

introduction

In this passage, we find a crowd that has been physically fed by Jesus but remains spiritually hungry. As they chase him across the sea, Jesus uses the opportunity to pivot their hearts from the "bread that spoils" to the "Bread of Life" that offers eternal satisfaction.



What seems like “comfort food” to you?

read **John 6:25-40 (NIV)**

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

²⁸ Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

²⁹ Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

³⁰ So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? ³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

³² Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ “Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

³⁵ Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶ But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. ³⁷ All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I

will never drive away. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. 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 them up at the last day."

Take a few moments to reflect on the Scripture. Share some insights, questions, or points that strike you. Then read what follows.

context

This dialogue takes place in the synagogue at Capernaum immediately following the feeding of the five thousand. During the week leading up to Passover, Jesus feeds the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. After, the crowd wants to forcibly crown Jesus as a political Messiah-king. Some of his disciples sail across the sea of Galilee, Jesus goes to pray by himself, then walks on water to join them, and they land on the other side. The next day, the crowds follow en masse to find Jesus. The crowd is looking for someone who will provide daily manna and solve their earthly problems — but Jesus intends to reveal himself as the divine source of life itself.

our search for life in the wrong places

Jesus perceives that the crowd's interest in him is purely transactional. They are pursuing the miracle-worker rather than the Messiah, seeking a solution to their physical hunger while ignoring the deeper, restless famine of their souls.

"Even if all the physical hunger of the world were satisfied, even if everyone who is hungry were fed by his or her own labor or by the generosity of others, the deepest hunger of man would still exist..."

— Pope John Paul II

discuss

1. What are some "perishable breads" (career, relationships, status) that we often work for, hoping they will satisfy our deeper restlessness?
2. How can we tell the difference between seeking Jesus for *what he gives* versus seeking him for *who he is*?

Jesus is the Bread of Life

Jesus shifts the focus from the bread Moses gave in the wilderness to the true Bread the Father gives now. He identifies himself as the only source of lasting satisfaction; to "eat" of him is to believe in him, placing our entire weight and trust on his finished work.

"The maker of man became man... that He the bread might be hungry, that He the fountain might thirst, that He the light might sleep, that He the way might be wearied in the journey, ... that He security itself might be wounded, and He life itself might die."

— Augustine

discuss

3. Why does Jesus use the metaphor of "bread" rather than something more extravagant to describe himself?
4. What does it look like practically in our daily lives to "feed" on Jesus as our primary source of strength?

5. In what ways does Jesus' offer of never being hungry differ from the temporary fixes the world offers?

the plan of salvation

These verses reveal the harmony between God's sovereignty and his hospitality. Jesus assures us that the mission of the Son is perfectly aligned with the will of the Father: to gather, to keep, and to save all who are given to him.

"Every person the Father gives me eventually comes running to me. And once that person is with me, I hold on and don't let go."

— John 6:37 (*The Message*)

discuss

6. How does the promise that Jesus will "never drive away" anyone who comes to him provide comfort when we feel unworthy of his grace?
7. According to verses 38-40, what is the ultimate will of the Father for those who look to the Son?

group application

Spend time reflecting on one aspect of your life that needs to be given up so you can feast on Jesus more as your source of life.

upcoming

- Sunday, March 1 | **Church Family Meal, after both services on the 5th floor**
Gather with your CG or sit with someone new for fellowship over a meal together. Overflow seating available on the 4th floor.
- Sunday, March 8 | **All Angels' Community Meal, 5:35-7:15 pm** at All Angels' Church (W 80th St & Broadway)
Volunteer with other Redeemer West Siders to serve and share a sit-down meal for the All Angels' community, including our neighbors experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.
redeemerws.com/allangels
- The March issue of the **Neighborhood Engagement Newsletter** is out with unique opportunities to bring joy to neighbors, connect with local superintendents, and deepen your grasp on the experience of homelessness, and engage on the theology of immigration.
redeemerws.com/neighborhoodnews