

# Sermon Series: Spurred on to Holiness (and Power) by Immersing Ourselves into the Life of Christ Through the Eyes of the Apostles – A Harmony of All Four Gospels

June 14, 2020

Sermon Title: Eating the Bread of Life

Today's Scripture: See insert

Introduction: see additional notes

Main point: Salvation is trusting Jesus and Him alone.

## Context

1. It is the height of arrogance to imagine our logic is superior to God's revelation. **So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"**
  - We can easily connect with the disbelief of the Jews in Galilee. We've grown up in a materialistic society where we have been taught from youth via our school systems that if you can't measure, it weigh it, see it, then it doesn't exist. We have been taught that believing in the unseen is naïve at best, stupid at worst. We might as well be like the African tribes who sacrifice chickens to demons so that they will be left alone or sacrifice chickens in honor of their ancestors like the Taoists of China.
  - All the Jews could see was a real live person who ate and breathed, and danced on occasion, and they were all familiar with his parents of course. In their minds he was the physical offspring of two human beings who lived in Nazareth and in most of their minds he was born out of wedlock.
  - What they had failed to do was their homework. If they had truly been looking for a Messiah they would have known that someday the prophecies of Isaiah 7:14 would have come true, which says, **"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel". (ESV)** They had already been told that Mary was a virgin when she became pregnant with the Lord since Mary and Joseph would not have hidden that fact from anybody nor would they have hidden the visit of the angel Gabriel telling her that she would have a son even though she was a virgin nor would Joseph have been quiet about his visit from an angelic visitor confirming the same information.
  - But because they scoffed at the notion a virgin could give birth they now scoffed at the child she did birth namely our Savior Jesus Christ.
  - If these Jews missed out on salvation because they could not rationalize in their own minds the logic behind the Virgin Birth and the inconceivable statement that Jesus said He came down from Heaven then is it also true that thousands today in liberal

denominations are not saved as well since they do not believe in the Virgin Birth and they do not believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible?

1. Let me quote from the theological textbook of a major denomination you are very, very familiar with. In their seminaries they teach this about the Bible: "Today it is impossible to assume the historicity of the things recorded. What the biblical authors report is not accepted as a literal transcript of the factual course of events. Therefore, critical scholars inquire behind the text and attempt to reconstruct the real history that took place."

2. Here is what they teach about the Virgin Birth of Christ: "The primary interest of dogmatics is to interpret the virgin birth as a symbol and not as a freakish intervention in the course of nature."

3. Here is what they teach about the divinity of Jesus: "The notion of the preexistent Son of God becoming a human being in the womb of a virgin and then returning to his heavenly home is bound up with the mythological picture of the world that clashes with our modern scientific world view." And again the textbook says: "The preexistence of Christ is an integral part of the myth of the incarnation."

- Why do I spend so much time here exposing false teachings of prominent denominations? Because I need to illustrate that if your starting point is your own logic and human reasoning then you will end up denying the Bible as true, miracles as having happened, the Virgin Birth as a myth and the divinity of Christ as a fabrication. I maintain that unless you believe from the start that the Bible is true no matter what your logic says then you are not a true believer and will end up going to hell unless you repent and recant.

2. When we learn to submit entirely to God's will, we will stop complaining about not getting our way. Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.

- The Jews were complaining because Jesus refused to be their earthly Prophet/King. They wanted a political king who could also do heavenly miracles such as feeding masses of people with just a simple blessing. They were hoping for a second Moses who was powerful enough back then to take on Pharaoh and who would now take on Caesar. This talk of heavenly bread and following a heavenly king did not fit at all with their fleshly desires.
- So Jesus says to them, stop begging for what you can't have. You want an earthly king, you're not going to get it. You want a never ending feast, it's not going to happen. By the way, can you imagine what would happen if that was true of Christianity? "Come to Christ and you never have to work for food again". The end result is predictable. Everyone would be a professing believer.
- Then immediately Jesus tells them why they are grumbling over not getting what they want. It is because they don't believe in Jesus because the Father has not drawn their

hearts to believe in Jesus. Why do they need to know that? It is not so much that Jesus wants to teach them about the doctrine of election, but to connect their minds and hearts to a previous teaching that they should have been paying attention to all along. They should have been reading their Old Testament Scriptures which teach about God giving hearers a new heart. Here is the passage Jesus is quoting from: turn to Isaiah 54:1-13. Then connect this passage to Jeremiah 31:31-34

- My point being is this – had they been looking forward to the Messiah’s coming, like Simeon did and Anna did at his birth, then they would have recognized the signs. They would have responded to Jesus as Messiah like Mary did and Andrew when he first saw Jesus at the Jordan.
  - Here’s a lesson in this passage about the doctrine of election. All who are wanting to find the God who created the universe, will find Him. All who want to be saved from their sin will be saved. No one will approach God and say I sought you with all my heart and you rejected me, because they will hear back “Yes, I know, because I was drawing you to myself”. In other words, don’t ask the question “Am I chosen?” Instead be assured that if you are hungering for God it is because He has put that hunger in your heart and you are born again.
3. Jesus reassures us all that everyone who believes in Him as Savior and Lord is called or drawn by the Father. **Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 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. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. 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.”**
- Here are three key verses that tell us what it means to believe in Jesus and gain eternal life. The first is **Acts 2:38 “And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (ESV)** The second is **1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (ESV)**
  - The third is **Romans 10:9–10 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (ESV)**
  - Eating Christ’s flesh is no more complicated than what he explained in this passage. It means trusting in his death to pay for your sins. It means that through your belief in Jesus you are consuming Him figuratively and He is consuming you. Communion is so symbolic of this principle. No the wafer is not Jesus’ flesh as the Catholics believe. But by taking communion you are saying I still believe. The tense for the verb is present tense meaning it is an ongoing belief in Jesus.
  - Now, let me tell you what belief is not:

1. It is not mental acknowledgment of who he is and what he has done. That means simply that you figured it out on your own.
  2. It is not praying a prayer called a sinner's prayer that includes a blanket statement forgive me for my sins. No, that's way too generalized. Jesus wants repentant sinners to reflect on how much they have offended God and others by thinking clearly of specific sins. For example, a man might reflect on his adulterous affair like David did and say, "Oh how I have sinned against God and hurt my wife and children." That genuine sorrow will be reflected in genuine emotion and genuine acts of repentance. That man should indeed go back to his wife and do all he can to pay it back.
  3. It definitely is not a mixed faith, meaning I trust in Jesus' death but I need to add to that my own good works to make God more happy with me. Isaiah clearly says our righteousness is nothing more than filthy rags.
- Scripture has many examples of genuine belief. Zaccheus comes to mind immediately, so does Matthew as he left his tax collector's booth. So does the Ethiopian eunuch who was ready to turn his whole life over to the Lord and be baptized by Philip on the spot.

#### Application

There is only one way to heaven, only one bread to eat, only one person to put your trust in. He is hated, maligned, used as a curse word, but until you feel the leading of the Holy Spirit prompting you to come to God as spiritual beggar and say God I have nothing to offer you. I want nothing more than Jesus to be my Savior and I am willing to follow Him anywhere and obey Him always.