



Sunday, February 22, 2026

John 6:22-60

As we've been walking through John 6 over the past couple of weeks, it has been a remarkable chapter in showing us the sovereignty of Jesus and His Lordship over everything.

We started off the chapter with Jesus feeding over 5000 people by miraculously multiplying 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish - thus symbolically showing Himself as the Bread of Life. That just as bread sustains physical life, Jesus sustains eternal life. The chapter then moves into Jesus walking on the water in the middle of a storm. He reveals Himself to His disciples by saying, 'It is I.' Literally translated into the exact phrase, 'I Am.' Declaring to them that He has ultimate authority over the physical and even spiritual realm - thus giving even more credibility to Him as the Bread of Life. And now, in this next section Jesus takes almost 40 verses to clearly articulate who He says He is. For the first time, Jesus will make the definitive statement, 'I am the Bread of Life,' and then walk us through what that looks like and remind us that even though this may be a difficult truth for some, this is the way. Those who accept this truth will gain eternal life, but those who choose not to accept this truth and turn their backs on Him cannot inherit eternal life.

So, if you have your Bibles with you this morning, I'd like to invite you to turn with me to John 6 where we will be reading from verse 22 all the way to the end of verse 60.

John 6:22-60

'The next day, the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw there had been only one boat. They also saw that Jesus had not boarded the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone off alone. 23 Some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

26 Jesus answered, "Truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs, but

because you ate the loaves and were filled. 27 Don't work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set his seal of approval on him."

28 "What can we do to perform the works of God?" they asked.

29 Jesus replied, "This is the work of God—that you believe in the one he has sent."

30 "What sign, then, are you going to do so that we may see and believe you?" they asked. "What are you going to perform? 31 Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

32 Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, Moses didn't give you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 Then they said, "Sir, give us this bread always."

35 "I am the bread of life," Jesus told them. "No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again. 36 But as I told you, you've seen me, and yet you do not believe. 37 Everyone the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never 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 I should lose none of those he has given me but should raise them up on the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him will have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

41 Therefore the Jews started grumbling about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They were saying, "Isn't this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

43 Jesus answered them, "Stop grumbling 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 will all be taught by God. Everyone who has listened to 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 I tell you, anyone who believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that anyone 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. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

52 At that, the Jews argued among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves. 54 The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day, 55 because my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. 56 The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the manna your ancestors ate—and they died. The one who eats this bread will live forever.”

59 He said these things while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

60 Therefore, when many of his disciples heard this, they said, “This teaching is hard. Who can accept it?”

There is a lot being said in this section, but the overview is quite simple. Basically, after Jesus and His disciples make their way over to Capernaum, the crowd that wanted to make Him king, ends up following Him. They’re still thinking about the miracle of the loaves and fish but not in the way that Jesus intended. Their desire is for physical bread and physical kingship but Jesus’ point in the miracle was to show them that as the Bread of Life, He is the One who sustains life - but they weren’t getting it.

So Jesus keeps explaining. And the more He explains, the deeper He goes. And the deeper He goes, the clearer it becomes that following Him involves surrender and sacrifice. And instead of leaning in, as we will eventually see, many will instead, fall away.

And so, what begins with a crowd trying to make Him king ends with many of His followers walking away.

And right in the middle of it all is one massive question:

‘Are you following Jesus simply because He fills your belly or because He feeds your soul?’

And the crazy thing is - two thousand years later - that’s still the question. And how you answer it changes everything. It changes how you see Jesus, what you expect from Him and ultimately how you respond when your expectations don’t line up with His reality.

There’s a word for this in our culture called consumer Christianity. Consumer Christianity is built upon the foundation of what I want. What makes me feel good. What benefits me. Embracing comfortable truths instead of the difficult ones.

And in all reality, a lot of this stems from an incorrect view of who God is.

We saw this last week when we talked about the idea of Jesus as a cultural icon with a poster that says, ‘Jesus is my homeboy,’ versus Moses at the foot of the burning bush, taking off his sandals because of the realization that he was standing on holy ground. Or, Isaiah falling on his face. Or John collapsing as though dead. And even others being brought to their knees or their face because of the holy reverence that being in His presence produces.

In consumer Christianity, instead of viewing God as the Holy One - the Great I Am - He tends to be viewed more like a Santa Claus-type figure. That there’s a list and he’s checking it twice to find out who’s naughty or nice. If we’re good enough, then we get what we want. And so, following Jesus becomes about my benefit, my gain, and my comfort.

But this is not the message that Jesus brought to the people of the first century and it’s certainly not the message that He’s speaking to us over 2000 years later. As the Bread of Life, He isn’t offering comfortability or selfish gain - He’s offering life. Real life. Eternal life. Meaning. Purpose. Not just in this world, but in the one to come.

And the language that Jesus uses to make this point is intentional.

In verse 27 He says:

27a ‘Don’t work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life...’

Which is His way of gently rebuking the crowd because they followed Him with the intent of mak-

ing Him king because they thought He could grant earthly gifts and political power. Jesus reminds them though, that their thinking is too shallow. It's too narrow. Their focus is temporal but His focus is eternal. That's what really matters because this life is only a blip, but eternity is forever.

Jesus would say this another way in the Book of Matthew by reminding the people:

Matthew 6:19-21

'Don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'

So Jesus is calling them - and perhaps even us - to shift our focus. To mature. To grow beyond surface-level faith. And part of that maturity comes with seeing Jesus - not just as provider, but as Lord.

And the real exclamation point comes in verse 35 when Jesus now says,

Vs. 35 'I am the bread of life,' Jesus told them. "No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again.'

Notice the language that Jesus is using here. Up until now, Jesus has allowed the crowds of people to draw conclusions about Him. But here, He says,

'I am...'

The same language as when He was walking on the water towards the disciples. The same language as Jehovah God in the burning bush with Moses - 'I am, who I am.' But now He completes it,

'I am...the Bread of Life.'

You see, up until this point, through His actions, His prophetic language, and His miracles, people have been asking the question - Who is this? They've been wondering. Speculating. Trying to piece it all together.

But now, with the statement, 'I am the Bread of Life,' Jesus removes that speculation.

He's not just hinting anymore.
He's not letting others draw conclusions.
He's now declaring it.

That He is God in the flesh.
That He is the Messiah.
That He is the One the prophets spoke about.
That He is the Great I Am.

And then in verse 41, He says it a second time - but with even more clarity:

'I am the bread that came down from heaven.'

Notice the intentional shift in His wording:

First He says, 'I am the bread of life.'
Now He says, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.'

Why not just repeat the same phrase as before?

Because He's pointing them back to their ancestors in the wilderness where God provided bread that literally came down from Heaven. It was called manna and every Jewish person standing there that day would have known that story.

So, by saying that He is the bread that came down from Heaven, He was showing them that even though miraculous, manna wasn't the ultimate bread from heaven. Sure, it sustained physical life for a while, but it never lasted beyond a day... it spoiled. It couldn't prevent death by consuming more. And it certainly couldn't give eternal life.

You see, the manna was never the point - even back then. It was God's provision, yes. But it was a sign that pointed forward. Forward to the day when the Bread of Life - Himself - would come down from Heaven - not just to provide temporary relief, but to save the world from sin and death for eternity.

And this is where the tension really starts to rise.

Because we read that some of the Jews standing there that day questioned this. You see, they knew Jesus. Some of them had even grown up around Him. Some were neighbours, classmates and others likely even family acquaintances. To them He was the son of Mary and Joseph the carpenter. And yes, He was also the kid who amazed the teachers in the temple when He was only twelve. So they all knew that there was something different about Jesus.

But...it's one thing to believe someone is used by God. But it's an entirely different thing to hear Him say that He is God in the flesh.

So what does Jesus do? He tells them to stop complaining and then equates Himself with God again by saying that He is the One who brings life and that anyone who believes in Him will have eternal life. And then He emphasizes this a third time in vs. 48 by saying again,

'I am the bread of life.'

And then again in vs. 51:

'I am the living bread that came down from heaven.'

Four times Jesus says this, when once would have been sufficient. Add to that His multiple references of the relationship that He and the Father have and His repeated comparisons to manna and it begs the question - why so much?

This is where context really comes into play.

If we back up all the way to verse 4, John includes a specific detail that might seem random. Here John says:

Vs. 4 'Now the Passover, a Jewish festival, was near.'

That's it. John doesn't mention this again. And it's easy to skip over this detail, but this single mention is not random at all. John says this because he's anchoring the entire chapter in the Passover. Which now sets the stage for everything that Jesus is about to do and say.

Passover was the feast that commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egypt. In the final plague, an

angel of death would be released over the entire nation targeting all first born. The Israelites were instructed to sacrifice a lamb and take the blood and brush it over their doorposts so that when the angel of death would come, he would pass over. This would all be happening while the family was inside eating the meal of the sacrificial lamb.

So - did your ears perk up earlier when we read that Jesus was telling people to eat of His flesh? Did that seem weird to you? Of course it did. Until you realize that it was Passover season and Jesus was simply using language that was pointing them back to the Passover meal that their ancestors ate in Egypt. That just as the sacrificial lamb gave life to the Israelites that night, Jesus would give His life for the world...so that death would literally 'pass-over'...for eternity.

Do you see what Jesus is doing here? It's all connected.

He's the true manna sent from heaven - giving life not just for a day, but for eternity.

He's the greater Lamb - whose sacrifice doesn't just spare the firstborn, but conquers death itself.

So when they celebrate Passover year after year, they're not just remembering what happened in Egypt...they're rehearsing a story that was always pointing forward.

Pointing to Him.

Jesus, the Messiah.

And you would think that after this, the crowds would have leaned in and welcomed Him with open arms. But that's not quite how things went did they? Vs. 60 tells us that those who were following Jesus found this to be a hard teaching, and instead of leaning in, as we will see over the next coming weeks, many would actually fall away because they simply could not accept this truth.

So, it seems to me that they were comfortable with Jesus as a provider...but not as the Great I Am. They wanted deliverance from Rome but not necessarily deliverance from sin.

And when that didn't match their expectations, many left.

So the question still stands:

Is Jesus simply your provider...or is He your Lord?

Because you can appreciate a provider.

But you can only surrender to the Great I Am.

Blessing

May the Lord Bless you and Keep you

May He cause His face to Shine upon you

May He be gracious towards you

Lifting up His countenance upon you

And may He give you peace

In Jesus name, Amen.

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