

## The Bread of Life

Malcolm Muggeridge, shortly before his death, said that in his few years as a Christian he had discovered that the most important thing in life is “seeking God; and having sought Him to find Him; and having found Him to love Him.” Indeed, this is exactly what our Lord teaches us. We need to find Him, and, in finding Him, we need to know real life. As we see in our text today, however, many folks miss the privilege of knowing Him, even though they are in His presence.

### John 6:22-35

**22** On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. **23** Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. **24** So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

**25** When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” **26** Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. **27** Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” **28** Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” **29** Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” **30** So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? **31** Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” **32** Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **34** They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

**35** Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

#### I. **Sometimes we miss Jesus because we make a superficial search (vv. 22-27)**

In our text, folks were looking for Jesus, because they were curious or, as Jesus said, “you ate your fill of the loaves.” Jesus instructs them not to look just for physical food in this life, which perishes, but rather for food that leads to eternal life. We often come to Jesus with our agendas, and we want Jesus to justify and validate our prior commitments. We, in order to really know Him, must drop our agendas and seek Him on His terms.

#### II. **Sometimes we miss Jesus because we make superficial efforts (vv. 28-29)**

In the text, we might expect those around Jesus to ask “Who is this Son of Man?”, but rather they ask “What must we do...?” It is forever our tendency in things spiritual to look to our own efforts and what we must do to attain the benefits of religion, rather than giving up on ourselves and looking only to Jesus Christ. When we look to our own efforts, we miss Him, because we only find Him when we realize that our chief work is simply to believe in Him.

#### III. **Sometimes we miss Jesus because we seek superficial assurances (vv. 30-33)**

In verse 30, the crowd asked Jesus for a sign, even though He had just fed 5,000 families with five biscuits and two small fish! Folks who don’t yet know Jesus often look for signs that will corroborate His claims on their lives. But it is wrong to ask for more than God has already given us. When scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus for signs on other occasions, He says that no sign will be given to them but that of Jonah, which symbolizes Jesus’ own death and resurrection. This is indeed the great sign for us today. When we do not receive with faith the signs and assurances that Jesus gives us, we shall always be inclined to turn to superstitions and myths and “coincidences” for our daily guidance. When we do that, we miss Jesus.

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**IV. Sometimes we miss Jesus because we experience superficial conversions (vv. 34-35).**

In verse 34, the crowd seems to believe in Jesus, and yet Jesus indicates that they still need to see Him personally as the sole answer to their search: "I am the bread of life." We can join churches and make public professions and still not know Him, if we are only seeking what He has to offer us instead of Himself. Augustine said it well: "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee."

**Discussion Questions**

1. What types of agendas have you observed that folks bring to Jesus, asking Him to bless? What agenda did you have to drop in coming to Jesus Christ?
2. Why is it that we human beings constantly look for what we can do to achieve God's blessing? Why did the crowd, in verse 28, ask, "What must we do?"
3. What sort of signs do folks today look for to warrant their religious beliefs? Why is it that we look for signs? What signs has God given us that Jesus is the bread of life?
4. What causes "superficial conversions"? How can we know for sure that we are seeking Christ instead of what Christ gives us?

**Going Deeper**

1. Are you sure that you have truly discovered life in Jesus Christ? How do you know?
2. How can you more deeply enjoy the life He gives you?