

## ***"The bread of life"***

Getting to know Jesus more accurately in 2015, by studying his words about himself. [*I am...*]

[**John 6:1-15** Feeding "the 5,000"] **John 6:33-35** "...the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "**I am the bread of life**; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

**THE FIRST "I AM"** → "In context."

Respect and love?

SPOKEN IN AN ARGUMENT. ABOUT WHO / WHAT HE WAS.

The **CONTEXT** shows HIS OPPONENTS WERE GREATLY OFFENDED. THEY HAD THEIR (2) REASONS.

**John 5:16-18** And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." **This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him**, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

THEIR OFFENSE JUST KEPT BUILDING.

**John 5:39** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life

AND BUILDING...

**John 5:45-47** Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

HE WAS PUTTING HIS LIFE ON THE LINE.

***BUT THEIR LIVES WERE ON THE LINE, TOO!***

RETHINKING THE FIRST "I AM..." STATEMENT:

**John 6:31-33** So they said to him, "... **Our fathers** ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but **my Father** gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

IN THIS CONTEXT: "Sir, give us this bread always." (Sarcastically? At least NOT respectfully!)

JESUS RESPONDS: "**I am the bread of life...**"

HIS OPPONENTS *EVEN MORE* OFFENDED. **John 6:41** So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "**I am the bread that came down from heaven.**" ...

THEN JESUS OFFENDED THEM EVEN MORE!

**John 6:47-51** "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. **I am the bread of life.** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. **I am the living bread** that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

**Q.** WHY THIS ARGUMENT? WHY WAS JESUS INTENTIONALLY SO OFFENSIVE?  
**A.** To get their attention. To keep them from ignoring him.  
 (As if "everything" depended on the relationship to him!) WHICH IS DOES!

### **TWO THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT JESUS AS "THE BREAD"**

1. "Bread" satisfies "hunger."

**John 6:35** Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

"Hunger" / "Thirst" in the Psalms:

**Psalms 42:1-3** As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they [his tears?] say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

"Hunger" / "Thirst" in the Sermon on the Mount  
 righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

**Matthew 5:6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for

**Q. Can't you see that it might be that -- ALL YOUR LIFE -- you've had a hunger (or a thirst) for something that nothing has ever satisfied?**

**So what** --- if you had a rich uncle, and as a special gift, on the occasion of a “milestone birthday,” he gives you a spectacular gift: perhaps a **1962 Ferrari 250 GTO**, recently purchased for \$38,000,000.

**“So what?”** *Don’t you remember how short-lived was the thrill of getting your first bicycle?*



Q. Can you see that *IN REAL LIFE* every single “spectacular gift” fails to satisfy, even if at first you thought it would?



What was once written by **Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)**

*There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.*



What was once written by **Jim Elliott: (1927-1956)**

*“I walked out to the hill just now. It is exalting, delicious, to stand embraced by the shadows of a friendly tree with the wind tugging at your coattail and the heavens hailing your heart, to gaze and glory and give oneself again to God – what more could a man ask? Oh, the fullness, pleasure, sheer excitement of knowing God on earth!”*

**Q:** *Why is this idea so hard for us to grasp? → We can blame it on “the world, the flesh and the devil.”*

What was once said by Jesus: **John 10:10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

2. **“Bread” sustains “life.”**

**John 6:47-51** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has **eternal life**. **I am the bread of life**. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and **not die**. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will **live forever...** NOT just **abundant life** but **eternal life**. NOT **just** eternal life but abundant life!

## **TWO THINGS TO DO ABOUT JESUS AS “THE BREAD”**

1. Look to Jesus to satisfy your most significant hunger.

**John 6:35** Jesus said to them, “**I am the bread of life**; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. It starts with a taste. Eating begins with tasting.

Tasting. **Psalms 34:8** **Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!** And then chewing. **Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!**

And then swallowing. **1 Peter 2:1-3** So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—**if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.** So if you haven’t yet, you should begin to believe in Jesus.

Beginning is only the beginning! We misunderstand “*believing in Jesus*” if we think of it as a one-time experience. **It begins with a one-time experience.** Eating food once doesn’t keep a person alive, so believing in Jesus requires a *constant sort of “receiving”* --- a constant sort of “feeding.”

So we must begin to look to Jesus AND continue to look to Jesus. A life-time commitment

2. Go to Jesus as if your life depends on it.

**John 6:51** I am the living bread that came down from heaven. **If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.** And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. NOT just **abundant life** but **eternal life**. NOT **just** eternal life but abundant life! → Whatever it costs you.

[**John 1:12**] → “**RECEIVING**” Christ means “**BELIEVING**” Christ

[**John 6:35**] → “**COMING**” to Christ means “**BELIEVING Christ**” which is what is meant by “**FEEDING ON Christ**” and “**FEEDING on Christ’s flesh.**”

**John 6:55-58** ... my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. **Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.** As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. **Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”** AND SO TO “**COMMUNION**”

**NEXT SUNDAY:** January 25, 2015. **John 8:12** . “*The light of the world.*” (Jude St. John)

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. Read again the references to “manna” that are found in **John 6:31-33,49**.
2. Read the account of God’s provision of “*bread from heaven*” [or “*manna*” (which in Hebrew means, “*What is it?*”) as told in **Exodus 16**.
3. In what ways does the account of God’s provision of “*manna in the wilderness*” resemble God’s provision of Jesus as “*the bread of life*”? e.g. **Exodus 16:21**. The manna needed to be gathered every day [“morning by morning”] In the same way, we need to go repeatedly to Jesus for life and for the satisfaction of our “hunger.”