

**DIVINE**  
"Jesus is..."  
December 6, 2015

*"Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you... They answered, "Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? ... The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so the world may live, is my flesh." Then the people began arguing with each other about what he meant. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" they asked. So Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you."*

*"At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him. Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, "Are you also going to leave?" Simon Peter replied, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God." Then Jesus said, "I chose the twelve of you, but one is a devil." He was speaking of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, one of the Twelve, who would later betray him."*

John 6:26-70 (NLT)

**Lessons from Jesus' Teaching:**

1. Jesus puts Himself above every person on earth and every earthly teaching.
2. Jesus is looking for committed followers, not casual dabblers.

*"Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do?"*

John 6:30 (NLT)

The insidious nature of living to satisfy desire:  
It makes us consumers more than enjoyers!

*"I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs."*

John 6:26 (NLT)

3. Jesus knew that not everybody would be convinced.

*"At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him."* John 6:66 (NLT)

*“Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”* John 6:68-69 (NLT)

*“I chose the twelve of you, but one is a devil.’ He was speaking of Judas.”* John 6:70-71 (NLT)

We were created with a God shaped vacuum inside us,  
and that vacuum will demand to be filled with something.

But there's a part of us that can never be complete without Jesus,  
who really is the bread of life.

**Leadership Tip!**

A big challenge for many group facilitators is managing silence. When you pose a question to your LIFE Group, do you give folks time to respond? Or do you jump in and ask more questions or even offer an answer yourself? Don't be worried if you ask a question and you hear "crickets." The span of silence is rarely as long as you imagine, and you will be demonstrating to your group that you value their input and want all to participate in the discussions.

***Jesus is ... The Bread of Life*****STARTER QUESTION:**

**What is your favorite meal to eat on a special occasion?**

**MAIN IDEA:**

This series will reveal to us what Jesus said about Himself, often by using word pictures to help make difficult ideas easier for our simple minds to grasp! Today we start with a basic need we all can relate to – eating. But Jesus isn't speaking about filling our tummies with Thanksgiving turkey or Christmas ham. We were created with a God-shaped vacuum inside us, and that vacuum will demand to be filled with something. There's a part of us that can never be complete without Jesus, who really is the Bread of Life.

**Have you ever been around a person who always demands attention or seems to be full of himself? How do normally you react to that?**

We don't think of Jesus as arrogant or boastful, but look again at what he says (**have someone read this passage out loud**):

**John 6:33, 51 (NLT)**

**The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and this bread, which I will offer so the world may live, is my flesh.**

Jesus is unashamedly declaring to all the people how great he is: *I came down from heaven...I gave life to the world...I offer eternal life to anyone who will take it.* But he isn't saying these things to puff himself up or to try and impress people. He is stating simple facts. When you are God, you're in the position to do that! Jesus rightfully puts Himself above every person on earth and every earthly teaching (and religious system or philosophy).

**John 6:63 (NLT)**

**So Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you."**

That kind of boldness offended the religious leaders of the day, and it isn't "politically correct" today either. Jesus wants us to love one another, and we aren't asked to go out and pick fights with those who disagree with His teachings. But He does challenge us to do more than COEXIST (think of the bumper sticker with all the religious symbols that spell out those letters).

**What are ways we can lovingly show that same boldness to others, that following Jesus is the only way to ultimately feel fulfilled?**

Sometimes we use our best efforts to try and point someone to Jesus, and we don't notice any change or commitment from that other person. It can be especially tough when we want to share what we have been given with a family member or close friend and nothing seems to matter. We beat ourselves up and say, "Maybe if I tell them this way, or if I give them this book, or..." And what Jesus would tell us is, "Hey look, I performed miracles. And then preached a message that was "full of life and the spirit." And yet people still walked away from me."

**John 6:66 (NLT)**

**At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him.**

If Jesus couldn't make everyone believe, what makes us think we can?

**How do we keep from becoming discouraged and just giving up on trying to share Jesus with others?**

Jesus plainly declared that He is the Bread of Life. In modern times some people shun bread as "bad carbs," but to Jesus' audience at the time bread was an essential part of their daily lives. The difference He points out, though, is that you won't feel hungry again once you have taken Bread of Life. What a gift for the taking!

But even committed Christ-followers can fall into a trap of going after something (or someone) we want badly, only to discover it doesn't make us as happy and fulfilled as we expected.

**If you're honest with yourself, can you identify something in your life that you keep chasing that doesn't satisfy you as expected?** (Don't force people to share out loud...but if someone wants to, be sensitive and respectful). **What next step will you take to change that pattern?**

## **FINAL THOUGHTS:**

The fact that you're in a LIFE Group demonstrates that you're willing to do more than just "dabble" at trying to understand who Jesus is. But given the culture we live in, we still need to be on guard against developing a consumer mentality in our lives. Jesus wants us to be "all in" with Him, and that means we can't just seek out things that make us feel good at the time but don't really fill that God-shaped void inside of us. We need the Bread of Life.

## **FAMILY FOCUS:** Jesus Is The Bread Of Life

**Text:** John 6:22-40

### **Items Needed:**

- Marked Bible for this passage. Prepare the copy in advance by highlighting the significant points to emphasize. Underlining words or ideas that will need additional explanation. I typically make small notes in the margin.
- Clue Phrases: Write the underlined words from the statements above on single sheets of paper. Eternal life, bread, believes in Jesus
- Paper and drawing/coloring supplies. The children will have an opportunity to illustrate ideas taught in the lesson. You will need enough supplies for every child to have a piece of paper and drawing/coloring supplies. To add variety you can have the children paint or use other methods to illustrate the ideas.

**Explanation:** This story builds from the lesson where Jesus fed the five thousand. The crowds begin to follow Jesus looking for more bread, so the Savior uses this as a teaching moment. He explains that bread alone will not satisfy their deepest need. Rather, they can have eternal life by believing in Him.

### **Hook**

Ask the learners, "Have you ever gone without eating for a whole day?" Explain that your body begins to get weak if you don't get food. Food is one of our basic needs – we all must eat to live.

Last week we learned how Jesus fed 5,000 families. He met their basic need for food. Today we are going to learn how Jesus can give us something we need more than food.

### **Book**

*Active Listening:* Introduce the children to the three clue phrases you've written on pieces of paper. If possible display these on the wall or on a marker board. Ask the children to listen carefully for these phrases as you tell the story.

*Read* (and summarize) John 6:22-40. Be sure to engage the children with good story telling. Key points include:

1. Jesus can give eternal life.
2. Jesus is the bread of life.
3. Everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

*Review:* Remind the children of the three key phrases you've displayed. Read the following statements aloud. Ask for volunteers to raise their hand and match one key phrase with the right statement. Repeat for all three statements.

- Jesus can give \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_ of life.
- Everyone who \_\_\_\_\_ will have eternal life

**Look/Took:**

*Picture It:* Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of the statements. Ask them to draw/color a picture that explains their key statement. After several minutes have volunteers share their illustration with the others. Write the appropriate key statement on each child's project.

*Test / Another Way To Say:* Read the key statements one at a time. Ask the children to think carefully about what those key statements mean. Have volunteers suggest another way to say the same thing with different words.

*Prayer:* Lead the children in a time of prayer. Pray specifically that they will believe in Jesus and his promise of eternal life.