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⁴¹ The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

⁴² And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

Biblical Insight

In John 6:34, the request for the bread of which Jesus spoke parallels the Samaritan woman's request for water in John 4. In both situations the askers did not fully understand the significance of what they were asking for (*Apostolic Study Bible*, note for John 6:34). However, unlike the Samaritan woman, the crowd in John 6 became displeased with Jesus' answer and began attempting to discredit Him by murmuring about the commonality of Mary and Joseph, Jesus' earthly parents.

Daily Devotion

One day while Alex and Bob were talking, Alex mentioned an overwhelming consensus in the scientific community regarding a natural phenomenon. Bob immediately responded, "You do not have a Ph.D., so you are not correct." This is an example of credentials fallacy. Credentials fallacy occurs when a person has issues with a premise, claim, or teaching. Instead of sharing their disbelief or challenging the content, they attack the person by pointing to their lack of formal credentials, qualifications, or achievements.

People and spiritual darkness attempt to hinder us from sharing our testimonies by convincing us we do not have the credentials, qualifications, or training to talk about Jesus. Has Jesus saved you, delivered you, healed you, filled you with the Holy Ghost, provided for you, or protected you? If He has done even one of these for you, then you have the credentials to share your testimony.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 3

John 6:43, 49-51

⁴³ Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

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⁴⁹ Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

⁵⁰ This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Biblical Insight

Like His statement in John 6:27, Jesus once again tried to highlight the perishability of food and the need to seek eternal things. The Jews heralded their forefathers who were sustained in the wilderness by manna, but they still eventually died. From a historical perspective, it seems ironic the Jews would invoke the provision of manna in Exodus 16 as a positive thing. The Old Testament Israelites were fed with manna by God's miraculous provision, but they still died in the wilderness outside of the Promised Land because of their unbelief (Numbers 14:29; Hebrews 3:17).

Daily Devotion

In ancient days, government officials and merchants used a small black tablet of slate or lyddite to determine the value and purity of metals. They would rub gold or silver along the stone's surface and note the purity of the metal by the color it left behind. This black stone came to be known as a touchstone. The term is metaphorically used today to refer to the standard by which something is judged.

We are encouraged to prioritize the kingdom of God over earthly things. Sometimes we prioritize the wrong things. Jesus' command to seek the kingdom of God first must become a touchstone when determining our priorities in life.

Take time to examine the tasks you do on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. How many are eternity-focused? How many invest in the kingdom of God?

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 4

John 6:53-57

⁵³ Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

⁵⁴ Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁵⁵ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

⁵⁶ He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

⁵⁷ As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

Biblical Insight

Jesus' commandment for them to eat His flesh and drink His blood must have been shocking and revolting to those listening. However, the crowd's negative response once again demonstrated their lack of understanding. Jesus was not endorsing cannibalism. Instead, He was offering Himself as the only sustenance that leads to eternal life and salvation, something that will ultimately taste sweeter than the best bread and wine this world can offer.

Daily Devotion

George Beverly Shea, a minister's son, grew up singing in his local church and often sang in other churches and on Christian radio programs. At the age of twenty-three, George came to a crossroads in his life. He could either move to New York City for a secular singing position with a great salary, or he could continue singing in churches and on Christian radio programs. Shea prayed long and hard about his options, but he felt like God was silent.

One day George read the poem, "I'd Rather Have Jesus" by Rhea F. Miller. The poem moved him to tears as he realized the crossroads he was facing was between worldwide fame or Jesus. George then sat at the piano and composed the music for the now popular hymn by the same name. George chose Jesus.

Throughout the Gospels, many people did not choose Jesus. Do you choose Jesus over anything?

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 5

John 6:60, 66–69

⁶⁰ Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

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⁶⁶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

⁶⁷ Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

⁶⁸ Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

⁶⁹ And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Biblical Insight

Unsurprisingly, the fickle crowd who feasted on bread and fish at the beginning of John 6 abandoned Jesus before the end of the chapter. Only twelve were left, but their response sharply contrasted the capricious crowd. Peter, who often had spiritual insight before others did, spoke out in faith and identified Christ as who He truly was. However, Peter clearly did not speak for all the disciples, for Judas was still among them.

Daily Devotion

On a small campus, an organic chemistry professor was known for being rude, cold, and unbending. His teaching style was dry. His tests were difficult for the graduate students. Yet he always encouraged his students to come to his office for help. When they did, he would encourage them not to drop his course but to persevere. His students were unaware that if they visited him during office hours asking for help and they persevered, he would automatically grant them a passing grade. Many students dropped the course and abandoned their dreams because they did not listen and obey the professor.

Throughout Jesus' ministry, many disciples did not remain. They lost the opportunity to learn more from the Master Rabbi. What a loss!

Reflect on times in your life when you wanted to “drop out” of a lesson Jesus was teaching you. What did you learn by persevering?

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*
