

“Wonder Bread”

I. **INTRO:**

- A. Oh, **taste** & see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who **trusts** in Him!
- B. Jesus had just fed the 5000. Jesus **reads their hearts** & confronts them with their **motive**.

II. **WONDER BREAD!**

- A. **BETHLEHEM!** (22-40)
- B. (26) **Most assuredly** - *Amen, Amen*. A teaching technique that indicated a crucial idea from Jesus (also: vs. **32,47,53**)
- C. Often people want the Lord to meet their **physical** needs **but not** their **spiritual** needs.
 - 1. They were like **stray dogs**, that if you **feed them** they'll stick around, **not** because they love you, **but** because you have food! – Stop feeding them & they're gone!
 - 2. They only seek God for their **carnal needs** to be met!
- D. Don't seek Him for **what** He can do for you, **but** for **who He is!**
- E. **Q:** What about today? Why do **you** seek Him? (Pure motives?)
 - 1. *For a healing? To pay the bills? In hopes to find a nice spouse?*
 - 2. “Lord, purify my heart that I may sincerely seek you today!”
- F. Now Jesus directs their thinking to a **deeper hunger!**
- G. (27) Jesus encourages them **not** to devote themselves to such pursuits, **but rather** to seek **food that endures** to eternal life.
 - 1. Therefore do not worry, saying, *What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or What shall we wear?* For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **But** seek first the kingdom of God & His righteousness, & all these things shall be added to you.
- H. **Seal** - “It was not the **signature**, but the **seal** that authenticated. In commercial & political documents it was the **seal**, imprinted w/the signet ring, which made the document valid; it was the seal which authenticated **a will**; it was the seal on the mouth of a **sack** or a **crate** that guaranteed the contents.” (William Barclay; vol.1, pg.213)
 - 1. With each miracle performed, God's authenticating seal on Christ's life was evident to all.

- I. (33) The **manna** came only to the **Jews** & sustained **physical life**; **but Jesus** came for **the whole world** & gives **eternal life**.
1. **Manna comparison:**
 - a) **Manna** came *at night* - **Jesus** came when men were *in darkness*;
 - b) **Manna** met *physical* needs - **Jesus** meets *spiritual* needs;
 - c) **Manna** a *gift* from God - **Jesus** God's *gift* to the world;
 - d) **Manna** had to be *picked up & eaten* - **Jesus** must be *received & appropriated*.¹
 2. **The bread of God** was a **gift** from the Father, whether it was shaped into **Manna** or the **Messiah**.
- J. (35) **I am the bread of life** - *i.e.* Jesus satisfies our deepest spiritual needs.
1. This is the 1st of 7 "**I am**" statements in the gospel of John (**I am the Door**; **I am the Good Shepherd**; **I am the Light of the world**; **I am the Res & the Life**; **I am the True Vine**; **I am the Way, Truth, Life**)
 2. **Q:** What **food** would you use to represent **you**?
 - a) I am the Filet-mignon; lobster; maple donut; steamed clams; choc chocolate chip ice cream?
 - b) **What is wrong with these?** [They are only enjoyed "*once in a while*" (for most people)]
 - c) No Jesus **didn't** say, "**I am the filet-mignon of life**", or "**I am the caviar of life**", or "**the sashimi of life**". **Why?** These are delicacies that only the favored few can enjoy.
 - d) Jesus picks a **common staple** all can relate to; & relate to **daily**; & throughout the **day!** (i.e. each meal)
 - e) **Bread** is found on the **rich & poor** man's table; **king & peasant**.
 3. In **Asia** it might be "**I am the Rice of Life**"; In **Mexico** it might be "**I am the Tortilla of Life**"; In **India** it might be "**I am the Curry of Life**".
 - a) **Whatever is that countries main food staple.** (means for sustaining life)
- K. If we take the 1st commandment from the neg to the poss, from "**Thou shall have no other gods before me**" to "**Thou shall have me!**" - **That's what Jesus is saying here!**
1. It is no coincidence that Jesus was born in the into **the city of bread!** (Bethlehem)
- L. (37) **There is a giant "Welcome mat"** in front of Jesus' house. **Wipe your sins** on the mat & **come on in!** :)

¹ Shepherds Notes; John; pg.37

1. The original reads, *I will **not, not** cast out*, or *I will **never, never** cast out*.
 - a) The text means, that Christ will **not at first** reject a believer; and that as he will not do it at first, so he will **not to the last**. (Spurgeon; Evening, July 30)

- M. (39) **Lose nothing** - Jesus believes in the assurance of the believer! **Take his word for it!**
 1. This is **Eternal security**, sometimes called the "*Perseverance of the saints*"; more appropriately called, the "*Preservation of the saints*" (i.e. **God preserves us!**)
 2. Ps.145:20 **The LORD preserves all who love Him But all the wicked He'll destroy**

- N. **FLESH & BLOOD!** (41-59)
- O. **Just as** you take **food** into your body, **so** you take **Christ** into your life; **&** He becomes *one with you*.
- P. (44) No one can come to the Father through Christ except the Father wills.
 1. I picture **Gods Rip-Tide**: Slowly drawing you out to Him (you often don't notice your being pulled out). **You keep swimming to shore away from Him**. You finally **give up & turn to Him**. Yet under the surface He's been drawin you all the time
- Q. We're chosen then drawn; drawn then saved; saved then 1 day to be resurrected; when resurrected then guaranteed eternal life!
 1. We've been bought, sought, caught, got, **&** now are being taught!

- R. (45) **To be in relationship with God is to be in a relationship with Jesus**.

- S. (51-55) **What is meant by eating his flesh & blood?**
 1. This is non-Kosher talk...this **cannibalism & blood drinking!**
 2. It sounds like a bad vampire movie filmed at Donar pass!
 3. He **wasn't** literally **bread**, anymore than He was literally a **lamb** or a **lion!**
 4. It means nothing *more* nor *less* than **believing in Christ!** (Mt. Henry)

- T. Also, Christ is **not** talking about the **bread** and **cup** of the **Lord's Supper!**
 1. The Lord's Supper had not even been instituted, **and** when it was, Jesus clearly stated that it was a **memorial**. It did not impart life.
 2. **Jesus manifest in the flesh is our bread of life;**
Jesus bleeding on the cross a substitute for sinners is **our soul's drink!**

- U. **2 things are Implied**: an **appetite** to Christ **&** an **application** of Christ.
 1. **An Appetite to Christ!** – Spiritual eating/drinking **starts w/hungering/thirsting**.
 - a) Mt.5:6 **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled**.

2. An **Application of Christ to ourselves!** – Meat *looked upon* will **not** nourish us, but meat *fed upon*! We must **accept of Christ as to appropriate Him to ourselves.**
3. **Body & blood** was used to represent everything needed to sustain & support life

V. (59) **These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.**

W. **Story** - Several years ago a reader of *The British Weekly* wrote a letter to the editor as follows: "Dear Sir! I notice that ministers seem to set a great deal of importance on their **sermons** and spend a great deal of time in preparing them. I have been attending services quite regularly for the past thirty years and during that time, if I estimate correctly, I have listened to no less than **3000 sermons**. But, to my consternation, **I discover I cannot remember a single one of them**. I wonder if a minister's time might be more profitably spent on something else? *Sincerely...*

1. The letter kicked up quite an editorial storm of angry responses for weeks. The pros and cons of sermons were tossed back and forth until, finally, **one letter ended the debate**. This letter said, "My Dear Sir: I have been married for thirty years. During that time I have eaten **32,850 meals** - mostly of my wife's cooking. Suddenly I have discovered that I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet, **I received nourishment from every one of them**. I have the distinct impression that without them I would have **starved to death** long ago." *Sincerely...*

X. **THREE ATTITUDES!** (60-71)

Y. **DEFECTION!** (60-66)

Z. This is the **1st group**. Unbelievers who *choked on* the bread going down.

1. Did you know...**Many sharks** have the ability to turn their stomachs inside out and evert it out of their mouths in order to get rid of any unwanted contents.

AA.(60) **Hard saying** - Yes, very difficult.

1. Not hard to *understand*, but **hard to accept!** – *skleros* (dried, rough, harsh), from *skello* (to dry).
2. This **fresh bread** from heaven just became **stale & crunchy** in their mouth fast!

BB.(62) Maybe you'll believe I "came down" **if** you see me "go back"?

1. A forecast of His Ascension!

CC.(63) **Spiritual words!** (Jesus offers **spiritual life** through union with **Himself**)

DD.(65) People are so ensnared in the *quicksand* of **sin & unbelief** that **unless God draws them** they are hopeless.

1. We spiritually lay dead as a paperclip & don't move **until** we feel His magnetic love drawing us to "**rise up & come to Him**"!

EE.(66) Follow/**No longer walked with Him** - from 2 Greek words alongside & walk.

1. They are no longer willing to walk alongside Jesus & no longer committed to Him & His Mission.

FF.So, here Jesus thins out the ranks!

1. They say the test of an army is how it fights when its tired!
2. At the 1st shadow of the cross...they left Him!
3. Like **Gideon**, Jesus sends home those who were “*fearful & afraid*” of the battle

GG.DETERMINATION! (67-69)

HH.This is the **2nd group**. Thinning crowds did nothing to thin the disciples determination!

II. (67) The choice is always to *follow the crowd* or *follow Jesus*.

1. **Q:** Right now do **you** feel like *going away*?
2. Is it **too hot** in your **kitchen**? **Too stinky** in your **nursery**?
Too dry in your **marriage**? **Too quiet** in your **relationship w/God**?
a) **Q:** Do **you** also want to go away?

JJ. (68,69) Peter comes up with **3 reasons** they can't.

KK.DECEPTION! (67-69)

LL. This is the **3rd group**. Standing right in the band of chosen men was one who **looked & sounded** like the most sincere disciple...**but was a devil**.

MM.**Q:** What category do **you** fall into? Like the **crowd** (open defection); or like **Judas** (subtle deception); or like the **disciples** (firm determination)?

NN.**Illustration:** Imagine a **book** on a shelf, never read. As long as it remains *unread*, it is *external* to you. One day you take it down & read it. You're thrilled, fascinated, moved. The story sticks to you. The great lines remain in your memory. Now, when you desire you can take that wonder out from inside you & remember it, think about it, feed your mind & hear on it. Once the book was outside you & now that its inside, you can feed **upon it**. (adapted form William Barclay; Gospel of John; pg.224)

1. If you've never taken Jesus into your life, assimilated His being into yours, then he is outside of your life!
2. You are **like a small child**, with nose pressed up against a **bakery window**. Smelling bread, seeing bread, knowing it's there...**but** never tasting it.
a) **Oh, taste & see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!** Ps.34:8