

I Am The Bread Of Life

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Date: 22 March 2026

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[0:00] As we turn to look at God's word, we're all being well over the next few weeks.!

And we'll go through the seven sayings, the seven I am sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of John. So that's the course that we're hoping to take.

And as it says there, the first passage is the passage that we have before us tonight. You can move the slide on.

Now, Jesus says on three separate occasions, or is credited on three separate occasions, as calling himself the bread of life.

I am the bread of life. And there the Jews grumbled and said, how can he say that I am the bread that came down from heaven? And then in verse 48, I am the bread of life.

[1:19] Which very simply gives us our text for this evening, and our title for this evening. The text that I've chosen is not the first one, but the last one that we had up there.

I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

The headings that we have for this evening, we'll look at the manna, we'll look at the true bread, and we'll look at the broken bread. And we can even see how these are marked out in the text that we have there this evening.

Obviously, our heading is taken from verse 48. We'll speak about the manna, which is mentioned in verse 49. We'll speak about the true bread that came down from heaven at the start of verse 50.

And then the broken bread and God's provision that's fulfilled for us in the latter half of that passage. So that's where we're going tonight.

[2:33] Hopefully, we'll get to the end. If you listen fast, we'll get there. Because as you've seen in the passage, it's a long passage.

There's a lot within the passage. And as I say, hopefully, we'll get through it. You can see there that there's kind of slight subheadings for each of the headings that we had.

The manna, the true bread, the broken bread. And we have God's provision remembered.

Obviously, in our singings tonight in the Psalms, we've looked back at God's provision for the children of Israel in the manna in the wilderness.

A large part of the passage that we have tonight is where Christ reveals himself quite clearly to the gathered congregation that he has. And then we have, at the end, where Jesus not only speaks about himself as the bread of life, but speaks about himself as the one that has come, that his flesh is to be broken for us and how we have to partake of that.

And why have we to partake of that? To receive eternal life. And that's why Jesus came and he clearly speaks to us through the passage here that's before us to say that if you eat the bread, eat of Jesus' body, the body that was broken for us, that you will have eternal life.

[4:04] Not only did he talk about eternal life, but we see throughout the passage, the phrase repeated time and time again, the last day. And where Jesus speaks about the last day and he will raise us up on the last day, pointing to the fact that there will be a last day.

And we have to think about whether we are ready and prepared for that last day. With these thoughts in mind, let us turn to the passage and see what it says to each and every one of us.

When we were here on the 8th of March, when we were looking at the passage in Matthew, if you remember I spoke to you about how Matthew has a theme running through where Jesus is the new Moses.

Well, we see even in the passage here tonight, where that theme is repeated in the Gospel of John. We looked at the passage in Deuteronomy previously, where God said that he would raise up a prophet like Moses from among the brothers, and that it was him that was to be listened to. And we read, if we had read the whole passage, we would have read in John 6, 14, at the end of the feeding of the 5,000, where it was said, this indeed is the prophet who is to come into the world. [5:32] And having partaken of the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus then sent the disciples off. They went across the lake, and as we're aware, there was a storm during the night, and Jesus walked on the water, and they arrived and went to Capernaum.

And the crowd got up in the morning, couldn't find Jesus, and as we read here, they went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. How many of you are here tonight, seeking Jesus, seeking to find out what Jesus has to say to you?

Have you come here tonight to truly seek Jesus? As we move on, we see that Jesus knew the heart of the people that were there.

We read that they came seeking Jesus, but Jesus knew what was in their heart. That they came seeking him not because they saw a sign, but because they ate the fill of the loaves.

Was it wrong for them to seek Jesus in that way? They had been on the hill all day. The disciples wanted to send them off, but Jesus wanted to feed them.

[6:57] And they cast out to find out what they had available to them, and it was a young boy who had his packed lunch with him. Two fish and five loaves.

And Jesus broke, having given thanks, broke the bread and broke the fish. And they fed. And they had their fill of food. Why?

Because it was probably the best fish and the best bread that they had ever tasted. Not because the wee boy had brought it with them, or his mum might have made it up for him, but because, having been in the hands of Jesus, the bread was broken.

And the bread was prepared. And it met the tastes of the 5,000 people that were there. And they ate.

And they had their fill. And what do we know about what happened? They went round and they collected the baskets. There was more than the people could eat.

[8:01] And they came and they sought Jesus. How do I know, or why do I say, that it's probably the best fish meal and the best bread meal that they had ever had?

And see, if we go back to John chapter 2, what did Jesus do with the water? He turned it into wine. What did the master of the feast say?

He said, why did you keep the best wine till the end? The water was turned into the best wine that the master of the feast had ever had. So the people that gathered on the hill ate and were satisfied. Satisfied to their own taste. And then they came seeking Jesus. But Jesus knew what was in their heart. Didn't really come seeking Him because of who He was.

They came seeking Him because they wanted more bread. We'll carry on and we'll look to see. Because Jesus then teaches them that what they really sought was the bread that was going to perish.

[9:15] And He very quickly goes on to explain that who He was. That they were to seek food that endures to eternal life.

which the Son of Man will give you. For on Him God the Father has set a seal. What did it mean for God to have set a seal on the Son of Man?

Well we can go back into Ezekiel and we can see when there was turmoil within the temple when people were carrying out abominable acts towards God that God set six men into the temple and they were to put a seal or a mark on those that were disgusted with what was going on.

And then after the six men had gone through they came back through and killed all those that were carrying out these acts. And the only ones that weren't to be touched were those on whom the mark had been set.

The seal had been put upon them. How many of you here this evening have had the seal put upon them having given your life to Jesus having been standing with Him and seek to know Him each and every day?

[10:38] Because as there was action on that day again as we find out there will be a last day and will we be found with the seal of the Lord Jesus upon us.

But God had placed His seal on His Son and what did that mean for us? Well what it meant was that the people that were there had already seen their hearts that they were trying to get more bread to satisfy their physical need.

They still weren't understanding what Jesus was teaching them. They say here what must we do to be doing the works of God. They thought they had to be doing something to earn God but Jesus very quickly tells them and it's the answer that's given time and time again.

This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He has sent. And who did God send? God sent His Son into the world to die for each and every one who believes who believes in Him. And that's what God requires of each and every one of us. Not for us to try and earn our salvation through works but to truly believe in who God sent.

[12:06] And that's what He teaches us here in the passage before us. As we move on we see the mention that the people in their hearts were wanting to see another sign.

In their minds it was Moses that had given them the manna in the desert. And Jesus corrects them knowing what they're thinking and says to them truly, truly it wasn't Moses who gave you the bread from heaven but my father gives you the true bread from heaven for the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

What was the problem with the manna in the desert? It wasn't that the manna wasn't tasty. We read within scripture it tells us that it was like bread dipped in oil.

The problem is that those that ate it they died. They didn't see the promised land but we have a provision here in Jesus coming that if we taste the bread that he has to offer i.e.

his own life that we will have eternal life. It is the bread that satisfies satisfies each and every one of them.

[13:34] Not looking at what perishes in this life but looking to eternal life. The people had thought that they could earn their salvation.

Jesus teaches them that it's not by works but it's by faith. Faith in the one that has been sent. He corrects their unbelief or sorry corrects their misinformation in relation to it being Moses that had given them manna in the desert and teaches them that it was God.

But God is now offering them a greater than the manna that was there. Why? Because he loves us. And we see as we continue here that Jesus knows the heart not just of those that were gathered in front of him but knows the heart of each and every one of us.

We can move the slide on. And this is where Jesus says I am the bread of life. What does he require?

[14:43] Whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet you do not believe.

hard words to read. Jesus is there telling them that he is the bread of life. He's the one that was going to come.

He's the one that can offer life to them. But yet they see him but they do not believe. You here this evening you've heard God's word preached you've read God's word you've questioned God's word it might be right but you're leaving and you're saying I don't believe.

It's a sad sad position for the people then it's a sad position for people now. Do we recognize that Jesus is the bread of life?

Do we recognize that he is offering to each and every one that hears that call upon their life eternal life?

[15:57] And all he's asking is that you would believe. Believe in him and believe in the one who sent him. The people had asked before what must we do to be doing the works of God.

The message is clear. Believe. Believe in the one that has sent him and you will indeed be saved. As we move on we see in Ephesians reminding us of where we were a fortnight ago as we looked at this word.

The people had Jesus there in front of them. They had seen the signs that he had performed. They had seen the feeding of the 5,000. that their eyes weren't open.

Not just their physical eyes but the eyes of their heart were needing to be enlightened as we saw before. Again, are you praying that the eyes of your heart would be enlightened to see the truth that is before us this evening?

That God made provision in times past but now there's a provision for you to come and believe in his son Jesus that you may indeed believe and have eternal life.

[17:26] We move on. Because what does it say here to us about if we come to Jesus?

Jesus, he will never cast us out. He will never cast us out. There's nothing worse than going somewhere and being thrown out.

I've seen it happen. I might have even had to do it myself. When you see people thrown out because of behaviour or thrown out for various different reasons, it's humiliating.

But Jesus is saying here if you come to him, he will never face that. He will never cast you out. Why? Because he loves you. And that should give us confidence.

to come to him, to know him, and to receive that blessing from him. And why does he tell us that? For this is the will of my father, that everyone who looks on the son and believes on him, what should they have?

[18:38] They should have eternal life. And I will raise them up on the last day. And where will he raise them up to? He will raise them up to be with him.

not just for one day, but forever. Is that something you truly desire? Is that something you long for? That's what it promises us.

If we come to Jesus, he will never cast us out. And he will raise us up on the last day to be with him. him. And then we see that Jesus is the true bread for each and every one of us.

The people still grumbled. Not because Jesus had said that they would have eternal life, but because they couldn't get their heads round the fact that Jesus had said he had come down from heaven.

They could see his parents, the newest parents, Joseph and Mary, but they couldn't. After having identified earlier on in the passage that he was a prophet, that he was one that they wanted to seek, the one that they wanted to get the bread that he had to offer to them, they still couldn't understand and couldn't accept that this was truly Jesus.

[20:09] I pray that that's not the position that you find yourself in as you gather here this evening. But as you read God's word, as you sing God's praise, that you would truly understand who God is and what his word teaches us is true about him.

And while the people are not really understanding, in verse 34, to give us the bread always, not really understanding what it was that they were asking for, that that would be your cry tonight, knowing that if you come and you believe, that you would ask for that bread, that bread that satisfies the hunger that so often we have within life, that hunger to know God and to be with him, not just this day, but throughout eternity.

eternity. And then as we go on, we see that Jesus again knows the heart of the people. And he says something to them that might seem strange.

No one comes to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. There's that warning to us again about the last day. But what does it mean for God to draw us? Do you hear God speaking to you through his word? Do you feel that call upon your life? Come, come unto me.

[21:44] If you are weak, if you are heavy laden, come to me and I will give you rest. Is God drawing you closer to him? You might have been drawn to come to church tonight because you enjoy the fellowship, because you enjoy singing the praises.

But is God calling you closer to him? Is he drawing you? And are you going to answer so that on that last day that you will be raised up with him?

Jesus is indeed the true bread. What have we learnt in the past about who he is? What did we learn in Sunday school? What were we taught in home?

everyone who comes to the father he will not cast out. And again that reminder to us that truly truly I say to you whoever believes has eternal life.

Eternal life for believing in the one who was sent. Sent from heaven to be the bread that we can feed upon. the bread that comes down from heaven.

[23:05] And where did the bread from heaven first appear when he was born in this world? A wee bit of information for you.

Bethlehem in the Hebrew bayit lechem is simply translated house of bread.

It is no coincidence that when the bread of heaven was born in this world that he was born in the house of bread.

There's something for you to consider and how God foreordains all things so that we can understand so that we can appreciate that Jesus is the true bread and he reveals himself quite clearly in the passage here this evening.

Which takes us to the final point the broken bread and God's provision fulfilled. And again Jesus says quite clearly I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

[24:17] If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. Jesus has gone from speaking about being the bread of life to now starting to explain that his flesh will be broken and his body will be broken for us and are we ready and prepared to partake of that?

And again those that were gathered there the Jews disputed how can this man give us his flesh to eat? Little did they know that it would be them that would actually provide the means on a cross for Jesus body to be broken for us and they would very much answer sadly their own question and still wouldn't understand clearly what it was that they were doing and who it was that they were doing it to.

The body broken. If we move on we can see what Jesus says. It's a long passage to read. Maybe if we move it to the next slide we can see what it says here what's repeated throughout it.

Eat the flesh. Feed on my flesh. My flesh is true food. Feeds on my flesh. Feed on me. Feed on this bread.

We're told to look and think about repeats that we see within scripture. Within the four verses the five verses that we have here before us.

[26:09] Six times Jesus calls us to come and feed upon him. And who does he call to feed upon him?

You can see there maybe it doesn't appear particularly well on the slide but it's whoever whoever feeds on my flesh. Whoever feeds on my flesh.

Whoever feeds on me. Whoever feeds on this bread. What will happen? They will live forever. What a promise to each and every one of us.

Now you might be sitting there tonight thinking well am I included within that whoever moved the slide on. What does it say in the first line?

Jesus said truly truly I say to you unless you eat the flesh of the son and drink his blood you have no life in you.

[27:16] But whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. And again that phrase I will raise him up on the last day. Amen. Jesus his body was broken for each and every one of us.

I'd hear that call upon our lives this night. I ask you the question again. Is Jesus drawing you to him? Are you hearing that message?

Young and old alike. You may have heard God's word preached time and time again. You may have tried to avoid it. as a fish tries to avoid a hook.

But once the hook is in the fish of the mouth the fisherman winds it in and the fish cannot get away. If you truly hear God calling upon you tonight I would ask you to respond to him and allow him to draw you closer and closer to him.

That you would indeed know him and that you would know him and know each and every promise that he gives within his word is true for each and every one of us.

[28:30] Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, are you prepared to eat that and know the blessing that comes from you?

And what does it mean to eat? the bread and the flesh? Three weeks ago we sat around the table. We read what's within 1 Corinthians 11 that we read each time we come to the table. We're given the institution that Jesus says, this is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Why? because he came to do it for each and every one of us. Jesus is the bread of life. Are you prepared to eat?

And once you have eaten, are you prepared to look forward to the last day when he will come and he will take us to be with him?

[29:44] we spoke earlier on of the feeding of the 5,000 and how the bread was broken and those that ate were satisfied.

What they ate that day was a foretaste, just a foretaste of what the banquet will be like for those that are called into heaven. and we will see God's hand as he prepares a table of food that we could not imagine that we can feast upon in his presence and enjoy eternal life.

The manna is a provision in the wilderness but those that ate it died. God sent his son Jesus the true bread of life into this world.

Why did he send it? Because there needed to be reconciliation. And for that reconciliation to happen his body had to be broken.

And it was broken for each and every one of us that hear that call this night. And as I have said earlier on, if you're feeling drawn to Jesus because you're hearing that call upon your life tonight, don't leave and run away.

[31:19] When the manna was on the ground, people had to be careful that they didn't trample on it and ruin what was there. Don't treat God's word in the same way, by running away and thinking, I can get away from this.

if God is calling you, he will draw you and he will draw you closer. Come now and accept the bread that was given for us.

Jesus is the bread of life. Take the bread of life and know what it is to have eternal life in preparation for that final day.

Let us pray. Let us pray.