

THE BREAD OF LIFE: THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL SATISFACTION JOHN 06:30–36

Introduction: Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life

Jesus Christ is the Source of spiritual satisfaction, of man's spiritual nourishment. He is the only Bread that can feed man's great hunger, the hunger that gnaws and gnaws within his inner being. There is no other source upon which man can feed and be nourished.

- I. The people demanded proof (vv. 30-31).
- II. Christ is the true bread (v. 32).
- III. Christ is the Bread of God (v. 33).
- IV. Christ is the Bread of Life (vv. 34-35).
- V. Christ was seen but rejected (v. 36).

I. *John 06:30–31 The Claims of Jesus Christ*

The people demanded proof. Jesus had just made some phenomenal claims. He claimed to be...

- the Son of Man (v. 27).
- the One who feeds man, who gives man bread which issues forth eternal life (v. 27).
- the One whom God had sealed (v. 27).
- the One whom God had sent into the world (v. 29).
- the One upon whom men were to believe (v. 29).

The people demanded proof. Note two revealing things about the nature of man.

1. Man focuses upon the physical and material. (Jn. 6:26-27.) He ignores all the signs, even the miracles of God which surround him. Christ had just miraculously fed the crowd, yet the crowd ignored the witness of that particular sign (Jn. 6:1f). It was not enough. They were so attached to the earth, to its physical pleasures and material goods, that they wanted more and more. To them...
 - Moses had fed Israel for forty years in the wilderness. Christ had fed them only once.
 - Moses had fed Israel with manna falling out of the sky from heaven. Christ had merely multiplied bread from a few loaves in His hands.
 2. Man demands that he first see, *then he will believe*. This is contrary to *true* faith. It is not the way faith works. A man must first believe God, then he sees. (See *Faith*, Heb. 11:6) However, note this fact: faith is not fate; it is a matter of the heart, a matter of how the heart must relate to others. God relates with us just as we relate to others. If a person does not believe in us, they do not see; that is, they may ask all they want, but it is unlikely that we will do what they ask. But if they believe and trust us, we usually do whatever they ask, and they see their desires and requests fulfilled by our hands.
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Repeating the above, a man must first believe God, then he sees. Faith must precede sight. Believe God and He will fulfill the desires of your heart (Psa. 37:4-5)

The people's complaint was twofold.

1. Christ had not fed them enough — not enough to prove that He was who He claimed to be.
2. Christ had not fed them in the right way, not given “them bread from heaven to eat.”

Thought 1. Man never has enough. He craves and craves, never being fully satisfied. He experiences a gnawing hunger, a restlessness, emptiness, loneliness, vacuum, and a lack of purpose, meaning and significance. Even in dealing with God, he never has enough evidence or proof to believe — not within his human nature.

Note another fact: man always wants to tell God how to act and deal with him and his life. Man wants his needs met in certain ways. It is not enough for God to meet his needs; man wants his needs met as he wills and desires. He tries to dictate how God is to act and behave toward him. So much human religion is nothing more than this, nothing more than man trying to spell out how God is to act and behave toward him.

HEBREWS 11:06 FAITH

*And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. **Hebrews 11:06***

A person can *grow* in faith and power. Faith and power can be developed by doing two things.

1. By practicing hope (Heb. 11:1), that is, by hoping for something and claiming it because God has promised it.
2. By earnestly seeking God (Heb. 11:6). Christ tells us what is meant by earnest *seeking*. It means...
 - a. To “hunger and thirst after righteousness” (Mt. 5:6).
 - b. To “ask...seek...knock” (Mt. 7:7-8).
 - c. To “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness” (Mt. 6:33).

The person who needs something and lives on his face in prayer before God (asking, seeking, and knocking) will experience God answering his need. Thus he will be encouraged to trust God, that is, to seek and knock even more and more. A genuine *faith in God* lives before God. That is what faith is: living before God. Faith is entrusting one's life to God. It is trusting God, depending upon God, believing God, seeking God, conversing with God, sharing with God, and fellowshiping with God. A person who really believes that God exists will do these things.

The greater the need, the greater amount of time *true faith* spends alone with God discussing the need. The greater the need, the more earnest *true faith* seeks the answer to its need.

What happens is this: as a person *earnestly seeks* God, he discovers that *true faith* diligently lives before God in prayer and devotion and is given what it hopes for. Therefore the person learns to trust God more and more. He grows in faith.

One thing, however, always needs to be remembered. God is not going to reward sinful, carnal trust, nor is He going to reward a doubting trust. If He answered a doubting trust or a carnal hope and prayer, then the doubting and carnal person would begin to think that the life he is living is acceptable to God. God does not approve sinful and carnal living, nor does He approve a doubting heart. God honours righteous living and a believing heart. It is the person who truly lives righteously and believes enough to earnestly seek God who grows and grows in faith (Jas. 4:3; 1 Cor. 3:1-3. Cp. Mt. 20:21.) □

II. *John 06:32 Jesus Christ, the True Bread of Life*

Christ is the true bread. Note two strong points.

1. Man cannot provide true bread, that is, true satisfaction. Only God can. Moses was not the one who gave Israel the manna from heaven; God was the One who gave the manna. A man has to do something if he wishes...

- to have his hunger met
- to be content
- to be truly filled
- to be completely satisfied
- to be comfortable
- to be at peace

A man must look both beyond other men and beyond the things of this world. Men and things cannot meet the gnawing hunger of man; they cannot provide true satisfaction, for they do not possess the *true* bread.

2. God alone provides true bread, that is, provides true satisfaction. Note three things.

a. Christ called God “My Father”. Jesus was claiming that He is One with God, that is, He is God Himself (Jn. 10:30). But note: Jesus was not claiming to be the same person as God. He was claiming to have the same *nature* of God, to be One with God...

- in nature
- in being
- in substance
- in power
- in essence
- in glory

This is seen in the word “one.” (Jn. 10:30) It is neuter, not masculine. It means *thing*, not *person*. Jesus is of the very same thing, of the very same substance as God.

There is no question that this is exactly what Jesus was claiming. His claim was perfectly understood by those standing around Him. The Scripture clearly show this. Note the clear accusation: “We are not stoning you for any of these...but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, *claim to be God*” (Jn. 10:33).

- b. The bread God gives is “true” bread (See *True*, Jn. 1:9).
- c. The “bread” or “manna” of God is not physical and material bread: it is spiritual. God may provide and actually does promise to provide for the physical necessities of *His followers* (Mt. 6:24-33), but physical and material bread is not what Christ was talking about in this passage. Physical and material bread lasts only for a short while. Once consumed, it is gone. Its satisfaction passes and man’s gnawing hunger arises again. But the bread God gives is spiritual bread, that is, spiritual food for the soul (Eph. 1:3). It is the bread that man really needs more than anything else on earth. It is the only bread that can feed and meet the need of man’s...

- gnawing hunger
- loneliness
- restlessness
- lack of purpose, meaning, and significance
- emptiness
- vacuum

John 6:50-51 *“But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”*

John 6:53-54 *Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

John 6:57-58 *“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. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.”*

JOHN 01:09 TRUE

The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

John 01:09

The words true, truth, and real are taken from two Greek words very much alike. But each has a different shade of meaning.

1. “Alethes” means true, the opposite of false.
2. “Alethinos” means the true, the genuine, the real. It is the *opposite* of the unreal, the fictitious, the counterfeit, the imaginary. It is also the opposite of the imperfect, defective, frail, uncertain.

Jesus Christ is seen as the true, the real, the genuine life which has come to give light to every man. □

III. *John 06:33 Jesus Christ, the Bread of God*

Christ is the Bread of God. Christ made at least two points.

1. The origin of the true Bread is God Himself. It is bread which came down from or *out of* (ek) heaven itself. This means several things.
 - a. The bread of God is not bread which comes out of the clouds above earth. Rather, it is bread which comes *out of* (ek) heaven itself, out of the spiritual dimension of being, from the very presence of God Himself. It is bread which comes from the very household of God.
 - b. The bread of God is not physical bread. It is of the nature of God Himself, spiritual and eternal bread (v. 50-51).
 - c. The bread of God is possessed by God; therefore, only He can give it, and man cannot have the Bread of God unless God gives it to man.
 - d. The Bread of God was a person. Note the personal pronoun “He” and the word *bread* (ho artos) which is masculine. Note that “He,” the Bread of God who feeds and nourishes man, came down or “out of” heaven. He was not born of the earth. He came from the very presence of God Himself.

John 3:31 *“The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.”*

John 6:38 *“For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.”*

John 8:23 *But he continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.”*

John 8:42 *Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.”*

John 16:30 *“Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”*

1 Cor 15:47 *The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.*

2. The Bread of God gives *life* to the world. The purpose of bread is to give life. (See *Life in Jesus Christ*, Jn. 1:4; *Life in Jesus Christ*, Jn. 10:10; *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3.)
 - a. Bread gives life by...
 - nourishing and sustaining
 - satisfying
 - energizing
 - creating desire (the need) for more (See Neh. 9:15.)
 - being partaken on a regular basis

Thought 1. Christ (and the Word of God) gives life to the believer by doing the same five things as bread.

John 1:4 *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

John 10:10 *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

John 17:2-3 *“For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”*

- b. The Bread of God came from heaven to give life to the *whole* world. It was not just to one person or to one nation that He came. He came to the whole world (1 Jn. 2:1-2). He came to sacrifice Himself, to feed and save a starving world.

Note that His coming as the sacrificial Bread of God had been foreshadowed by the sacrifices of the Old Testament. They are said to be the Bread of God or “food of his God” (Lev. 21:21-22. See Jn. 6:50-51.)

John 7:37 *On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”*

Rom 10:12 *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him.*

1 Tim 2:4-6 *Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.*

Isa 55:1 *“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”*

JOHN 01:04 “IN CHRIST WAS LIFE”

“In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.” John 01:04

The simple statement “in Christ was life” means at least three things.

1. Life is the quality and essence, the energy and power, the force and principle of being. Christ is life; He is...
 - the very quality of life
 - the very energy of life
 - the very force of life
 - the very essence of life
 - the very power of life
 - the very principle of life

Without Christ, there would be no life whatsoever. Life is in Him, within His very being. All things exist and have their being (life) in Him.

2. Life is purpose, meaning, and significance of being. Christ is life; He is...
 - the very purpose of life.
 - the very meaning of life.
 - the very significance of life.
3. Life is perfection. Life is all that a man must be and possess in order to live perfectly. This is what is meant by life. Life is completeness of being, absolute satisfaction, the fullness of all good, and the possession of all good things. Life is perfect love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Whatever life is and all that life is, is all in Jesus Christ. Even the legitimate cravings of man that are sometimes entangled with evil — such as power, fame and wealth — are all included in the life given by Jesus Christ. Those who partake of His life shall reign forever as kings and priests (Lk. 16:10-12). This is the very thing that is distinctive about life — it is eternal. It lasts forever and it is rewarding. It will eventually exalt the believer to the highest life and place and position. (Rev. 21:1f.)

Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the way to life, and He is the truth of life. He is the very substance of life, its very being and energy (Jn. 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2). □

JOHN 10:10 LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” **John 10:10***

Life is one of the great words of the Scriptures. The word *life* (zoe) and the verb *to live* or *to have life* (zen) have a depth of meaning.

1. Life is the energy, the force, the power of being.
2. Life is the opposite of perishing. It is deliverance from condemnation and death. It is the stopping or cessation of deterioration, decay, and corruption (Jn. 3:16; 5:24, 29; 10:28).
3. Life is *eternal* (aionios). It is forever. It is the very life of God Himself (Jn. 17:3). However, eternal life does not refer just to duration. Living forever would be a curse for some persons. The idea of eternal life is also quality, a certain kind of life, a life that consistently knows love, joy, peace, power and responsibility.
4. Life is satisfaction (Jn. 6:35).
5. Life is security and enjoyment (Jn. 10:10).
6. Life is found only in God. God is the source and author of life, and it is God who has appointed Jesus Christ to bring life to man. Jesus Christ gives the very life of God Himself (Jn. 5:26; 6:27, 40; 10:28; 17:23).

7. Life has now been revealed. It has been unveiled and is clearly seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows man what life is (Jn. 1:4-5; 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2).
8. Life only comes to a man by believing in Jesus Christ. A man outside Jesus Christ only exists. He merely has the existence of an animal. Real life is found only in God. This is to be expected and it is logically true, for God is the creator of life. As the creator of life, He alone knows what life really is and what it is supposed to be (Jn. 3:36; 5:24; 6:47). This is the reason He sent His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ, into the world: to show men what life is. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees exactly what life is, exactly what it involves (Gal. 5:22-23):
=> love => patience => faithfulness => joy => kindness
=> peace => gentleness => goodness => self-control □

JOHN 17:02–03 ETERNAL LIFE (AINIOS)

“For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” **John 17:02-03**

Life, real life. It is the very life of God Himself. It is the very energy, force, being, essence, principle and power of life. It has more to do with quality and with what life really is than with duration. To live forever in the present world is not necessarily a good thing. The world and man’s body need changing. That changed life is found only in eternal life. The only being who can be said to be eternal is God. Therefore, life — supreme life — is found only in God. To possess eternal life is to know God. Once a person knows God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, that person has eternal life — he shall live forever. But more essential, the person has the supreme quality of life, the very life of God Himself.

John 3:14-15 *“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”*

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

John 6:40 *“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

John 3:36 *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”*

John 11:25-28 *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me*

will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.”

John 12:25 *“The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”*

Rom 5:21 *So that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Gal 6:8 *The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

2 Tim 1:10 *But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.*

1 Jn 5:11-12 *And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. □*

IV. John 06: 34–35 Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life

Christ is the Bread of Life. There are four significant points here.

1. The people requested the Bread of God. The people called Jesus *Lord* (Kurios), but how much they understood of His deity is not known. Apparently it was just an address of respect. However, the point is clear in the Bible. When a person asks for the Bread of God, he must call Jesus “Lord” and be ready to submit to Him as Lord, serving Jesus day by day (Lk. 9:23; Rom. 10:13).

Note that the people requested: “from now on give us this bread” (pantote dos herim ton arton touton). This was a *once-for-all* request (the Greek aorist tense). The people wanted this Bread of God once-for-all, so that they might have a *permanent provision*. The Bible is again clear on this point. Salvation, that is, partaking of the Bread of Life, is to be a permanent experience. It is to be a once-for-all experience.

2. The phenomenal claim of Jesus: “I am the Bread of life” (See “*I Am*”, Jn. 6:20. Also *Life in Jesus Christ*, Jn. 1:4; *Life in Jesus Christ*, Jn. 10:10; *Eternal Life*, 17:2-3.) Jesus Christ made the phenomenal claim: He was...

- the true Bread
 - the Bread of God
 - the Bread of Life
3. If a man comes to Christ, the Bread of Life, he will never hunger. Man has a starving, craving need for life. Man craves a life that...
- is full and satisfying
 - is nourishing and sustaining
 - is energizing and has its desires fulfilled

If a man comes to Christ. He will never hunger. The gnawing of starvation, the craving for life will be fully satisfied.

4. If a man believes, he will never thirst. The picture (symbolism) is switched from hunger to thirst. Man's need is more than met; not only is his hunger satisfied, but his thirst is quenched. Every need of life, of nourishment, and of growth is met. Nothing is left out or lacking. When a person comes to Christ and believes (continuous action, meaning continuing to believe), every need of his life and growth is met. Of course, this does not mean he will never hunger after righteousness. He will, but his hunger and thirst will never go unsatisfied. He "will be filled" (Mt. 5:6). Note the word "never." It is a strong, emphatic word: "[He] will never be thirsty."

Note how a person is *saved* from hungering and thirsting after life. One is saved...

- by "coming to Christ" (v. 35, 37, 44-45, 65).
- by "believing in Christ" (See *Saving Faith*, Jn. 2:24).

Mat 5:6 "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*"

John 4:14 "*But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.*"

John 6:35 *Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."*

John 6:47-48 "*I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life.*"

John 7:37 *On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."*

Rev 22:17 *The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.*

JOHN 06:34–35 JESUS, THE LIVING BREAD

Bread does at least four things. It nourishes or sustains life; it satisfies; it energizes; and it creates a desire (the need) for more and more.

Neh. 9:15 You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought forth water for them from the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land which you had sworn to give them. □

V. *John 06:36 Jesus Christ, Rejected*

Christ was seen, but rejected. The point is that the people were without excuse. They had every opportunity in the world.

=> The Bread of God had “come down from heaven.”

=> The Bread of God had come to give life to the world.

=> The Bread of God had been seen (1 Jn. 1:1-3).

=> The Bread of God was being seen and proclaimed that very moment.

Any of the people could have easily come to Christ, yet sitting there and hearing the glorious news, they still did not believe.

John 1:11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

John 3:36 “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”

John 8:24 “I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”

John 12:48 “There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.” ■