



# Jesus, the Bread of Life - Part 1

## Lesson 10 John 6:25-42

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. We will study Jesus' teaching to those who were seeking Him and understand both the theological and practical implications in our lives.
2. We will study the first of eight "I Am" sayings in the Gospel of John and what this statement reveals about Jesus Christ.

### REVIEW

1. Jesus fed the 5,000 with just two fishes and five loaves.
2. There are crowds of people seeking Jesus after this miracle (6:22-24). In the last part of verse 24, we find an interesting phrase that will serve as the catalyst for our study tonight, *"They also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus."* The rest of John 6 is ultimately about following Jesus Christ as a disciple in the biblical sense of the word (leaving everything, throwing down their nets and following Christ). In the following verses, this *"seeking"* crowd will eventually be weeded out and the true followers of Christ will remain.

### THE BREAD OF LIFE BEING SOUGHT BY THE CROWD (John 6:24-34)

#### A. They were seeking for Jesus - 6:24

**6:24** "When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus."

1. The Greek word that is translated *"seeking for"* in English means "to seek in order to find"<sup>1</sup>
2. They were trying to find Jesus (physically, not spiritually)

#### B. They find Jesus - 6:25

**6:25** "And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?"

1. He is in the synagogue - 6:59
2. Their question, *"Rabbi, when camest thou hither?"*
  - a. *"Rabbi"* is a term of respect that usually precedes an inadequate question or action
  - b. *"When camest thou hither"* or literally "When hast thou come?" We sought you anxiously on the other side of the lake and could not see how you came across."<sup>2</sup>

#### C. They were seeking Jesus amiss - 6:25-34

1. They were seeking Jesus because He fed them, not because of the miracle - 6:26

**6:26** "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."

- a. Jesus begins to expose the hearts of those "would be" followers
- b. They were seeking Jesus because their physical appetites had been filled, yet they missed the spiritual truth behind the signs

<sup>1</sup> Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 272, ref. 2212.

<sup>2</sup> A.T. Robertson, *Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 103.

2. The admonition of Jesus to labor for everlasting food - 6:27

**6:27** "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."

- a. To understand verse 27 we must answer the question, "What does the Son of man give unto those who work for the meat which endures to everlasting life?" Is it the gift of everlasting life or is it food (satisfying work for God)?
- b. Those who argue that everlasting life is given cite these reasons
  - i. The word "*perisheth*." Though the same word is used in John 3:16, its meaning in this verse is different. Here it means "to perish, of things being thrown away or decomposed."<sup>3</sup>
  - ii. The words "*everlasting life*." The fruit that will endure to everlasting life speaks of salvation.
  - iii. We are quick to jump to conclusions that every reference to everlasting life refers to salvation, but that is not always the case - 4:36
- c. Those who argue that food which endures to everlasting life is what is given cite these reasons
  - i. "*Labour... for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life*" would seem to indicate works for salvation
  - ii. The word "*meat*" refers to "food"
    - a) The first reference is to physical food which corrodes or perishes
    - b) "The second time metaphorically, of spiritual food."<sup>4</sup>
    - c) Similar language in John 4:31-38
      - 1) The "*meat*" of Jesus was to do the will of God who sent Him - 4:34
      - 2) Laboring for this food means "*gathereth fruit unto life eternal*." This is not a salvation verse. - 4:36
  - iii. "*For him hath God the Father sealed*"
    - a) "Literally, 'For this one the Father sealed, God.'"<sup>5</sup>
    - b) Why did the Father seal the Son?
      - 1) He was not sealed in order to give salvation
      - 2) He was not sealed because He did not need to be saved
      - 3) He was sealed by God in order to be identified as the Messiah who had come to do the work of God (cf. at His baptism, John 1:33-34; His works, John 5:36-37)
  - iv. His audience. He is speaking to a group of people who are following Him only for utilitarian reasons (He fed the multitudes)

3. The crowd's question, "*What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*" - 6:28

**6:28** "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"

- a. They want to do the works of God (miracles)
- b. They are still focused on the physical realm

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer, 64, ref. 622.

<sup>4</sup> W.E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1968), 400.

<sup>5</sup> Robertson, 104.

4. The penetrating statement of Jesus - 6:29

6:29 “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

- a. The work of God they needed was to believe in Jesus
- b. This is the starting place for every follower of Christ
- c. This is a statement of salvation

5. The crowd’s demand for a sign - 6:30-31

6:30 “They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? 31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

- a. A general request for a sign - 6:30
- b. A specific request - 6:31
  - i. They refer to the sign of God’s provision of manna in the wilderness in Exodus 16
  - ii. They quote Psalm 78:24 - Psalm 78:17-32

6. Jesus’ response - 6:32-33

6:32 “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.”

- a. “Moses gave you not that bread from heaven”
  - i. “Blunt and pointed denial that Moses was the giver of the bread from heaven.”<sup>6</sup>
  - ii. Specifically referring to manna
- b. “The true bread” comes from the Father
  - i. “‘True’ means that which has not only the name and resemblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name, in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name, real, true genuine”<sup>7</sup>
  - ii. “Giveth” is present active indicative tense, “a continual process.”<sup>8</sup>
  - iii. It is from heaven - 6:32
  - iv. The True Bread is a person, “He which cometh down” - 6:33
  - v. The True Bread gives life

7. The crowd desired that True Bread - 6:34

6:34 “Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.”

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## THE BREAD OF LIFE EXPLAINED (John 6:35-40)

6:35 “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. 36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. 37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>7</sup> Thayer, 26, ref. 228.

<sup>8</sup> Robertson, 106.

**A. Jesus is the Bread of Life - 6:35**

1. *"I am the bread of life."* "The emphatic expression 'I am' had a particular connotation for the Jews. In the Old Testament the term 'LORD' is a derivative of the verb *to be*. When Jehovah revealed his name to Moses as 'I AM,' He was stating, 'I AM WHO I AM.' The Jews of Christ's time knew that when He said, 'I am,' He was claiming, 'I am Jehovah of the Old Testament.'"<sup>9</sup>
2. Anyone who comes to Him shall never hunger - 6:35
3. He that believes will never thirst

**B. The crowd rejected Christ as the bread - 6:36**

**C. The shift to emphasize His earthly ministry - 6:37-39**

1. Verse 37 refers to His disciples who would faithfully follow him
  - a. They are given by the Father
  - b. They will not be cast out
  - c. Similar language in John 17:1-26
    - i. John 17:1-20a are specific to the disciples that God has given Jesus during his earthly ministry
    - ii. John 17:20b-26 refers to those who would believe after the disciples
2. During his earthly ministry, Jesus Christ submitted to the will of the Father - 6:38
3. The will of the Father - 6:39-40
  - a. Specific will for the disciples - 6:39
    - i. All that He had given Him (specific) would not be lost
    - ii. They would be raised at the last day
  - b. General will for all of mankind - 6:40
    - i. Everyone (universal) who sees the Son (figuratively) and believes would have everlasting life
    - ii. They would be raised at the last day

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**THE BREAD OF LIFE REJECTED (John 6:41-42)**

**6:41** "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?"

**A.** They complain because of His statement about being the Bread of Life from heaven.

**B.** The basis of their complaint is His obvious humanity - 6:42

1. He is Joseph's son
2. We know his father and mother

**C.** This demonstrates the "realness" of Jesus' humanity

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**LIFE LESSONS**

1. Seek Jesus, but seek after the right things
2. Jesus is the Bread of Life, the only One who can satisfy our spiritual hunger

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<sup>9</sup> Elmer Towns, *John: Believe and Live* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), xiv.