



TRI-PARISH MAIL MINISTRY

Grace
Valentine

Peace
Mission

St. Paul's
White River

Trinity 2

June 29, 2025

Pre-Service Meditation: Psalm 18

Hymns: 244; 293; 54

Scripture Readings: Exodus 3:13-22
2 Timothy 3:10-17

Sermon Topic: Godly Living; Jesus as Our Bread of Life; True Faith

In Jesus' Name!

Text: John 6:27, 47-58 NKJV

Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.... Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, 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. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

In Christ Jesus, who gives Himself to us as the "*Bread of Life*," dear fellow redeemed:

In our home and perhaps in yours as well, we have a game called "Bible Trivia." It is a fun game in which you are asked questions and must provide the appropriate Bible answer. You might be asked, "What was Jesus' most famous sermon?" Your would answer, "Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount*." But how would you answer the question, if it were: "What is Jesus' second most famous sermon?" That question would no doubt stump quite a few of us. The answer, in my opinion, would be Jesus' "*Bread of Life*" sermon found here in John 6. Our text is part of that sermon. While this sermon is much less familiar than the *Sermon on the Mount*, its content, once again in my opinion, is even more important. I say that because, while Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* deals with sanctification—how we are to live as Christians, Jesus' *Bread of Life* sermon deals with justification—how we are saved. Our salvation is the well from which our Christian living flows!

Jesus' *Bread of Life* sermon came at a pivotal point in His earthly ministry. The day before He miraculously fed over 5,000 people with five barley loaves and two small fish. Just prior to the sermon those same people came to make Him their king, an action inconsistent with Jesus' calling and opposed by our Savior. Then He preached His *Bread of Life* sermon, with the result that most of His disciples, we are told by John, "*went back and walked with Him no more*" (Jn. 6:66). Why was that? The reason is because most of the people who were following Jesus wanted something of Him and from Him that He was not prepared either to be or to give. They wanted Him simply to be their "bread" king. Jesus, on the other hand, wanted to be and to give them the "Bread of Life."

Dear friends, listen closely this morning for these words have direct application to our lives. Let us answer this question, which is not a matter of "Bible Trivia"—**IS JESUS OUR "BREAD KING" OR OUR "BREAD OF LIFE"?**

I.

It is important that we answer that question, for by our words and actions, whether consciously or unconsciously, **we often** appear to **want Jesus to be our “Bread King.”** Consider closely the actions of the people in John 6. There are at least three observations we should make. First, these disciples of Jesus were following Him because He could and did provide them with material blessings that satisfied their desires. Only the day before, He had demonstrated His power by providing them all with a free meal. It was wonderful! The prospect of having a ruler who could provide them with the material necessities of life with little or not effort on their part was even more wonderful. Second, even after Jesus rebuked their materialism with the opening words of our text, *“Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life,”* they responded by asking for another miracle. This Jesus refused to do. Jesus wanted to give them something much more important—His words of life! Third, after Jesus was finished preaching to them, they were unwilling to listen to or accept His words. Rather, they said among themselves, *“This is a hard saying; who can understand it”* (Jn. 6:60), and forsook Jesus. In summary, these followers of Jesus were primarily interested in material things rather than spiritual things; they were interested in having Jesus fulfill their physical desires, rather than they fulfilling Jesus’ spiritual desires; and they were unwilling to conform their thoughts to the truths spoken by their Savior.

Dear friends, let us be honest with one another. Are we not all often just like these individuals whom John describes as Jesus’ *“disciples”* (Jn. 6:61)? For instance, what are our prayers like? Are they not all too often merely shopping lists of material items that we would like to have? “Lord, I need this,” or “Lord, I want that”? Yesterday, as I was stopped at a stoplight I noticed a bumper sticker on an older car in front of me. It read, “Jesus, could I use a new car!” I am sure that it was attached with tongue in cheek, but it is very revealing, is it not? Our Lord is interested in our physical well-being, for He Himself taught us to pray, *“Give us this day our daily bread”* (Mt. 6:11). However, of the seven petitions in the Lord’s Prayer, only one deals with material items. The materialism of our present society ought not lead us to view our Savior as some sort of “Bread King!”

What about our overall Christian lives? How close are we to our Savior? Does our Savior direct our lives, or do we try to direct our Savior in our lives? Do we come to our Savior when we are in trouble and expect Him to perform a miracle for us, only to walk away after the problem is resolved with a brief, “Thank you, Jesus,” and an attitude that says, “Lord, don’t call me, I’ll call You”? Our Savior does not operate that way, and yet at times it appears we seem to think so! Wilbur Rees, a Christian author, describes an attitude that we can at times so easily adopt when he wrote: *“I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please, not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I don’t want enough of Him to make me love a black man or pick beets with a migrant. I want ecstasy, not transformation; I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please”* (Charles R. Swindoll, *Improving Your Serve*, p. 29).

What is the level of our spiritual aptitude? Are we growing spiritually? Do our children find us reading our Bibles? Young people, when your friends call on the phone and ask, “What are you doing,” are you ever able to say, “Well, I’m reading my Bible”? God’s word is packed with important information necessary for our lives, but it takes effort and at times intense effort to grasp the meaning and to ponder how to apply it to our lives. Do we make the effort, or do we suggest to ourselves, “I really can’t understand it. I’ll stick with *Sports Illustrated* or just go play videogames?”

Dear friends, **IS JESUS OUR “BREAD KING” OR OUR “BREAD OF LIFE”?** As we examine our lives, I would guess we will all have to confess that we often simply want Jesus to be our “Bread King.” Let us repent of such an attitude, for...

II.

Jesus always wants to be our “Bread of Life.” Jesus’ primary concern for us all is our souls! He tells us: *“The living Father send Me,...so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me!”* Our gracious God and Father in heaven sent His beloved Son into this world to rescue us from

ourselves, dear friends. He came to rescue us from our sins, which deserve God's eternal wrath and judgment. He wants us to live, not just here for a few years, but forever in His presence! In this sermon Jesus makes two things perfectly clear. First, He points out that He is the "Bread of Life" upon whom we are completely dependent; and, second, He urges us to strive for a personal and ongoing relationship with Him, based upon a living faith and leading to everlasting life!

Jesus says: *"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die."* Jesus' words are intended to take us back in time to Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The LORD God at that time revealed Himself to Moses as the *"I AM"* God (Ex. 3:14). Jesus says: *"I am the bread of life."* He identifies Himself with the LORD God who delivered Israel out of Egypt. Even as Israel was completely dependent upon the LORD God for deliverance from their enemies in Egypt and the elements of the deserts through which they passed, so we are completely dependent upon Jesus. He has more to offer us than the manna provided to Israel in the wilderness. The Israelites ate that bread and died, for in their wickedness they rejected God's greater gifts and focused only on their earthly desires. Jesus is the "Bread of Life!" Without Him all is ultimately lost, while with Him any temporal loss will inevitably result in eternal gain. Jesus says: *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."* Jesus did give His life for the world. He gave it consistently for over thirty years, keeping all of God's laws perfectly, so that as Paul says: *"Through (His)...righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life"* (Rom. 5:18). He gave His life for the world on Good Friday, taking our sins and nailing our failures to the cross (cf. Col. 3:14). We are completely dependent upon Jesus for our salvation. Peter emphatically tells us: *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12).

Jesus goes on in our text to say: *"Most assuredly, I say to you, 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.... Whoever eats My flesh indeed, and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."* Before we go further, we must understand that Jesus is not here speaking of the Lord's Supper. We know this, for Jesus says that *"unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you."* Attendance at the Lord's Supper is not a condition of salvation. Nowhere in the Bible does God tell us that if we fail to go to the Lord's Supper we will lose our souls. Rather, Jesus is here talking about faith. He is urging us to strive for a personal and ongoing relationship with Jesus based upon a living faith and leading to eternal life.

Jesus' words imply ongoing action. He promises literally: *"Whoever keeps on eating My flesh and keeps on drinking My blood has eternal life.... Whoever keeps on eating My flesh...and keeps on drinking My blood abides in Me, and I in him."* The Scriptures clearly tell us that God works through the means of grace. *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom. 10:17). God sanctifies and cleanses us *"with the washing of water (that is, baptism) by the word"* (Eph. 5:26). He does urge us to go to communion often, for in so doing we *"proclaim the Lord's death till He comes"* (1 Cor. 11:26). We are to keep on using these means of grace to secure a personal and ongoing relationship with Jesus!

Dear friends, let us not treat our Savior as a "Bread King," but rather as the "Bread of Life." Let us stay close to His words, pondering and applying them to our lives, while recognizing that they are absolutely essential for eternal life. This world's pleasures are but passing trifles. Let us rejoice in our Savior God's love. Let us live our lives with this confidence, that as we submit our every word and action to His word and will, He will abide in us to bless us. **JESUS ALWAYS WANTS TO BE OUR BREAD OF LIFE! Amen.**

Prepared by Pastor Paul D. Nolting
To God alone be the glory!