

Jesus Christ the Bread of Life

We have seen that the Book of John begins by announcing that when time began, the “Word” was already in existence, the “Word” is a unique name for Jesus Christ and only used by John the Apostle. It is important to note that John was an eyewitness to the events he describes, he was a Jew and understood and quoted from the Old Testament, he had a thorough knowledge of Jewish feasts and customs and he was a resident of Palestine.

Now the purpose of John's writing was that people might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that by believing in Jesus we might have life through His name. With these facts established let us look at what John says about Jesus Christ as the Bread of Life.

Because of his power to meet physical needs the people thought Jesus was great and they wanted Him to be their king. However, when they realized that the ministry of Jesus was spiritual, they rejected Him. The day following the event of Jesus feeding the five thousand those who had been fed began looking for Jesus and they found him in Capernaum and again asked him to become their king but Jesus rebuked them and stated that although the people had seen the signs, they had not accepted them for what they were (proof of His true Messiahship), and they were only interested in the physical. The real purpose of His coming into the world was to save people's souls.

We can see that the people are confused. Jesus offered to give them eternal life and they wanted to know what to do. Jesus explained that they would be accepted by God if they believed in Him and that it's not the works of man to please God, but it is the act of receiving what God has done for man. Now the Jewish leaders asked for a sign to prove that they should believe in him. They knew that Jesus had made more bread out of already existing bread. Their claim was that Moses had done greater than the miracles of Jesus because Moses had brought bread from heaven. Now, if Jesus wanted these Jews to believe in Him, He had better perform a greater sign than Moses.

Jesus explained that the manna which Moses gave is of different character than the true bread. The true bread is a person, he which cometh, and is capable of giving life. The Jews wanted this bread but they still thought it was just bread and much like Moses' manna. Jesus identifies Himself as he Bread of Life. The life He speaks of is spiritual and not physical. To partake of this life means that one's spiritual hunger and thirst will be fully satisfied. Moses' manna was not eternal. In contrast to Moses' manna, this true bread will not let man die. Jesus further describes this bread. It is His flesh. He clearly refers to His vicarious death on the cross that will provide life for the world (His substitutional death for mankind.) Jesus said to accept what He said (His words) and they would have life. As food and drink are offered to meet physical needs, so the flesh and blood of Christ are offered to meet spiritual needs.

Luke 22:19-20

And he took bread, gave thanks, and broke it,
and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying,
“this cup is the new covenant in my blood,
which is poured out for you.”

