

The Feeding: Tim Keller

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The scripture reading is taken from John 6:1-14 and 27-35.

Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee, that is the Sea of Tiberius, ²and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. ³Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. ⁴The Jewish Passover festival was near. ⁵When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. ⁷Philip answered him. It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite. ⁸Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, ⁹"Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" ¹⁰Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down, about 5,000 men were there. ¹¹Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted.

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He did the same with the fish. ¹²When they had all had enough to eat, He said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." ¹³They gathered them and filled 12 baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the prophet who has come into the world!"

²⁷Do 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. ²⁸Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" ²⁹Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." ³⁰They asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?" ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' ³²Jesus 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.

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³³For 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." ³⁵Then 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."

This is the word of the Lord.

[00:03:13.830] - Speaker 1

In January and February, we're looking at these passages in the Gospel of John that look, especially at Jesus' miracles, what John calls miraculous signs. We're getting an idea bit by bit about who Jesus actually is. Christianity teaches that Jesus was the only perfect human being because he was more than a human being. If you and I were to try to imagine a perfect human being, we would fail because you'd have to be perfect to imagine a perfect human being. But if a perfect man were to be presented to us, we would, on the one hand, be surprised because we wouldn't have imagined him to be exactly the way he was, but at the same time, we'd be compelled. We'd be surprised and compelled. That's exactly what happens if you're willing to page after page, read about his life and the things he said and did. Now, we get to this very famous of all of his miraculous signs, the feeding of the 5000. It's a miracle in which Jesus takes a few loaves and fishes and then miraculously feeds a huge multitude of people. This is the only one of the miracles that is told in every one of the four Gospels.

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But John, unlike the other three Gospels, gives us this final discourse in which Jesus explains the meaning of the miracle. As we've been saying every week, John chose miracles to give us. He said, Jesus had many more miracles than I'm giving you in this book, but he chose the miracles he did because each of them, he called a sign, that is, they had symbolic meaning. And Jesus explains it very clearly. Why did you do the miracle of the loaves? Well, I fed people physically, but it was a symbol of the fact that I am the bread of life. That's verse 35. What I want to do for the rest of our time together is just, in a sense, meditate on the aspects of that remarkable statement. He says, I am the bread of life. I'd like to have three points to my address:

- I'm the bread of life
- I'm the bread of life
- I am the bread of life

Okay, that's a thorough way. In other words, I'd like to first look at what the meaning of bread is in general. I'm the bread of life. Secondly, the meaning of this bread in particular, I'm the bread of life.

[00:05:48.720] - Speaker 1

Finally, why Jesus is able to give it to us? I am the bread of life. First of all, I'm the bread of life. What does bread mean? Well, for all ancient people, bread meant more than it does to us because people did not have meat ordinarily. Meat was a luxury. Lots and lots of other kinds of foodstuffs that you and I take for granted were not available. Therefore, bread was really the heart of the meal, and it came to therefore essentially symbolize life itself. That's the reason why Jesus could actually say in the Lord's Prayer, when he gets to the petition where we're supposed to be asking people, asking God for our needs, all we have to say is give us this day our daily bread. Because bread simply meant everything we need for life. What keeps you on your feet? But for the Israelites, in particular, there were two very, very powerful historic references that came to their mind when someone talked about bread. One was the manna in the wilderness that when God brought the children of Israel out of slavery, they're on the way to the promised land, they were in the wilderness and there was nothing to eat.

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They would have starved to death. Except God, miraculously, six days a week, miraculously gave them manna. Manna appeared on the ground in the morning and it looked like frost and it was flaky. What they were... What they did was they gathered it and they turned it into cakes that actually had the taste of honey. Therefore, manna was savory, which means it was satisfying, and of course, it strengthened them and kept them alive in the wilderness. But the other reference that the Israelites would have known about was that when God told them how to build the tabernacle, the place of worship, the place where they related to God, one of the pieces of furniture of the tabernacle was the altar of show bread. It was basically a table, and on it, twelve loaves of fresh, hot bread were put. You imagine how the tabernacle smelled. Of course, the priests ate the bread and then they replaced it, but it represented what? See, even today, for you and me, to ask somebody out to eat is a friendly thing. But in those days, breaking bread was almost a formal way of saying, I want you to be my friend.

[00:08:16.920] - Speaker 1

If I bring you into my home, if I break bread with you, that meant we are friends. The way you ratified a covenant, you made a truce between two parties that were opposed, the way that you showed world and you showed each other that we're friends now, that we are no longer enemies. What did you do? You ate together. You broke bread together. All of this came together in this remarkable place in Exodus chapter 24. In Exodus, God brings the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, and he says, I'm going to enter into a relationship with you. But when he first comes down on Mount Sinai in the thunder and the smoke and the fire, God says, I'm holy and I'm glorious. And when I'm on the mountain, you can't touch the mountain. You can't come up on the mountain. You'll die. I'm infinite. You're finite. I'm holy. You're pure. I mean, you're flawed. I'm holy and pure. You're flawed and sinful. You can't touch the mountain. But there's a remarkable spot in Exodus chapter 24, where God, as it were, atones for their sin. He says to Moses, go to the 70 elders of Israel, sprinkle them with the blood of the sacrifice, and then bring them up on the mountain.

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Even though they don't literally see God's face, they come near, they have an amazing experience, and what do they do? In Exodus chapter 24, let me just read this to you. It says, Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words." Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the 70 elders of Israel went up and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky itself. But God did not raise his hand against them. They saw God and they ate and drank. See, when they went up on that mountain, and even though it's obviously inexpressible, I mean, it says they saw something like they, what was it? His feet? They saw something like a sky. It was some inexpressible sight. They realized that they were being brought into the presence of God and they weren't

being smitten. He did not raise his hand against them. He was saying, "I want a relationship with you." What did they do?

[00:10:41.410] - Speaker 1

They ate and drank. They broke bread. Because breaking bread doesn't just doesn't simply represent satisfaction, savory, satisfaction and strength. It also represents oneness. It represents peace. It represents relationship. Breaking bread with God meant not simply that he was your King, but he was the friend of your heart. That's all the bread meant. All those things. Now, Jesus doesn't just say talk about bread. He says, I am the bread of life. Now, what is this particular bread of life he's talking about? Well, he tells you in verse 27, as I said, the discourse in which he explains the bread of life is longer than what we had read. But if you look at the beginning of verse 27, at the beginning of his explanation of what the miracle of the loaves symbolized, he says, "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. The bread he's talking about, the bread of life is eternal life. Now, that's what the whole book of John is about, that through Jesus Christ you can have eternal life, which he is calling the bread of life.

[00:12:02.100] - Speaker 1

What is that? What is eternal life? Three things that we see here in the passage. Three things about eternal life. First of all, eternal life is a quality of life. The trouble with the term eternal life, it simply looks like to you and me that it just means life extended forever. No, no, it's a quality of life. There are two Greek words that can be used for life, that are translated life. One is the Greek word bios, which means physical life, or maybe I should just say existence. The other Greek word is Zoe, which refers not just to physical existence, but to quality of life. When he was 10 or 11 years old, I took my son, Michael on a trip in an airplane. Now, Michael had never remembered being on a plane before, even though he had been. Here he was sitting in the plane next to me. He's the middle son, so he often felt like he didn't get one-on-one time with dad, but he had been all by himself. He was sitting on the window seat and he was looking out. Then along comes these people who are saying, Can I get you anything to eat and drink?

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Which is amazing to him. I said, I'd like a Coke. She gives him a Coke. I remember, so remember. He pops the thing, pops it, starts to drink. He leans back in his chair, puts his feet up and he says to me, Dad, this is living. Now, he was using the word life. How? What did he mean? Was he saying, I am now physically existing? No, he wasn't talking about bios. He was living before and he's living after. Well, maybe the caffeine might have helped his bios a little bit. All right. What is he talking about? He's talking about life. He's talking about quality of life. What he means is he says, "This isn't boring. This is exciting. I got my time with you and I've never done anything like this." See, what's the difference when existing and living? There's a big difference. In fact, all of us are trying to live, not just exist. In fact, the idea of eternal, see, it says literally, eternal Zoe, is what I'm going to give you. It doesn't just say eternal bios. In fact, you all know if it's simply eternal existence. Is that anything to write home about?

[00:14:20.560] - Speaker 1

All of your self-doubts, all of your frustrations, all of the emptiness, everything that you are right now? Just imagine that going on forever. Is that exciting? We have a word for it in the Bible. It's called hell. Eternal existence is hell. Eternal life is a quality of life. It's what you do to move from existing to living. It means meaning in life. It means energy. It means joy. It means fulfillment. It means satisfaction. So first of all, eternal life is a quality of life. It's not eternal bios, it's eternal Zoe. It's a quality of life. Secondly, it's a quality of life that starts now. Again, when you see the word eternal life, that usually means, Oh, it means when I die, I go into afterlife and live with God. Yeah, it does, actually. Eternal life means at least that, but it means more than that. It does go on forever, but it starts now. How do we know? Well, in verse 35, which is the key verse, it says, He who comes to me, see, whoever comes to me will not go hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. Give us this bread.

[00:15:29.320] - Speaker 1

Here's how you get this bread. You believe in me. You come to me and you get it now. What's that mean? It can't mean you don't need to eat physically. Once you become a believer, once you come to Jesus and you believe in Jesus and you don't have to eat? No, of course. He's not talking about bios here. You still need to eat. But he says there is a deeper hunger. There's another hunger. It's a hunger for that which moves you from existing to living. Every single person is trying to find that movement from existing to living somehow. You're looking to certain things. There's a hunger, and you're trying to really have that life and you're looking to things. Unless it's me, if it's anything but me, what does he say in verse 27? It will spoil. Now, here he's probably talking about it. It's probably a reference actually to the Manna story. If you know the stories about the manna in the wilderness, that when the children of Israel were first facing starvation, and then suddenly Moses says, God is going to give you bread. God's going to give you, he's going to feed you.

[00:16:47.170] - Speaker 1

The first couple of days that it showed up on the ground, it was like a miracle. It was a miracle. What do you mean like a miracle? It was a miracle. But God warned them and said, I will only give you enough for one day at a time. Every day you got to go out and get it for the next day. Don't try to hoard it. Don't try to save it. Don't try to store it up. Because if you try to hoard it overnight, it will go bad. It'll spoil, it'll stink, it'll be filled with worms. And it was. Why? What's the big deal there? Here's the deal. God says, I want you to depend on me. I don't want you to think that the manna is going to save you. It's me saving you. I want you to trust me. The reason why people would hoard it is they're saying, "Hey, Moses pulled that miracle off today, but, wow, who knows if it's going to be there tomorrow. I just to be safe." So, what are you doing? What are you doing at that point? You're not looking to God. You're not trusting in God.

[00:17:47.430] - Speaker 1

You're looking to something else. Here's what Jesus is saying. There's lots of great things in this world. There gifts from God. There's family, there's career, there's talent, there's health. There's all sorts of things to do that do add Zoe to life. There's all kinds of... People say, I want a career, or I have a vision for art, or I have a cause that I really want to work for social justice. I really want to make a difference in the world, or I want a family, or I just want people. There's certain people who I just want to love and be loved by, or I want to get to a certain level in my career or something. Those are all great things, but when they become the main way that you move from existence to living, your main joy, your main source of meaning and hope and security and love and joy, he says, "They'll spoil. Anything more important than me, it will spoil." Now, there's nobody who's ever put this better than C. S. Lewis and that little radio, one of these radio talks he did over the BBC during World War II, and he puts it like this.

[00:18:57.990] - Speaker 1

He says, "Most people," I'm going to read this slowly because it's so good, "Most people, if they really learned how to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want and want acutely something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never keep their promise. The longings which arise in us when we first fall in love or first think of some foreign country or first take up some subject that excites us, our longings, which no marriage, no travel, no learning can really satisfy. I am not speaking of what would ordinarily be called unsuccessful marriages or trips or so on. I'm speaking of even the best possible ones. There is always something we grasped at in that first moment of longing that just fades away in the reality. The spouse may be a good spouse. The scenery has been excellent. It has turned out to be a good job, after all. But 'it' has evaded us." What's it? See, it's a quality of life that we think this thing can give us. And Jesus says it can't.

[00:20:12.340] - Speaker 1

It will spoil. Do you want proof? Look at the most successful people in any realm, whether it's in art or acting, whether it's in business or finance, whether it's in the media, any government, political leaders. Go look at their interviews or if they're in prominent enough, their biographies? Or just what you know of them and just ask, does success endure? Does it spoil? Doesn't it eventually start to stink? I mean, even those of you who just have actually been pretty successful in your life, you know it doesn't endure. Exactly what he's saying here. You thought that if you got it, it would bring more with it, more satisfaction, more of this life, this quality of life that you're looking for, but it would satisfy that deep hunger, and it doesn't. You know it doesn't. Here's the second thing. Jesus Christ says, anything you're looking to in order to move you from existing to living t hat's not me will not satisfy you. I'm the manna. I'm the one thing that will satisfy you, that will give your soul the savor it needs. I'm the one thing that will give you the life and strength. That leads to the third point.

[00:21:36.530] - Speaker 1

That's what's so remarkable about this. Not only that eternal life is a quality of life, and it's a quality of life and it's a quality of life that starts now, but secondly, that it comes through. It's not really something that

Jesus gives you. He's it. The most amazing thing here is not I have bread of life. Even though he does say it occasionally, he's I am the bread of life. Now, that is amazing. Of course, it's amazing. He says, I am the bread of life. If you want to see what he means by that in the metaphor, how do you eat this bread? Well, he tells you in verse 35. It says, I'm the bread of life. Whoever comes to me and who believes in me. Now, wait a minute. You don't believe in bread, do you? I'm the bread of life. Believe in me. I'm the bread of... You don't come to bread. I guess you can come to bread, but you can't believe in bread. But that's what he's saying. You see, he's mixing it up. It's a metaphor, and metaphor brings two fields of discourse together. What he's saying is that when you come to me and you believe in me, and when you make me your savior, and when you surrender to me as your Lord, you're feeding on me.

[00:22:45.730] - Speaker 1

You're getting the bread. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we get reconciliation with God, and we get the deepest satisfaction of our heart. We eat and drink on the mountain. Now, question, isn't that amazing? Yes, it is. Why? Because it makes Christianity utterly unique in two ways. Let me just mention this. Two ways, before moving on to the third question. How can Jesus actually be this? But two ways is really unique. Philosophically and religiously. I promise, I won't take too long on the philosophy, all right? But anyway. Many people have said that the history of all of philosophy is just a footnote on Plato. What that means is, if you go back to the oldest days of Greek and Roman, the Greek philosophers, you not only have Plato lining up against Aristotle, even before then you have Heraclitus and Parmenides. Basically, there was always this real question. The one or the many, the objective or the subjective? Is truth basically? Is reality basically? Is truth objective, transcendent, abstract, up there, and we all have to conform to it? Or is truth personal and subjective, and everyone has their own truth? Is it really one and we have to submit or is it many?

[00:24:21.010] - Speaker 1

Is it principal or is it particular? Is truth objective or is it subjective? And of course, there's problems with both of those. If it's objective, then we feel sort of trampled on, don't we? Because everybody's got to fit the procrustean bed and no matter who we are, we have to just kneel to the truth. But on the other hand, if you say it's subjective and everybody's got their own truth and every individual is different, then what holds us all together? I mean, there is no truth now. Anybody can do whatever they want or nobody feels like there's anything we're really living for. Is it one or is it many? Is it objective or subjective? Then Jesus Christ comes along and what is He saying? "I am the divine, cosmic truth that's become a person who can walk and talk and laugh and cry and you can know personally." In other words, you don't have to choose between the two. It's just, I mean, Christianity cuts the Gordian Knot. It just utterly breaks the historic, ancient, philosophical log jam, which is more basic. Is it the one or is it the many? Is it the object or the subjective?

[00:25:31.320] - Speaker 1

In Jesus they all come together. Secondly, though, Jesus Christ, when he says, "I am the bread of life," makes Christianity so unique. I mean, essentially, even though they don't all use the terms, every other religious founder basically says, Here's the way. This is the way to the bread of life. If you do these things, you can get the bread. Five-fold, the five pillars of Islam, the eight-fold path to enlightenment. The bread is the divine connection. Do this, do this. In other words, every other founder of every other religion basically says, I can tell you where the bread is. I can show you how to find the bread. I can show you the weight of life. But you see, if you say, I have the bread, I can show you where to get it. Then salvation is basically through your efforts. You have to do whatever you have to do in order to get that bread. You have to do whatever you have to do in order to go down that road. If somebody comes and says, I've got the bread of life. Okay, what do I have to do? Do I have to pray every day?

[00:26:39.190] - Speaker 1

Do I have to obey the Ten Commandments? Do I have to love my neighbor? What do I have to do? Then the person says, "Well, you have to do this, this, and this." But if he says, "I am the bread. If you have me, you've got salvation." You don't have to achieve it. That means salvation is by grace. That's the reason why this very important exchange here in verse 28, they said, "Well, what must we do to do the works of God?" Remember? "What must we do to do the works of God?" In other words, he says, "I've got this eternal life, this bread of life." They said, "Well, what do we have to do in order to get it?" He says, "The work of God is this to believe in the one he has sent." You don't have to do anything. You have to believe that the one who God sent has done it. He's lived the perfect life. He's loved God with all his heart, strength, and mind. He's loved his neighbor as himself. He's the only one who's done it. When you receive him, you receive it. When you rest in Him, you've got it.

[00:27:35.260] - Speaker 1

You don't have to say, "Now, what do I have to do?" He doesn't say, "I can show you the way to life, or I will be your guide on the road to life." He says, "I'm life." That means salvation is by grace, and that makes it utterly different than any other faith. Now, thirdly, how is this possible? That Jesus could say, "I'm the bread of life." How is it possible that he could give you this. Especially in light of what we said in Exodus, chapter 24, where the book of Exodus gets across the fact that if there is a God who really, really has created the world and who's infinitely exalted above it and transcend it and perfect and all that, how in the world could the life of God, which is the only thing that will really satisfy our souls, how could it get into us? He's infinite, we're puny. He's perfect and holy, we're sinners, flawed. How do you get an elephant in a dollhouse without crushing the dollhouse? You can't. So how could Jesus Christ be giving us this bread? And the answer is twofold. Two ways. First of all, he says, "I am the bread of life."

[00:28:56.760] - Speaker 1

Now, this is impossible to get across in the English translation, but when Jesus says in Greek 'Ego', meaning 'I', 'eimi', he says, "I am the bread of life." 'Ego eimi' means 'I am.' In Greek, it's very, very emphatic. Here's the reason why. Generally speaking, when you were saying I am this or I am that, the

word I am was understood and not said. In every language, it's a little hard to convey. In every language we have constructions in which words are dropped or letters are dropped and the listener knows that they're there, but they're not and they're understood. From Western Pennsylvania, people always drop part of their infinitive. They don't say it needs to be done. They say it needs done. And everybody knows what you're talking about. Or even contractions where you say don't instead of do not. In every language there are ways in which you do shorthand. You say things and you ordinarily don't spell it out. You don't put the other words or letters in there. You just they're understood. In Greek, seldom did you say ego eimi, you said the rest of this sentence, and everybody understood you meant 'I am'.

[00:30:13.100] - Speaker 1

But this is the first of seven times where Jesus emphatically says, I am the bread of life. I am the good shepherd. I am the light of the world. Over and over and over again, very emphatically. When he says, 'Ego eimi', it's almost like yelling. It's like what you and I would say, 'I am', which means very emphatic. Why was he being so emphatic? Why was he saying it like this? Was this just a rhetorical flourish? No. He's making a point about who he is. That comes out in John 8. In John 8, they're having an argument. The religious leaders are saying, "We're children of Abraham. We don't need you." Jesus looks at them. One of the most, this is maybe, I think, the most astounding thing anyone has ever said. It's the most astonishing claim in the Bible. He looks at them and he says, "Before Abraham was, I am." Now, when you and I read that, it just looks like atrocious grammar. See, if he had said before Abraham was, I was, that would have been amazing enough because what he would have been saying is, I lived before Abraham. I'm older than Abraham.

[00:31:26.720] - Speaker 1

That would have been incredible. But when he says, "Before Abraham was, I am," everybody there knew what he was saying because they immediately tried to kill him. They immediately tried to kill him. When he used the word, I am, he was taking the divine name that God had given Moses when he met Moses in the burning bush. In Exodus, chapter three, God appears to Moses in the burning bush, and he says, I'm sending you to Pharaoh. Moses says, "Who should I say has sent me? What's your name?" God says, "Tell them, 'I am' has sent you." It's just the Hebrew word to be. But Christian and Jewish theologians for centuries have known exactly what God was saying. God is basically saying there, "I am the God who always am. I am beginningless and I'm endless. There never was a time in which you could have said about me, He will be. There never will be a time about which you can say of me, I was, He was. I always am. Meaning, there is no beginning, no ending because I depend on nothing. Nothing caused me. Nothing could stop me from existing. I depend on nothing.

[00:32:44.630] - Speaker 1

Everything depends on me. I am the source of all being. Moses tell them being itself and the source of all being has sent you. That's my name. And Jesus is saying, that's my name. Before Abraham was, I am, and they immediately tried to kill him. He was saying, "I am the source of all life, of all power, of all being."

When he said that, you realize if Jesus had just suddenly said, "I'm God", there's all kinds of ways of reading that. If Jesus had literally said, By the way, I'm divine, I'm God, you could have said, "Well, you know, he's that little spark of good in all of us. He's that spirit of love that binds us all together." You could have... In other words, he's that... There's all kinds of ways. But when he said, no, I am the beginningless and endless, transcendent being, not only who created the whole universe, but on whom the universe every second depends. I am the source of all being. That's me. That's the first reason why he could be the bread of life because he's the source of all life. But here's the second reason. Because he says, I am the bread.

[00:33:58.900] - Speaker 1

But you know this. What I'm about to tell you know, but basically because you live in an industrialized society, you don't remember it. If you're a farmer or if you're a hunter-gatherer, you are constantly aware of something. Outside of the odd mineral like salt, everything we eat has died so that you can live. You cannot live without eating. Everything you eat has had to die so that you could eat it so you could live, whether plant or animal. Bread is not just grain that's died so that you could eat it, but you realize if the bread stays whole, you're going to fall to pieces because you're going to starve. But if you are going to be made whole, the bread has to be broken into pieces. When Jesus Christ says, "I am God who's become bread," what he means is, "I am God made breakable. I am God made vulnerable. I am God come to die on the cross for your sins. I am God come to atone for the things that you have done wrong. I am God come to become weak and vulnerable and do all the things that you should have done so that you can be saved by grace.

[00:35:18.940] - Speaker 1

That's the reason why I can reconcile you to the Father. That's the reason why we can be friends. That's the reason why the life of God is not fatal to you when it comes into you because I've atone for your sins. I'm God made breakable." That's the reason that when he broke bread, Luke 22, the night before he died, the last supper, he broke the bread and he said, "This is my body given, broken for you." Now, what is this to learn about this? Let me just give you three practical thoughts. Very practical, though, extremely practical. Number one, this is teaching you that Jesus Christ is not just someone to be believed, but you're supposed to make him your strength and your life. You have to do that every day. Just like with manna had to be gathered every day. You couldn't hoard it. It's not enough just to believe in Jesus Christ with your brain. You've got to find a way to every day make him your actual strength in life for living. He can't just be an abstraction. He's supposed to be food. Well, look, when you worry, really worry, and some of you are very anxious.

[00:36:35.060] - Speaker 1

Why? Because there's something that has to happen or you're not going to be happy or something has to happen or life isn't going to be right. Something has to happen. But here's what you ought to think. If you're a Christian and you've received eternal life and you've made Jesus your Lord and savior, then

here's what you ought to say. This thing that I'm worried about is a good thing, but it's not my life. It's not the thing that's going to keep me going forever. It's not the real satisfaction of my heart. It's not my life. It's not the real basis for my value and worth and security. This is a good thing, but it's not the ultimate thing. Jesus is my life. This is not my life. Guess what? You're going to stop worrying as much. You're going to start to relax. You know why? You're feeding on him. You're actually making him your life and strength at that moment. Or let's say you're getting angry. Why are you getting angry? You're very resentful towards someone. Why? Because they've robbed you of something. What is that? Something. Here's what you ought to say. There's something that I lost, whether it's my reputation, my money.

[00:37:33.240] - Speaker 1

It's a good thing, but it's not my life. Jesus is my life. Jesus has given me this and he's given me that. I'm going to be with him forever. What are you doing? You're starting to forgive. Why can you forgive? Because Jesus died on the cross for my sins. How can I not forgive this person? What you're doing is you're feeding on him. You're actually getting strength from him. Now, you have to do that every day. See, manna has to be done every day. How do you do that? You do it the way you're doing it right now, by the way. You're in corporate worship, and Jesus is becoming an existential reality to you in a way he wasn't before. You do it in your own prayer time. You do it in your own reading of the Bible. The Bible is often looked at as bread and food. You're savoring it. You're thinking about the things that it says about you, especially in the Lord's Supper, where we literally have bread and we have a cup and we have bread. We, Christians, believe that the Holy Spirit is particularly present to make Jesus Christ a living reality and your strength at that time.

[00:38:37.700] - Speaker 1

You've got to do that every day. You have to. It can't be hoarded. It can't just be you had an experience five years ago. Unh-uh, every day! Number one.

Number two, if you're going through a wilderness right now, if you're going through really, really difficult times, God's got manna for you. It's in Jesus. Here's what I want you to remember. It's hard to change your diet. Always is. But if you've got nothing else going and you're out there in the desert, in the wilderness, turn to him and he will feed you. He will feed you. He will give you, in a sense, a savor. He will give you a satisfaction in Jesus Christ that is deeper than anything else you've ever had. Sometimes it's the bad times that teach you how to feed on him. Very often it's the bad times that in which you finally figure out how to make Jesus not just an abstraction, but something that really becomes your life and strength. Sometimes you don't realize that Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have.

Lastly, receive him if you're going to receive eternal life. If there's anything in your life you're trusting for, for your significance and security, for your salvation, there's anything more important to you than Jesus Christ, it'll spoil.

[00:39:54.650] - Speaker 1

Go to him. Come to Him. Believe in him. Let's pray.

Our Father, thank you. We thank you that your son have been made our bread. He became breakable. The only reason why your divine power is accessible is because of the incarnation and the atonement, because he left his glory behind and became a human being, and because he went to the cross and died there in our place. Lord, bread has to be broken if we're going to be made whole. And that's substitution. That means he had to go and take what we... He died so that we would live. He died in our place. We thank you for that. And we know that even the sadness that comes from knowing that we caused it is healing. It's softening. It's consoling. It's strengthening. Teach us how to feed on him in our hearts by faith, by the power of your Holy Spirit, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.