

The Bread Sermon II

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #20)

John 6:41-51

A. Jesus' "Bread Sermon" has three major parts

1. In 6:25-40, Jesus' evangelical sermonette, he teaches the height of the Gospel - that is, it is provided solely by God
2. In 6:41-51, Jesus' ecumenical sermonette, he teaches the breadth of the Gospel - as wide as the world and every individual
3. In 6:52-59, Jesus' Eucharistic sermonette, he teaches the depth of the Gospel - into our hearts, souls, and bodies

B. And, there is another question that isn't asked directly of Jesus

THE EXPLICIT QUESTION (6:41-44)

A. Question Five (6:41-42) is "How can this human - this flesh and blood person, Jesus - claim to be heaven-sent bread?"

1. It is a question many ask: "How can Jesus - the human son of Joseph and Mary - claim to be divine?"
2. What evidence is there to back up such a claim?

B. Jesus: "Stop your grumbling! No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws that person to me."

1. Rather than defend his provenance; Jesus teaches his Father's providence
2. Jesus talks about God's sovereignty: "Coming to me originates with my Father"
 - a. Jesus says no one can believe in me unless my Father is at work
 - b. Meaning: God, not logical arguments, persuasive theological truths, or well-honed evangelistic techniques, brings people to Jesus
3. It's never our defense of God that wins the day; it's always all God

THE IMPLICIT QUESTION (6:45-47)

A. There is an implicit (i.e., implied) question behind 6:45-51: "Who is being addressed by this sovereign, drawing Father?"

"All your children shall be taught by the Lord" (Isaiah 54:13)

"For what can be known to them about God is plain to them [all], because God has shown it to them [all]... so they are [all] without excuse" (Romans 1:19-20)

"I ask, have they [all] not heard? Indeed they have; for "their voice has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the world." (Romans 10:18)

B. This does not sever the nerve of mission or our role in it...

1. Whoever comes to Jesus wants to get this Truth out into the world

"The harvest is huge, but there are hardly any workers. So pray the Lord of the Harvest will send out workers into the field." (Matthew 10:37-38)

2. Note the "saving" isn't for all those who've heard; the "saving" is for all those who've listened and learned and come to Jesus

3. God is constantly talking to his world through his Creation (General Revelation) and this Gospel (Special Revelation) proclaimed in his Church

4. Mission, meanwhile, is done out of gratitude and obedience

C. In 6:47, John gets personal: "The one who simply trusts me has eternal life"

1. Trusting Jesus is the way to Jesus; Jesus is the way to salvation

"Believe in the One he has sent" (John 6:29)

"He who believes in me will never be thirsty..." (John 6:35)

"Every individual who looks to the son and believes in him shall have eternal life" (John 6:40)

2. By faith alone (*sola fide*) in Jesus alone (*solus Christus*) by God's grace alone (*sola gratia*), we have everything God has to offer

THE ULTIMATE QUESTION (4:48-51)

A. Jesus wants to address the life and death question

1. Jesus: "Even the manna generation, those given divinely prepared food, died"
2. Jesus: "There is bread that continually comes down from heaven so you may be continually feeding on real 'manna'" (i.e., The Bread of Life)
3. Jesus is literally the gift that never stops giving (Life)

B. This is the bottom line: Jesus is It!

1. This bread (Jesus) is not only from divinity, it is for humanity
2. Jesus is not only the great revelation from God, he is the great reconciler of man with God

C. The foundation of the Christian faith is about getting personal with Jesus

1. Jesus is the bread that literally sustains Life; bread we must hunger for
2. Our faith is more than a set of beliefs, a list of intellectual propositions, a set of theological positions. It is a personal relationship with Jesus
3. So how do you get Life? His name is Jesus. Do you know him?