

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15

Psalm 78:23-29

God rained down manna from heaven; so mortals ate the bread of angels. (vv24, 25)

Ephesians 3:14-21

John 6:22-35

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, eternal goodness, immeasurable love, you place your gifts before us; we eat & are satisfied. Fill us & this world in all its need with the life that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- John 6:22-35

... ²⁵When [the crowd] found [Jesus] on the other side of the sea [of Galilee], they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" ²⁶Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." ²⁸Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." ³⁰So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it & believe you? What work are you performing?" ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³²Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven & gives life to the world." ³⁴They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." ³⁵Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, & whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. In *John 6*, Jesus refers to a spiritual eating (cf. the contemporary phrase "feed your mind"). (Accounts of the Lord's Supper refer to a physical eating of Jesus' body cf. *Matthew 26:26-28*). How is this spiritual eating a prerequisite for the physical eating in Holy Communion? See *Small Catechism: Lord's Supper, esp. Q4, 5; Formula of Concord Solid Declaration VII:61-65 SC; FC:SD available bookofconcord.org*
2. How does Jesus challenge & change the crowd's perception of "work" (vv27-29)? See (cf. *Mark 10:17-22; John 1:10-13, 3:17-21; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:20-22, 28; Galatians 2:16, 3:10-14, 24; Ephesians 2:8-9; see also Hosea 6:6*)

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Jesus challenges the status quo (vv32-35). Think about the last five years in your congregation... how has a dead traditional-ism (a.k.a. "the way we've always done it", not Christians traditions themselves) been confronted by a living faith? Think also about your personal life...how have you had to leave behind food that perishes for living bread? Don't forget what Jesus says in *Matthew 5:17-19; Mark 3:1-6, 7:17-23*.
4. Vv 34-35 echo Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well (4:1-42, esp. 13-15; cf. *Exodus 17:1-7*). What are the differences in the metaphors of bread & water? What are the differences in their *Exodus* prototypes? When has Jesus been the bread of life for you? When has he been living water for you?

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Think about the differences between the heavenly bread & earthly bread. Which is easier for you to offer to others? Which is easier for your congregation? How do you offer the heavenly bread to pre-Christians? How often do you bring a pre-Christian adult friend to worship so they can be fed spiritually? See *Mark 2:1-12*
6. Jesus has seven "I am" statements in St. John's gospel (6:35, 8:12, 10:9, 10:11, 14, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1, 5; cf. *Exodus 3:14; John 8:24, 58*). How do each of these help you introduce your pre-Christian friends to Jesus? In what everyday life circumstances are each one useful?

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11th Sunday after Pentecost

08.04.24

Series: The Shape of Belief

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Our inward beliefs about Jesus shape our outward lives

At the Table

Sharing food shares life in body & spirit

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life.
Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (v35)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. (*Matthew 4:4*)

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