

(Through the Bible) John 6

by Chuck Smith

In this sermon, Chuck Smith explores Jesus' identity as the Bread of Life and the importance of seeking Him for spiritual sustenance rather than material gain.

Duration: 37:17

Scripture: Matthew 16:18, Matthew 16:23, John 2:19, John 5:39, John 6:63, John 6:68, John 20:31

Topics: "Faith Assurance", "Eternal Satisfaction"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of satisfaction and how worldly pleasures and pursuits often leave us unsatisfied. He emphasizes that Jesus is the bread of God and the only source of true satisfaction. The speaker encourages the audience to believe in Jesus and partake of him, as he promises that those who do will never hunger or thirst again. The sermon also touches on the importance of faith and the assurance that Jesus will never cast out those who come to him.

Transcript

Now, we have an indeterminate period of time. Jesus was in Jerusalem when he was saying these things. They were as the result of this blind man, or the lame man rather, who was healed there at the Pool of Bethesda, and the controversy that was stirred over that.

And so, John spends a whole chapter in that little picture. But it gives us marvelous insight into Jesus, showing how that he equates his work with the Father, and he is working in harmony with the Father, he is actually here doing the Father's work, and the works themselves testify of him, as well as the Word of the Old Testament testifies of who he is. He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now, after these things, an indeterminate period of time, we don't know how long it was after, but John takes us back up to the Sea of Galilee now. He's left Jerusalem. What events? Others? There transpired? We don't know.

But back in the area of the Galilee, Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias, also known as Gennesaret. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles, which he did on them that were diseased. And so, by his miracles, Jesus was attracting a great multitude of people.

People are drawn and attracted to Jesus for various reasons. Some of them legitimate, and some of them not so legitimate. But Jesus has an appealing force and power.

He always has had an appealing force. And it's interesting to me how that Jesus appeals to people in all walks of life. It is interesting to me how that Jesus appeals to people of all cultures.

It's interesting to me how Jesus appeals to people of all ages, and how little children are attracted to Jesus. In fact, that to me is one of the most beautiful things in the world, the attraction that even a child has for Jesus. Probably a stronger and greater attraction than we who have become so complex and mixed up in our thinking processes.

Oh, the beauty of Jesus that attracts men. But men are attracted by different reasons. These people were attracted because of the spectacular, the miracles that Jesus was doing on people who were diseased.

And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the Passover feast was drawing nigh. And when Jesus lifted up his eyes, he saw a great company that were coming unto him.

And he said unto Philip, Where are we going to buy enough bread that these people may eat? And this he said to prove Philip, for he knew what he was going to do. And Philip answered him, Two hundred penny worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one might take just a little. So, where are we going to buy the bread? Boy, I don't know.

Two hundred penny worth. Now, a penny was a day's wage for a laboring man. If we had two hundred penny worth of bread, I don't think that would be enough to give everyone a little.

And one of the disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said unto him, There's a lad here which has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many? I mean, I'm sorry I said it because, you know, what's that with this big crowd? And so Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now, there was a lot of grass in that place. Passover time, springtime in the Galilee.

Beautiful. Absolutely glorious. The Galilee in the springtime has to be one of the most beautiful places you could ever see.

Grassy fields filled with yellow daisies, red and white and purple anemones, lupins, brodeas, just fabulous. The beauty of the wildflowers and all around Passover time. There in the springtime in the Galilee.

A lot of grass in that area. So Jesus said, Have the men sit down. So the men sat down in number about five thousand.

And Jesus took the loaves and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples and the disciples to them that were sat down. And likewise the fish. And they ate as much as they desired.

And when they were filled, the word in Greek is gluttoned. When they were stuffed, he said unto his disciples, Now gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be left or lost. And therefore they gathered them together and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which remained over, which was over and above, that which they had eaten.

And then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth, that prophet which should come into the world. That is a reference to the prophecy of Moses that declared and another prophet likened to myself shall come and to him shall ye give heed. So they were looking for that other prophet likened to Moses.

And when they saw this miracle, they said, This is the one Moses no doubt was talking about. That other prophet that should come. And they recognized that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Now, they wanted to then make public acclamation. They wanted to take him and to force him to be the king. To establish now the kingdom.

But this was not according to God's plan. Jesus, rather than stepping in with the popular movement at this point, just slipped away from them and went into the mountain alone. He did not allow them to prematurely acclaim him as their king.

God had a special day to present his king to the nation. That special day we call today Palm Sunday, for it was the Sunday that preceded his crucifixion. And that was the day and the hour that God had prepared and had prophesied when his promised Redeemer would come.

And that day, Jesus set up carefully, having the disciples go into the city and get the donkey, that he might ride into Jerusalem on the donkey and thus fulfill the prophecy of Zachariah. That day, he allowed the disciples to cry out that Messianic Psalm 118, hosanna, hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Glory to God in the highest.

And he allowed them to cry out that Psalm. In fact, when the Pharisees objected, he said, if they would at this time hold their peace, these very stones would cry out. That was the day he wept over Jerusalem and said, if you had only known the things that belong to thy peace in this thy day, but they are hid from your eyes.

So, here was a premature attempt to establish him as king by the people. This was a movement of the people. Jesus rejected it because he was working in God's time schedule and not man's.

Oh, God, help us to learn to work in God's time schedule rather than our own. It seems that we are always desiring to prematurely do things. God never seems to work quite as fast as we would like him to work.

We would like to speed up the program of God. Well, if I could only have my way, the Lord would have come a couple of years ago. But some of you would be in bad trouble had he.

So, you can be thankful he's running things and not me. So, when Jesus perceived that they were going to try and force the issue, and to make him king, he departed into a mountain by himself. And when the evening was now come, his disciples went down to the sea of Galilee.

And they entered into a ship and went over the sea toward Capernaum. Capernaum. And it was now dark and Jesus was not come to them.

And when the sea arose by reason of a great wind, and when they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty-four furlongs, three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the ship, and they were afraid. But he said unto them, It's me, don't be afraid. And they willingly, eagerly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was on the land where they were going.

They docked immediately at Capernaum. Now the following day, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea, that is where he had fed the multitude, saw that there was no other boat there, except the one wherein the disciples had entered, and that Jesus was not with his disciples when they went in the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone. However, there were other boats that had

come from the area of Tiberias, near to the place where they did eat bread.

And when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither with his disciples, they also took ship, shipping, and they came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, how did you get here? And Jesus answered and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Now he didn't tell them how he got there. He just said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, you seek me not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled.

You are seeking me for the wrong reasons. You are seeking me for the wrong motives. You are only seeking me because you had your stomachs stuffed with bread and fish.

And that's not the reason to seek me. Jesus would not really accept those who were seeking him with wrong motivations. There are many people today who seek Jesus with wrong motivations.

There are many ministers who encourage people to seek Jesus, encouraging them with wrong motivations. Encouraging people to do the work of God with wrong motivations. Now we're going to give a bicycle to the one who brings the most new members into the Sunday School in the next, you know, five months.

And so we're motivating all these little kids with carnal motivation. Teaching them to do the work of God through the carnal rewards. God help us.

How far we've come from the straight and narrow. He said, Don't labor for that meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures to everlasting life. Don't labor for the material things.

Don't strive for material things, but strive for spiritual things. The spiritual is superior to the material. That was the constant claim that Jesus made.

And that is what men are constantly challenging today. And we in our own minds oftentimes have the challenge. Is indeed the spiritual life superior to the material life? And Satan is constantly holding up to us the glitter and the glory of the material realm and saying, Look, once you like this.

The Lord is constantly saying, Hey, don't strive. Don't labor for the meat which perishes, but for that which is life eternal for the spiritual things. That which endures to everlasting life for the son of man shall, which the son of man shall give unto you for him.

Hath God the Father sealed? Then they said unto him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? This is a question that people oftentimes ask when they become conscious of the spiritual dimension. Well, what can I do to do the works of God? We remember the rich young ruler that came and fell before Jesus and said, What good thing must I do to inherit the kingdom of heaven? Good Master, what shall I do? And I'm always looking for some work that I might do for God. Jesus answered in a paradox.

For he said unto them, This is the work of God that you might believe on him whom he hath sent. Isn't that interesting? What work can you do to be pleasing to God? The only work you can do is just believe in Jesus. That's what pleases the father.

This is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, Well, what sign will you show us then that we might see and believe you? What do you work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written. He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my father gives you the true bread from heaven. Moses didn't give you the manna. My father sent it.

But my father is now giving to you the true bread from heaven. Your fathers ate of that manna. And they died.

For the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven and gives his life and gives life rather unto the world. This is the bread of God. He who came down from heaven and gives his life unto the world.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. And he that cometh to me shall never hunger. And he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

These people had just eaten the day before and were stuffed. But they were hungry again. They had eaten of the bread of this world.

And though you can eat today and you can be so stuffed, and I've eaten that pita bread with those delicious sauces and salads and all, until I was so stuffed, I thought I can't eat another bite. I get so upset with the cleaners nowadays that shrink my coat so dreadfully. This polyester, that's one problem.

It just shrinks. But, though I push myself away from the table and groaningly stand on my feet and say, I never want to eat again as long as I live. The bus isn't very far down the road until someone says, Can we stop for some ice cream? Yeah, it sounds like a great idea.

Hungry again. It just doesn't satisfy them. But Jesus said, I'm the bread of God.

I've come down from heaven. If you eat of me, you'll never hunger again. And if you believe in me, you'll never thirst again.

There is that area of man's life that seems to never be satisfied, that always is crying out for more, more, more. And though a person pursues after the pleasures, the excitements, the thrills of the world, one thing about them is that they're just not lasting. It isn't long before you're thirsting again.

But Jesus said, I'm the bread of heaven. God has sent me. And if you eat of me, you'll never hunger again.

And if you believe in me, you'll never thirst again. What glorious good news! But I said unto you that you have seen me, but you don't believe. All that the Father gives me shall come to me, and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out.

What a glorious word of Jesus to our trembling, hesitating souls. Because you see, Satan says to me, look, there's no sense you going to God. He doesn't want anything to do with you.

You're a failure, man. Your life is a mess. God doesn't want anything to do with you.

There's no sense you going because there's no way he's going to open the door for you. And he would plant unbelief in my heart. And if I believe that God won't receive me, then God won't receive me because I won't come.

But Jesus said, whoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out. All that the Father has given me are mine. They'll come to me.

And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise. What encouraging, glorious words to your troubled spirit tonight. You who Satan has been hassling for so long, trying to tell you that you're not worthy, that God doesn't want you, God isn't interested.

Let me tell you something, if you'll just come to Jesus, there's no way, no way he will cast you out. For I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. The works that I do, I do not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

I didn't come down to do my will, Jesus said, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the Father's will. Oh, that's what I've been wanting to know.

What's God's will? That all which he hath given to me, I should lose nothing, but should raise them up in that last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which sees the Son and believes on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day. Those to whom the Father has revealed the truth of Jesus Christ and who believe in him, it's God's will that he save you and raise you up in that last day.

Praise God for his glorious will for our lives. And the Jews then murmured at him because he said, I'm the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, is not this Jesus? Isn't this Joshua or Yahshua, the son of Joseph or Yoseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it that he says I came down from heaven? And Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, don't murmur among yourselves, for no man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Here's an interesting statement by Jesus, one that we need to make note of. No man can come to Jesus unless the Father draws him. Now that takes the pressure off of me in my witnessing because I sometimes get discouraged when I witness to a person and I can lay out the truth of Christ and I would think that even a child could understand.

And they just, you know, don't accept it. It doesn't do anything. And I try to argue and convince and press and nothing happens.

Well, no man can come except the Father draw him. You say, well, I don't know if that's fair. Well, did the Father draw you? Well, yeah.

Well then, what are you worried about? It also follows that whosoever will may come and drink of the water of life. There are the two sides to the coin. You can't come unless the Father draws you, but anyone who comes can receive eternal life.

The door is open for all men. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father comes to me.

God has taught us. He's laid it upon our hearts. Not that any man hath seen the Father except he which is of God.

He hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. Notice these radical claims that Jesus is making concerning himself.

Testifying now of himself, making radical claims. I am that bread of life. They said, how can you say he came down from heaven? He's Joseph's son.

He said, I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and they are dead. But this is the bread which comes down from heaven that a man may eat thereof and not die.

Not hunger, not thirst, not die. For I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever.

And the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world. He took the bread and he broke it and he said, take, eat. This is my body broken for you.

The bread is my flesh that I will give for the life of the world. And the Jews therefore strove among themselves saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, you're having trouble fellows, I'm going to make it a little harder. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

You're dead. You're dead in your trespasses and sins. You don't have life in you.

Whoso eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed. And Jesus took the cup and he said, take, drink.

This is the blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of sins. Eat of my flesh, drink of my blood, partake of me that you might have life. For my flesh is meat indeed, my blood is drink indeed.

And he that eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me and I in him. And as the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eats me, even he shall live by me. And this is that bread which came down from heaven, not as your fathers did eat the manna and are dead.

For he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. And these are the things he said to them as he was teaching them in the synagogue in Capernaum. And you that have been in that synagogue of Capernaum can now sort of put it together in your mind.

He was there in the synagogue of Capernaum teaching them these things. Now many, therefore, of his disciples, when they heard this, said, Man, these are tough sayings. Who can hear it? And when Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Does this offend you? What and if you will see the Son of Man ascending up where he was before? What if you don't see the kingdom established right now? What if you see me ascending up and going back to the Father? It is the spirit that makes alive.

The flesh profits nothing. Now we're coming back. You've eaten of the bread and that's why you've come.

Your stomachs were filled. But don't seek that bread which perishes. But that bread which is everlasting life.

And so again, coming back to that thought. It is the spirit that makes alive. The flesh profits nothing.

Underline that. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.

The word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. The word of God is spirit and the word of God is life. But there are some of you that believe not.

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believe not and who would betray him. And he said, Therefore, I said unto you that no man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my father. Again declaring, look, the only way you can come is that the father draws you.

You can't come unless the father does draw you. Now from that time, many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. Couldn't handle it too much.

When he starts talking about the denial of the flesh, when he starts talking about the life of the spirit and the partaking of spiritual things, too much for some people. They can't handle it. Many of them were following him because they were desiring that he establish the kingdom now, that he overthrow the Roman yoke of government and that he bring to pass a kingdom of plenty where everybody would eat and drink to their full.

Every man neath his own vine and fig tree would eat and not be afraid. And they were wanting that kingdom of material prosperity. And he is denouncing it as secondary.

The primary thing is the spiritual kingdom. Partaking of me. Finding that life that comes from me.

The life of God imparted to man through Jesus Christ. The flesh will profit you nothing. But the words that I speak, their spirit, their life.

And so they couldn't handle it. They went back and they walked no more with him. One time John sent a messenger and said, Are you the one that we should look for or shall we look for someone else? These people despaired.

Because Jesus was talking of the importance of the spiritual man rather than the physical. Can't handle it. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will you also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

Oh, blessed Peter. You know, he had a problem. He could get in trouble so much with his mouth.

And yet he could also say some of the most appropriate things. Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Oh, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona.

Flesh and blood did not reveal this unto you, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. But you're going to see the Son of Man betrayed and turn to the hands of sinners, and they're going to crucify him and slay him.

But on the third day he'll rise again. Oh, Lord, be that far from thee. And Jesus says, Oh, get thee behind me, Satan.

You're an offense unto me. You don't understand the things that are God, the things that are man. No, Peter, he could go so fast from the top to the bottom.

But here, one of those grand moments in Peter, when Jesus turns to the twelve and says, Well, are you going to leave too? Lord, where can we go? You have the words of life. Jesus said, My word is spirit, my

word is life. Peter is testifying, Yes, Lord, that's true.

You have the word of life. We believe. And we are sure that you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and yet one of you is a devil? And he was speaking of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. For he it was that should betray him, and he was one of the twelve. Interesting that Jesus says of Judas, He was the devil.

Paul? No. Peter refers to him as the son of perdition. We will read in a few weeks where Satan entered him, and he went out and did his dastardly deed.

And we'll get into Judas Iscariot as we move on in the gospel of John. But from the beginning, Jesus knew who it was that would betray him. Jesus said, Have I not chosen twelve of you, and yet one of you is a devil? So, next week we move on into chapters seven and eight, and some very interesting.

Oh, don't you love John? I just love the gospel according to John. And these insights that he gives us into Jesus. The insights which show and prove that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God.

In order that you might believe and have eternal life. Father, we thank you for your word. It is spirit.

It is truth. It is life to those that believe. Now may the entrance of thy word bring life and light to us.

And may we walk in that light. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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