

I AM Part 4: "The Bread of Life" (11-26-2017)

This new series . . . As we begin to move towards Christmas this year, instead of exploring the Nativity, we will be looking at the Identity & Mission of the child that came into the world.

The series is titled: I AM . . . we will be exploring Jesus identity & mission through the eyes of the apostle John

There are 7 proclamations Jesus made in John's Gospel, about His Identity . . . The 7 "I AM" statements

There are 7 proclamations Jesus made in John's Vision (Revelation), to His People . . . The 7 letters to the churches

We will be looking at the connection between Jesus' Identity & Mission, and our own.

Today: Part 4 – "I AM The Bread of Life"

John 6 context: Jesus Feeds 5,000 and that night Jesus walks on water. The next day, the crowd from the feeding comes looking for Jesus the next day, then this conversation . . .

John 6:25-29 (ESV)

(25) When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" (26) Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. (27) Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal." (28) Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" (29) Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

Notes:

- Jesus is saying to them, you are just here for bread. You had your fill yesterday (for free) and now you are back looking for more.
- Their response – well what do we have to do to work for it then? (We still just want to be satisfied, so what's that going to take?)
- Jesus answer . . . believe in me. (Notice that throughout this passage Jesus does nothing but offer really good news, and they just can't receive it)

John 6:30-34 (ESV)

(30) So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?" (31) Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" (32) 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. (33) For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." (34) They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

Note: They're thinking: "Ok, we are back on track, that whole manna thing clicked. Now He's getting it!"

John 6:35 (ESV)

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."

Notes: He offers great news! When I told you the only "work" to do is believe, this is what I meant – totally and complete satisfaction. But you guys don't really believe me do you?

John 6:41-42 (ESV)

(41) So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." (42) They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, I have come down from heaven?"

John 6:47-51 (ESV)

(47) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever 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 that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. (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."

Note: Jesus is saying – Look, you brought up manna, let's talk about that. It didn't last, they died out there! In fact if you remember they didn't even really like it. It got old, they got tired of it and complained. And then they died. Because they missed something, that now you are missing too . . .

Deuteronomy 8:3 (ESV)

And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Jesus' point: God's Word and My Life are synonymous. And together they are life giving!!!

John 6:52-54 (ESV)

(52) The Jews then disputed among themselves, 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 you. (54) Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Note:

- I mean you can almost hear Jesus saying at this point – ok sure fine, you just have to eat my literal flesh and blood. Yeah that's it. And yet he is still speaking truth . . .
- It's what we celebrated this morning together – His body (the bread) broken for us, His blood (the wine) shed for us. In Jesus sorrow, suffering, and death, we have provision for life (bread), and celebration joy (wine)

John 6:60, 66-69 (ESV)

(60) When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" . . . (66) After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. (67) So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" (68) Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, (69) and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

Notes on John 6: The Jews' issues . . .

- What's in it for me? (Looking for bread)
- Why should we believe you? (Looking for a sign)
- Doubting Jesus (They question his validity – isn't he just Mary & Joseph's kid?)
 - When we don't like the message, our natural instinct will be to invalidate the messenger
- Lack of Understanding (We have to eat his flesh?)
- Drop out (They couldn't handle the hard sayings, so they left)

Jesus' actual offer . . . The Bread of Life that brings real & lasting satisfaction!

Transition to Letter to Pergamum: The Bread Jesus offers won't always appear appetizing, yet it is the only thing in this life that truly satisfies. Unfortunately, in order to make it more palatable we spread on a little compromise . . .

Pergamum History:

Map of 7 churches – Pergamum the top "coastal" town

History: Pergamum's library on the Acropolis (the ancient **Library of Pergamum**) was the second best in the ancient Greek civilization. The library was believed to contain 200,000 volumes, which Mark Anthony later gave to Cleopatra as a wedding present. Pergamum was also a flourishing center for the production of **parchment**.

Picture of the Theatre – 10,000 seat theatre

Revelation 2:12-17 (ESV)

(12) "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword. (13) "I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. (14) But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. (15) So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. (16) Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. (17) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.'

Notes on the Letter to the church at Pergamum . . .

- It's from Jesus, the one with the Sword of the Spirit

Revelation 1:16 (ESV)

In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

Ephesians 6:17 (ESV)

. . . take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

- Pergamum – a hard place to be a Christian. Satan dwells there and yet many of them held strong.
- Their Issue? Compromise . . . They were prone to compromise, as is often the case when we become comfortable in a culture where Satan dwells. Some examples of compromise . . .
 - Food sacrificed to Idols – the blending in with culture, feasting on it's influence
 - Sexual Immorality
 - False teaching – anything that adds, removes, or twists the Gospel

Similar to the people in John 6 . . . **compromise comes when I'm looking for satisfaction on my terms not God's.**

- Application: Beware of where you live and the pull to compromise
 - (Repent) The Sword cuts – removes what needs to go

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- (Abide) The Bread sustains – feeding us for continued health and growth
- The Results: Manna that feeds and satisfies, and a special Name, Identity, and Intimacy with God