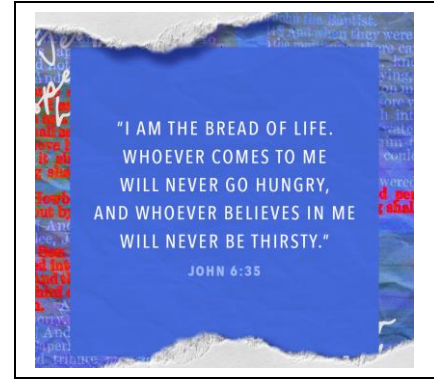


In His Words: Letting Jesus Speak for Himself

Jesus said: I Am the Bread of Life

Scripture: John 6:22–35



Introduction: For the next 4 Sundays we will be exploring Jesus' Words and His 'I AM' statements from the gospel of John. I AM is the name of God – Yahweh. So Jesus is stating He is the same God – the great I AM.

Who can remember when fresh bread was delivered from the back of a horse and cart? I can and we couldn't resist the smell of freshly baked, warm bread. Many times, we picked out the middle and ate it – only to get home in a lot of trouble.

There are over 200 different types of bread we can eat today – what a wide choice. The word bread is used 24 times in John's Gospel. Jesus teaches us that we should not be too preoccupied with perishable food and the material things of this world but should strive for spiritual food which will give us everlasting happiness.

Our society and indeed the entire world is filled with unsatisfied and hungry people. We long for connection, understanding, love, compassion, and so much more.

C.S. Lewis said,

"If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."

The Bread of Life.

Just as physical bread nourishes and sustains our bodies, Jesus, the Bread of Life, nourishes and sustains our souls. This metaphor is not just about physical hunger and thirst but speaks to the deeper spiritual hunger and thirst that exists in every human being.

In the ancient world, bread was a staple food, a necessity for survival. It was the primary source of nourishment and was often used symbolically to represent life itself. When Jesus declares, "I am the Bread of Life," He is saying that He is essential to our spiritual life. Without Him, our souls starve and wither, just as our bodies would without physical food.

We all know the feeling of hunger and the satisfaction that comes from eating a good meal. But Jesus, as the bread of life gives us lasting satisfaction. When we come to Him, when we believe in Him, we will never hunger or thirst again. This is a promise of spiritual fulfillment.

The world offers many things that promise to satisfy our hunger and thirst. Wealth, success, power, pleasure – these are the things that the world tells us will make us happy. But as many of us have experienced, these things often leave us feeling empty and

unsatisfied. They are like junk food that tastes good for a moment but leaves us hungry again soon after.

Jesus gives us the spiritual nourishment we need to live a life of faith – He feeds our souls with His word, His love, His grace, and His presence. He strengthens us in our weakness, comforts us in our sorrow, and guides us in our confusion. He is the source of our spiritual life, the one who sustains us in our journey of faith.

False Promises from the world.

Unlike Jesus, the things of this world make promises that simply don't come true. These false promises come in many forms and can be found in the pursuit of wealth, power, fame, pleasure, and even in the pursuit of knowledge or wisdom.

The world tells us that if we just have enough money, if we just have enough power, if we just have enough popularity, if we just have enough pleasure, or if we just know enough of anything, then we will be truly satisfied.

We falsely believe that if we have enough, we'll be enough.

The reality is that these worldly pursuits leave us feeling empty and disappointed. The pursuit of wealth can lead to greed and materialism, the pursuit of power can lead to corruption and tyranny, the pursuit of fame can lead to vanity and narcissism, the

pursuit of pleasure can lead to hedonism and addiction, and the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom can lead to arrogance and pride.

These worldly pursuits are transient and fleeting – wealth can be lost, power can be overthrown, fame can fade, pleasure can become dull, and knowledge and wisdom can be surpassed.

As the Bible says in 1 John 2:17, "The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever."

The world's false promises cannot satisfy our hearts because they are not aligned with our ultimate purpose, which is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Jesus satisfies.

The satisfaction of Christ is a profound and life-changing truth that we find in the Gospel of John. When Jesus declares, *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty,"* He is offering a satisfaction that the world cannot give.

So, what's the context of this statement and why did Jesus say it? Jesus had just fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish, a miraculous sign of His divine power and provision. The people were amazed and followed Him, not because they understood who He was, but because they wanted more of the

physical bread. In response, Jesus pointed them to a greater reality – Himself, the Bread of Life.

The satisfaction that Jesus offers is rooted in a relationship with Him. It's about coming to Him, believing in Him, and finding our identity and purpose in Him. This is a satisfaction that transcends our circumstances, our feelings, and even our understanding. It's a satisfaction that is grounded in His unchanging character, His unfailing love, and eternal promises.

When we come to Him, we will never go hungry or thirsty again. This doesn't mean we won't have physical needs or face challenges in this life. But it means that in Christ, we have everything we need for life and godliness. We have the assurance of His presence, the comfort of His love, and the hope of eternal life.

In contrast to the fleeting and superficial satisfaction that the world offers, the satisfaction that Christ offers is deep, lasting, and fulfilling. It's not dependent on our performance, our possessions, or the approval of others. It's based solely on His grace and His work on the cross.

Have you ever found yourself wondering if there was more to life? Have you ever come to the end of your week and thought, “Wow, was that it, isn't there anything more?”

If so, you're in good company. We weren't made for this world and its systems of progress, production, and efficiency. This place leaves us wanting... This place leaves us unsatisfied and hungry.

If that sounds like you today... If you've been trying to fill your life with the empty promises of this world and its systems, then I've got good news for you. Jesus is the bread of life. Jesus is the sustenance and provision you've been seeking... And He says,

“Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

He is the answer, the only answer, to your parched and weary soul.

Let us join in our pursuit and commitment to Jesus, His commandments, the Church, and the Kingdom of Heaven. Let's enter His rest today and forsake the shallow promises of this world and its systems.

Prayer: *“Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day and for your Word that guides us. Open our eyes to see the false promises of this world, and our hearts to fully embrace the satisfaction found only in you. Guide us, teach us and let your Holy Spirit convict us.”*