

The Gospel of John

True and False Disciples (Part 4)

John 6:32-59

INTRODUCTION:

We have gone over a lot of miracles in John 6.

- The feeding of the 5,000 plus women and children with 5 barley loaves and two fish.
- Jesus and Peter walking on water.
- Calming the raging sea.

Jesus had compassion for the sick and those in need. But the real purpose of His miracles was to prove that He was Who He claimed to be. Jesus has performed the miracles and they know that He is at least finding favor with God because, as Nicodemus said, no one can do these things unless God is with Him. The theme for John chapter 6 is the distinction between a true and a false disciple. So now it is time for Jesus to teach them Who He is and what His mission is.

You would think that everyone at this time would be chomping at the bit to hear His words of salvation. But, unfortunately the false disciples were only interested what Jesus had to offer them physically. This is the point where we can choose to hear what Jesus came to tell us about the Kingdom and His righteousness or we, like the false disciples, can reject His message.

You see, our **faith** is not of this world. It is a free gift from God. **Our faith is built on things that are beyond our human experience.** That is why we are told to " **seek first His kingdom and His righteousness**" (Matt. 6:33) and all of our needs will be given to us. We are to believe what Jesus taught us about Himself and His kingdom. We are to "**Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.**" (Col. 3:2).

Hebrews 11:1 tells us that "**Faith is the assurance of things hoped for.**" The things we hope for are the promises of God found in the scriptures. You have complete confidence that the promises we see there will all come true. God never fails to keep His promises.

"**the conviction of things not seen**" Not only does God keep His promises, but every word that we find in the scriptures are inspired by Him. We believe because of the overwhelming evidence that the scriptures have to be from God. There is no way that multiple writers over a long period of time could ever come up with such a consistent and unified message. So we are convinced that the teachings concerning those things that we have not personally seen or experienced are positively true. It is not a **blind** faith.

You see that is the problem with false disciples. They will only concern themselves of earthly things.

This morning you are going to hear a PERFECT sermon!

That is pretty bold of me, isn't it? The passage of scripture that we are going to read this morning from **John 6:32-59** is a great sermon from Jesus Himself! That is why I can say that you will hear a **perfect sermon** as we read our passage of scripture.

All Stand and Read Scripture.

John 6:32-59 (NASB)

³² Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.” ³⁴ Then they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.”

³⁵ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”

⁴¹ Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.” ⁴² They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’” ⁴³ Jesus answered and said to them, “Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

⁵² Then the Jews *began* to argue with one another, saying, “How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?” ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.”

⁵⁹ These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Prayer

You probably noticed a lot of repetition in Jesus' sermon as well as a lot of symbolism or metaphors. Our minds have not experienced the spiritual so Jesus used symbolism to

give clarity to that spiritual truth. Then he will repeat the spiritual truth in a different way to ensure that true disciples, through the Holy Spirit, will understand.

Jesus referred to Himself as "The Bread of Life". We know that He did not appear on this earth in the form of a loaf of bread with two legs and two arms. We know that He is using symbolism.

BODY:

I. I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE.

John 6:32-34 (NASB)

³² Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." ³⁴ Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread."

This sermon to the Jewish people in the synagogue at Capernaum would have been very shocking to them. The most compelling statement around which all of this is built is the repeated statement, "**I am the Bread of life**".

This is going to be more like a Bible study than a sermon. I can't preach a sermon on a sermon. This **is** a sermon. I can't make metaphors on metaphors. **So let's jump in!**

To say that He is bread is a way to compare Jesus to physical food. Physical loaves of bread are a nourishing food that gives life and sustenance. Jesus used the word "bread" to refer to physical food when He said,

Matthew 4:4b (NASB)

...**"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"**

Bread as used here, then, was simply a word that encompassed all nutritious food. Jesus is saying that, "You have to eat physical food in order to exist in this world, but **you will eventually die**, just as the Israelites did when they ate the manna in the wilderness. But I am your spiritual food. **Those who eat of my food will never die.**"

You notice that God is the One who supplies this food and it comes from the scriptures. In order for us to eat of the Bread of Life, we must have a craving for it just as we do when we are hungry for our physical food.

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. (Romans 10:17).

One of the things you will notice about this bread is that it is preexistent. Look for the phrase, "**came down out of heaven.**" You will find it, for example, in **verse 32** at the very beginning of the message. "**Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven**"

Verse 33, "For the bread of God is that which comes down **out of heaven**," **Verse 38**, "For I have come **down from heaven**," You also see it in **Verses 50, 51, and 58**. Now, he switches from the metaphor, "the bread has come down", and applies it to Himself and says in **Verse 41** "Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "**I** am the bread that came **down out of heaven.**"

The Jews fully understood what He was telling them because they grumbled over His claim that He was the bread that came down out of heaven.” **Verse 42**, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’ They were only willing to acknowledge things that were of this world.

Another reference to His preexistence is found in **Verse 46**, again says, “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. These statements were affirming the incarnation of a preexistent person. He didn’t **come** into existence. He came down out of heaven. Anyone who claims that falsely is a lunatic or a deceiver who would have a hard time convincing people.

II. RECEIVING OUR FAITH FROM GOD.

Now we are going to get into the recipe that Jesus gives on how we receive our faith from God and how Jesus provides spiritual security.

God not only purposed to send His Son, He purposed what His Son would accomplish when He arrived. We see this in **verse 37**. “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me **I will certainly not cast out.**” **Verse 39**, “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me **I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.**

Verse 44. “**No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.**”

And this is consistent with Old Testament prophesy. **Verse 45**, “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me

Now, are you starting to see the plan? God sends the Son, and then God draws certain people to Himself. Then they are given to the Son. The Son **receives the people and protects them**. He will then raise them from the dead to fulfill the Father’s plan. This is crystal clear.

This is not a plan to begin something. It is a plan to **complete** it.

John 10:27-29 (NASB)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and **I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.**

²⁹ My Father, **who has given them to Me**, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.**

WOW! What a promise for our faith to grab hold of!

How did they become God’s? By divine election. He chose them before the foundation of the world, wrote their names in the Lamb’s Book of Life. In time, He draws those who belong to Him by His own sovereign choice. He gives them to Christ. Christ receives them, Christ keeps them, and on the last day there is a physical resurrection with glorified bodies.

III. RECEIVING ETERNAL LIFE.

Why do we want this bread? Well, go back to **verse 33**. “The bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives – ” what? **LIFE!** Life to the world. The Greek word used here is not **bios**, not biological life, but **Zoe**, which is spiritual life.

This bread provides eternal life. It is repeated over and over again in this passage. **Verses 33, 35, 40, 47, 50, 51, and 58.**

How do we get eternal life into these mortal bodies? Verse 56 tells us. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."

This is backed up by other scripture.

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

*²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

Because we come into a real union with Christ, we are one in Christ. And so His eternal life is in us. **These are really incredible promises!**

Do you know that if you are a true disciple, that the eternal life which you possess is the eternal life of Christ in you? **In you!** We have the Holy Spirit living inside us. And as we read in **John 10**, no one is powerful enough to break that union. That’s the security of every believer.

This is what it means to be a Christian. It’s not **following** the teachings of a man. It’s having His life in us. This is the work of God. As **verse 45** says, this doesn’t happen unless you’re taught of God and drawn to Him.

So in **verse 35**, He says, “Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.”

Isn’t that interesting? “He who **comes to Me.**” **Verse 44** just said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him;” and yet here it says, “He who comes to Me.” **So the first requirement is to come.** And fortunately **verse 37** clarifies it, “All that the Father **gives** Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”

The second requirement is found in **verse 40**, “For this is the will of My Father, that **everyone** who **beholds** the Son and **believes** in Him will have eternal life,”

Everyone! There aren’t limitations here. The scriptures tell us that everyone who searches for God **WILL** find him. So even though God has predetermined those who are listed in the Lamb's Book of Life, it does not mean that it is impossible to come to Him. This is open to **All who come!**

Everyone who beholds. What does the word “behold” mean? It’s a Greek verb which basically means to look at intently, to scrutinize, to study, to gaze on. It is a very strong word. **So, what is the human’s responsibility?** Our responsibility is to come to Christ. And when you get there, experience it, gaze at it, scrutinize it, look carefully at it, and see Who Christ is.

Then there is another word in **verse 40**. The will of the Father is that **EVERYONE**

BEHOLDS and, here's the word, "**BELIEVES IN ME**".

You have to come. You have to look. You have to be exposed to the truth, but you must also believe.

CONCLUSION:

The closing invitation of this sermon begins in verse 50 where we go back to the metaphor of the bread. **Verse 50.** "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may **eat** of it and not die.

Believing is eating. Taking in, receiving, appropriating.

Verse 51. "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

This is a powerful metaphor that everybody understands. You have to take Me in. It's not enough to come and listen. It's not enough to admire and get some kind of information. You have to eat. You have to receive Me. That's our responsibility.

What are we to believe? That Jesus is the bread of life. We believe in the person of Christ. We believe in His preexistence and His incarnation (God in human flesh). But let me tell you something quickly, believing in the person of Jesus Christ as the living bread is not enough.

There is something else! You not only have to believe in Him as **living bread**, you have to believe in Him as **dying blood**. **What? Verses 53-56.** "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. 54 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. 56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."

You can believe in Jesus as the preexistent Son of God who came into the world and is the source of eternal life, but unless you **believe in His sacrificial death**, you cannot be saved. **As bread, He nourishes.** **As blood, He cleanses.**

Blood, then, speaks of His death. These Jews had a big, big problem with this issue. The idea that their Messiah would die as a sacrifice was a huge problem for them. They were utterly unwilling to accept that. Even the disciples struggled with that. When Jesus said, "I'm going to die," Peter says, "No, no, Lord" and Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan!"

If you want eternal life, eating is necessary. You can't just come. You can't just admire. You have to eat, which is to **believe** fully. But eating is in response to hunger. So, the people who eat are the people who are hungry! Spiritual hunger is the aching of the heart of one who knows he's empty. That's the work of the Holy Spirit to make the heart hungry. That's where the Father starts to draw. The hungry heart seeks the bread.

If you don't eat physically, you will die. When you eat food it transforms you, and that's what Christ does. **Isn't it great to see life from the Kingdom's point of view!**

The Family of God.