

“Jesus, the Bread of Life”

March 15, 2026

John 6:30-59

I. Introduction

Since we are coming in the middle of an extended story and sermon, it might be good to review what led up to this part of Jesus’ sermon. On the day before this, Jesus and His disciples had gone to the far side of the Sea of Galilee. There Jesus had fed around 15,000 men, women, and children. Then, since the people **”intended to come and make him king by force,”** (John 6:15), Jesus had sent the disciples to Capernaum by boat across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus went up into the mountain by Himself to pray. Then, on the day after they had been fed, the crowd—now augmented by others that had heard about the feeding of the multitude—searched but couldn’t find Jesus. So, they returned to Capernaum, Jesus’ home base, where they found Jesus and His disciples who were talking about Jesus’ walking on the water in the midst of a storm.

In last week’s study, we saw the people ask Jesus how He had gotten to Capernaum, but instead of dealing with physical issues, like having full bellies—Jesus dealt with more important issues—spiritual issues as He told them in John 6:27, **“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”** When **“they asked him, ‘What must we do to do the works God requires!’** Jesus answered, **‘The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.’”** (John 6:28-29)

The Jews understood that Jesus was calling Himself the **“One sent by God”** or the Messiah, but He didn’t fit the pattern they were expecting. They were expecting a warrior-king who would lead them on a second exodus in which the treasury of heaven would be opened and they would once again be fed with **“bread from heaven”**—manna. An early Jewish commentator had written: *“As the first redeemer caused manna to descend . . . so will the latter redeemer cause manna to descend.”* So, with hearts and minds still focused on their physical needs, the crowd sought another miraculous sign from Jesus. If He was truly sent by God; i.e., if He was the Messiah, then let Him prove it by causing manna to fall from heaven. They wanted to **“see it and then they would believe.”**

Jesus began teaching them in the streets where they had found Him, but He soon led them to the synagogue. He tried to lift their minds above a material or physical understanding of His miracle and sermon. He argued that their efforts should not be focused on the loaves and fish, but on the greater food that lasts forever. Jesus replied to their questions by preaching a sermon to them that tried to deepen the people's understanding of the truth. He began by teaching them about the "True Bread from Heaven."

II. Jesus' Sermon

A. The true Bread from Heaven. Rather than worshipping Jesus as Messiah and Savior, the "One sent by God," the people wanted Him to continually give "them bread from heaven to eat." To emphasize the importance of what He had to say about the Bread from Heaven, Jesus began His answer and sermon by saying, "I tell you the truth, or Truly, truly." He then highlighted four misunderstandings about manna. 1) It wasn't Moses that had given them the manna, it was God, "my Father." They needed to take their eyes off of Moses and look to the real Source. 2) God gave manna in the past, but now He was giving "the true bread from heaven." 3) Manna gave physical life, but "the bread of God" gives spiritual life. 4) Finally, unlike the manna, which was given only to Israel, the true bread from heaven "gives life to the world." Jesus had come not just to sustain life, but to give life, eternal life, to Jew and Gentile alike. As Jesus had told Nicodemus back in [John 3:16](#), "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

The conversation had begun with the crowd looking for Jesus and then seeking another "miraculous sign." But after listening to Jesus talk about the "true bread from heaven," the source of Moses' manna, they decided that this is what they wanted so they said, "Sir, from now on give us this bread."

The crowd wasn't looking for salvation; they wanted the bread so that they wouldn't have to worry about food anymore. As [1 Corinthians 2:14](#) points out, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." This lack of understanding by the unspiritual Jews led to Jesus' second point of His sermon as He plainly say, "I am the bread of life."

B. “I am the bread of life.” The people didn’t need to wait for manna from heaven; Jesus was the Bread of Life—He brought salvation/eternal life—and He was already there. He said, **“He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”** These were the same things He had told the Samaritan woman at the well. In both cases, He was speaking spiritually. To come to Jesus is to forsake the old life of sin and rebellion, to reject sin and submit to Jesus as Lord. Then the disquiet, confusion, and worry about life after death will be gone. Believing is not merely an intellectual thing, giving mental consent to some doctrine. To believe in Christ is to trust completely in Him as the Messiah and Son of God and to acknowledge that salvation—eternal life—comes only through faith in Him. As Peter told the Sanhedrin in **Acts 4:12**, **“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”** To come to Christ and believe in Him means to receive Him inside, just as one receives food and drink.

Jesus then rebuked the crowd for their unbelief. Although they had seen Him and His miracles, they failed to grasp the significance of the miracles, and they missed the point of His teachings. The miracles they had seen merely whetted their appetites for more miracles. They were intrigued by what Jesus could do to ease the difficulties of life, but they were unwilling to believe in Him as their Messiah and Lord. Jesus would tell the disciples in **John 6:63**, **“The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”** But the people couldn’t get their minds out of the earthly mindset and what they could get from Jesus.

Jesus went on to explain that salvation involved both divine sovereignty and human responsibility, **“All the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.”** Jesus said that the Father gives men and women to the Son, but these men and women must come to Him, that is, believe on Him. This is election or predestination and free-will in the same verse. From our limited human perspective, we cannot see how divine sovereignty and human responsibility can work together, but from God’s perspective, there is no conflict. And that’s where we have to leave it in faith and trust in Him! Jesus went on to assure them that nobody who came to Him would ever be lost but would be raised at the last day

as He said, “For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

With this, the crowd went from murmuring about what Jesus said to grumbling. They recognized that Jesus was claiming to be God. But they knew that He came from the despised town of Nazareth; they thought they knew Jesus’ mother and father. None of this gave Him the ability—the right—to call Himself the “Son of God.” But if they had done any searching at all, they would have found out that what they assumed about Him wasn’t true.

Jesus met their unbelief and doubts head-on. He basically called on them to soften their hardened hearts as He repeated the message again. The Father draws the sinner by His Word; it was then and still is today through the teaching of the Word that God draws people to the Savior. **Turn to Romans 10:13-15.** The crowd wanted to see something, but their real need was to learn something, and they refused to “hear” the Word of God. It is by the Word that one “sees” God and in faith comes to Christ and trusts in Him—**Romans 10:17** says, “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”

When Jesus called Himself “the Living Bread,” He wasn’t claiming to be exactly like the manna. He was claiming to be greater. The Jews who ate their daily manna in the wilderness eventually died, but when someone receives Jesus Christ within, that person will live forever. Living Bread is greater than manna.

Jesus brought His message to a close by saying in **verse 51**: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” As He had been throughout His sermon, Jesus was talking spiritually. There are many similarities between physical food and spiritual food. 1) Just as food is useless unless it is eaten, so also spiritual truth does no good until it is accepted. **Hebrews 4:2** says, “For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.” 2) The food, physical or spiritual that a person eats becomes part of him. So, by faith, Jesus becomes part of those who come to Him. **Turn to Galatians 2:20.** 3) Just as each

person must eat his own food, each person must decide what to do with Jesus. Psalm 49:7 says, “No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him.”

Back in John 6:51 Jesus said that the Son of God will give Himself as a sacrifice “for the life of the world.” Jesus came to be the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world—1 John 2:2 says, “He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

Those listening just didn’t get. “Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves. ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’” When Jesus spoke of eating His flesh, He wasn’t talking about cannibalism. Obviously, He was giving a physical illustration of a spiritual truth, but once again the blind, hard-hearted Jews refused to understand what He was talking about, so they began to “argue sharply among themselves.” This led to the third part of Jesus’ sermon--“The Flesh and Blood of the Son of Man.”

C. The Flesh and Blood of the Son of Man Perhaps to get them to see that He was talking of spiritual truths; Jesus continued His talk about eating His flesh and added the shocking concept of drinking His blood. Basically, Jesus emphasized in more graphic detail that just as you take food and drink into your body and it becomes a part of you, so you must receive the Son of God, Jesus, within your innermost being so that He can give you eternal life and become part of your spiritual life.

Some commentators feel that Jesus was talking about the Lord’s Supper in these verses and that when one celebrates the Lord’s Table; he is eating Jesus’ flesh and drinking His blood. But that doesn’t make a lot of sense. First, why would He talk to hostile unbelievers about the Lord’s Supper? The Lord’s Supper is a memorial for believers. Turn to 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial for believers. Second, the Lord’s Supper didn’t even exist yet. Third, as the verbs translated “eat” and “drink” are written in the Greek, they signify a once-for-all-action—i.e., something done once not over and over like the Lord’s Supper. Fourth, when He does talk about the Lord’s Table, Jesus used the word “body” not “flesh” (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24).

Jesus concluded His sermon by making 4 promises to those who eat His flesh and drink His blood.

1) Actually, the first promise is a negative one: “unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His

blood, you have no life in you.” Those who don’t eat (i.e., those who reject Jesus) have no life in themselves; they won’t have eternal life. To reject Jesus means to reject eternal life. 2) “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.” Those who do eat His flesh and drink His blood have eternal life the instant they believe. As Acts 16:31 says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved—you and your household.” 3) Christ will raise up on the last day all who eat His flesh and drink His blood. He will raise up those who trust in Him in the last days. 4) The fourth promise is that of union with Him. He said, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.” In John 14:20 Jesus told His disciples, “On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.”

III. Conclusion

There are several things we can learn from these verses. 1) First, Jesus made it clear who He is. There is nothing hidden or obtuse. Jesus is the Son of God who came from heaven to give His life for the world. 2) Second, Jesus is the only source of eternal life. Later in John 14:6 He will say, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” 3) Third, to have this life—eternal life, Jesus has to be taken within. God’s gift of eternal life has to be acted on—it must be accepted. In John 3:18 Jesus said, “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.” This is what it means to eat His flesh and drink His blood. That’s what Paul meant in Romans 10:9 “if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

There is a saying “*You are what you eat*” and it applies here in the spiritual realm as well. What does your life say about what is inside you—inside your heart? Turn to Galatians 5:19-25. If you claim to be a child of God—does your life show it? What do others see in your actions? Are you in Jesus Christ and is He in you? As we are reminded by the banners and empty crosses in the sanctuary, Jesus willingly died as a sacrifice for you and then rose from the dead 3 days later so that all who believe on Him will have eternal life. Is He your Lord and Savior? If He is, are you carrying out His Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) to go into the world and make disciples? “How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?”