

# Secret Food

by Jim Cymbala

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of finding and doing God's will as the source of inner strength, fulfillment, and happiness.*

**Duration:** 26:16

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 50:7, Matthew 6:33, Luke 9:23, John 4:34, John 6:38, Philippians 3:13-14

**Topics:** "Will Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of 'food' that Jesus refers to in the Bible. He explains that Jesus' food is to do the will of God and to finish His work. The speaker emphasizes that Jesus' ministry and preaching were part of God's plan for His life, and that each person has a unique plan and purpose from God. The sermon encourages listeners to seek and follow God's will in their own lives, and to have faith and boldness in carrying out their calling.

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## Transcript

One of the most famous stories in the book of John is not only Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night and saying, how does you enter the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus said, you must be born, what? Again. Or, as some translations have, you must be born from above. You must have a spiritual birth along with your natural birth.

That's how some people interpret born of the water and of the spirit. Not baptism so much, but natural birth, which is water, the body's made up of water, water is of the earth. And then, and of the spirit, that spiritual rebirth where you're born again.

Be that as it may, in the next chapter, Jesus is heading from Jerusalem back up to Galilee, and the Bible says he needed to go through Samaria. And Samaria was the piece of land in between the northern province of Galilee and the southern province of Judea, except Jews didn't live in that middle part of Samaria. In fact, they detested the Samaritans.

The Samaritans had become like a mixed breed of people, part Jewish blood, but then mixed with all the invading armies and people who had been shipped in when Israel was conquered hundreds and hundreds of years before. They had developed their own religion. It was partly from the Bible.

They believed in the books of the law, Moses, but they didn't believe in the prophets nor the Psalms. And there was this competition and hatred, literally, between the great Jewish leaders, the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, and the people who lived in Samaria. In fact, the rabbis taught because they were very much into ceremonial cleansing and becoming contaminated.

They said that if you walk through Samaria and you got the dust on your sandals, you had to have a special bath to just get rid of the dust of those filthy, terrible Samaritans. Well, Jesus was going through Samaria and he stopped by a well which was connected to the life story of Jacob. And at that well, which I was near, and my only visit to Palestine, to Israel, we actually went to the headquarters of the Samaritan religion, still going on today.

And there's only about, if I remember correctly, about 900 Samaritans left in the world. They have never been conquered. They've never left the land.

They've remained there. And I went to their headquarters where they have these great books of genealogies where they trace all their ancestors way, way, way back. And they have an annual sacrifice there.

I saw the yard where it's done in, where they kill one huge animal there, a cow of some kind, and they kill that animal and sprinkle the blood and go through their rituals. But it's not according to the Jewish law that was given and practiced by the Jews from the days of Moses. I met the lead priest of it, the head of that religion, who I felt very uneasy around that whole situation, to be honest with you, and went in their main worship place.

But there's only 900 of them, and they intermarry. They don't mix with anyone, and they so intermarry that you see strange physical phenomena in some of the offspring because there's such inbreeding. It was there that Jesus stopped.

And since it was noonday and he was very thirsty and tired, a woman came, a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, would you give me some water to drink? And the woman was taken back because, first of all, he was Jewish. She knew he was, either by the way he looked or by the way he dressed. And she said, why would you, a Jew, be asking me, a Samaritan, for water? Because I'm unclean to you.

You're going to drink from my drawing a jar or whatever basin, pitcher. And Jesus said, if you knew who was asking you for water, you would ask me for water, and I would give you living water. And she said, where would you get this water? You have nothing to draw with.

And then he began to teach her about that he was speaking of the water of new life, of the Spirit of God, that when you put your trust in Christ, you drink of that water, which is a symbol of eternal life and the Spirit and the joy and the peace that God gives. Well, he went on with this conversation with her, and when the disciples came back, they had gone into town for some food. When they came back, they saw him talking with this Samaritan woman, which totally unnerved them and surprised them, and they whispered among themselves.

And then she left at Jesus's request to bring some of the people from her family and town. And the Bible says that they thought that maybe they had failed him by not bringing him food fast enough, and that he had gotten hungry or something had gone down that was wrong. And then Jesus said these very, very

famous words, not as famous as what he said to the Samaritan woman, but very important for us.

Meanwhile, his disciples urged him, Rabbi, eat something. But he said to them, I have food to eat that you know nothing about. Then his disciples said to each other, could someone have brought him food while he was talking to that woman? In other words, while we were out getting food, could someone bring him some food? And now he's upset, or it doesn't look like he's eating.

What's going on here? And now what's this food that nobody knows about? He has a food, something that keeps him going, that he says, we don't know about this kind of food. My food, said Jesus, the thing that keeps me going is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. My food, my sustenance, the thing that keeps me going is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

And that brings out these truths to us today so that we can pray. And I just pray that there's visitors here or someone here that God direct me to this passage that is meant just in a special way for you, even though it's meant for all of us. I have food that you don't know about for my meat.

My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Jesus said, what keeps me going and what supplies me with inner strength is to do and carry out the plan that the father has for my life. Jesus never ministered or preached one sermon before he was 30 years old because that was not the father's plan for him.

But once he was 30, the father's plan was for him to get baptized by John the Baptist and then to begin his ministry of teaching public ministry, healing miracles, declaring the kingdom of God. And he did this for about three and a half years until another part of God's will was worked out in his life, which was to lay down his life for you and I to die for my sins and your sins. And when he prayed in the garden and he felt this, this terrible weight coming upon him, this terrible darkness of the sins of the world that would be on him in some way we don't understand.

He prayed, father, if it's possible, take this cup away from me. Don't let me go through this. But nevertheless, not my will, because this was Jesus's law in life.

Find the will of God and do it. Find the will of the father and then act it out every single day, whether it's talking to someone, helping someone. And that is a law for us.

This is a direction for us. Although we're not Christ, we are Christians. He lives inside of us.

Jesus said, this is what keeps me going. I live in obedience to what the father has planned for my life. His days were ordered.

His death was ordered. The betrayal by Judas was ordered. It was all part of a master plan that the father had for Jesus's life.

And now for every one of us who's listening to my voice, starting with the speaker, there's a plan for our lives. If you believe that, say amen. There's a plan for our lives.

And if there is a plan, it can't be a plan that takes a lifetime. It has to be a plan that is worked out day by day, hour by hour. And this is what Jesus said gives us an inner strength where we get weak and where we get out of the pocket and where we start to lose our spiritual vitality is when we forget God's call and plan for our lives.

God has a plan for your life, not just for Jesus, not for some pastor or evangelist or some, the apostle Paul. There's a plan for all the pastors in the front, the deacons, the deaconesses, people up in the balcony, the people over in the sound booth over here. There's a plan for every one of our lives.

It was mapped out before you were conceived in your mother's womb. The gifting that God was going to give you, the people he wanted you to touch, the people he wanted you to minister to, the people he wanted you to love, to show mercy, to encourage, to lift up. And it's so easy to live a life not conscious of God's plan for our life and just kind of roll from day to day, bouncing from one thing to another with no sense of, Lord, I have been sent into this world just like Jesus was sent, but in a different way.

I have been sent in this world, not for nothing, but for something. And now there's a plan for my life. And I will never be happier than when I'm doing the will of God.

You are never happier than when you're doing the will of God. Francis Asbury, the great Methodist circuit rider, came to America and rode, I don't know how many hundreds of thousands of miles on horseback, almost drowned a number of times. This is rough and rugged, early America.

This is back there, back then, in little past colonial times. I've read his life and been inspired by it. And he said something to a hundred Methodist ministers in a conference that I wrote down in the fly leaf of my Bible a lot of years ago.

He said this, though the devil attacks you in a thousand ways, and though there's trouble on every side, listen to me, young minister, you will never be happier than when you're doing the work that God called you to do. Though the devil attacks you in a thousand ways, though the bottom falls out and you have problems everywhere, you are never happier, you are never more fulfilled than when you're doing the will of God. Yesterday I woke up and I was, while I was just praying in the morning, I had this urge that God wanted me to help somebody and do good to someone in some unique way that day.

And I said to my wife, I'm supposed to do good to somebody today and help them in some unique way. And she just looked at me. So I came to the church because she was busy doing some music and I was all alone in my office with neither one of my assistants around.

Well, when that happens, I'm very vulnerable to the phone ringing. And then I don't even know how to answer it or move the call to the right line because I don't usually do that. So as I'm passing through my assistant Faola's office, the phone rings.

Hadn't been ringing the whole day really. As I'm walking through, I run over and I pick it up and I go, hello. And the person goes, hello, is this, who is this? And I said, how can I help you? And they said, I want to talk to pastor Symbola.

I said, why? So they said, I want to know if someone from the church can come and pray for my house, my apartment and bless my apartment. And the minute she said it, I knew this was the person God wanted me to help that day. So I said, I am pastor Symbola.

She said, no. I said, yes, I am. So she said, I said, what do you need? Well, I've been feeling some strange things and in my house and I want you to come and like, I said, well, wait a minute.

Are you a Christian? Yes, I'm a Christian. And we discussed her spiritual growth. She said, I just feel like there's some powers going on here.

And I said, well, look, if you think we're going to come and cast the devil out of the carpet or the linoleum or the rooms, we don't do that. That's not found in the Bible. If you're a Christian, your house becomes the house of God and you have the ability to know that the blessing of God is there and you don't have to worry about this thing and that thing.

And the other thing I said, why are you? And she was superstitious. I asked where she was from. And it was a place where there was a lot of superstition.

She said, well, I'll be honest with you. It was cold outside freezing. And there were two flies moving around in my room and I felt very strange.

And like that was a bad, like two flies. I said, I get those flies all the time when it's cold in my office, they're flying all around. I said, you don't have to worry about flies.

Goodness and mercy are going to follow you all the days of your life. Come on. Can we say amen to that? I said, it's a principle of witchcraft to pray for physical objects.

It's never a principle found in the new Testament with possibly one exception of handkerchiefs that were laid, have hands laid upon them to be brought to people as an instrument to encourage their faith. But you don't pray for carpet. You don't pray for flowers.

You pray for the blessing of God on your life. And then wherever you go, the blessing of God, one more time, let's just say amen to that. You don't have to worry about a spell being put on you or someone putting voodoo on you.

None of that can work on a blood bought Christian born again believer. Come on. Do you say amen with me? And I said to her, what kind of salvation would that be? If I'm saved and Jesus died on the cross and I'm born again, but some flies can come in my house and put a spell on me.

I told her what to do with those flies. I told her, go like that and just kill those little flies. But that was God's plan for yesterday.

That was God's plan as part of the day. That was a plan for my day. And I prayed about it before I went to the office and the minute it happened.

And I told her, I said, I prayed this morning that God would let me be a blessing to someone. I wasn't expecting to see many people. You're the person we, I prayed for on the phone and we had a beautiful time.

She's going to come and introduce herself to me on Sunday. Your days have a plan for each one of them. How else could God do his will for all the people in the potters group that sang? There's a plan for every one of their lives.

Not everyone's called to be a pastor. Not everyone's called to have a ministry and prayer. Not everyone's called to be a teacher.

Not everyone sings in the choir. There is a plan for your life. The only success measurement in life is this.

Did you find God's will and do it? That is the only success. What world call success, fame, money, cars, clothes, apartment, houses, lands that has nothing to do with God's estimation of success. You could be

here today in the prayer band and be much greater in God's sight than me because for the calling that you have, you are more faithful in it and you do it better than I do the calling on my life.

A pastor of a church with thousands of people isn't necessarily better or more successful than a man right now somewhere in the Amazon region of Bolivia or Peru who has 15 people gathering from huts around a fire and he's telling them about Jesus. If that's God's will for his life and he found that will and he's doing it, great is his reward in heaven. The Bible says, not well done my good and faithful famous person, my good and faithful servant.

What do servants do? They find out their orders and then they do it. For my meat, my food, what keeps me going is to do the will of him who sent me. God has sent every one of us into this world as a light, as salt and as a plan for our lives and it has to be worked out on a daily basis and there are few Christians.

I was talking with a beautiful young lady who has a call to work in a certain area with young ladies who might be involved, recruited in a sex trade in other parts of the world and she's trying to find out now what is God's plan for my life now. That season I did that over there, now what's God's plan? Because that's the only way you're happy is when you're doing what God called you to do. If you try to do something God didn't call you to do, you're going to be frustrated and it could just totally smash up.

But if you find what God wants you to do, there's blessing, there's fulfillment. The happiest days of my life have been when I'm doing as faulty as I do it, but doing what God called me to do. And I know that's how the devil tries to discourage me like he discourages you to pull me away from the thing that I'm called to do.

That's the only joy in life. I've had opportunities to meet presidents of the United States, I've turned them all down. I have no interest in going to the White House because I feel that's not God's call for me, that's not something his plan is for my life.

Oh no, but you would meet somebody famous, you'd get your name in the paper. That doesn't mean success. Finding God's will and doing it, when no one's even watching, talking to a woman about her superstitions on a phone, that's what makes life fulfilling.

Notice what Jesus finished with. My meat is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Here's the battle in life.

You can start out doing God's work and then the enemy will try to pull you away from God's work. The great battles in life is if God calls you to do something and you're scared to do it, you're frightened to do it. It takes faith to step out and do the thing that you know God wants you to do.

Not just in ministry, but in where you should live, what you should give yourself to, who you should marry, just some silent thing that you know this is God's will. The only success in life, the only fulfillment, the only joy is to find God's will and do it. The battle is to find it and then have the courage to do it.

Here's the other battle as I close. You can start out doing God's will and then you can drift away. You can quit.

You can get discouraged. You can get distracted. Missionaries go to seminary or Bible school and they lay on a carpet somewhere in chapel and they pray and they say, God send me wherever you want me to go and then they go and then they serve God so beautifully for five or ten years and then they get distracted.

Someone fights, someone criticizes them, they see Christians acting bad and the devil uses it to say quit, quit, quit, quit. What's the sense? I was reading about the servant of the Lord in the book of Isaiah where the prophet says, but also speaking almost messianically of Christ, the servant of the Lord does what he wants and then the temptation is to say to God, God for what? What did I do it all for? That's the temptation. What did I do it for? Satan is just saying, see you're a failure.

You didn't succeed. You didn't do it the way you should have done it, but God encourages the servant of the Lord and says, no, I'll be with you. I will help you and even when you stumble, I'll give you strength because I see that you want to do my will, not my will, but thine be done.

If you're here today and you're afraid to start to do God's will, we're going to pray. If you're here today and you know God's called you to something and somehow you've drifted away from it, whether you're visiting, you're a visiting minister, visiting from another church, visiting missionary, you're drifting away, you've gotten discouraged. You don't think I know about discouragement? Look at me.

You don't think I know about discouragement? You don't think I've been attacked 10,000 times a thousand times? But I'm telling you by the grace of God, we got to keep on keeping on. We got to do God's will because once you leave God's will, what he's called you to do, no matter what heavy heart you do it with, no matter what heartache you have, you get into some very dangerous territory, very, very dangerous territory. You got to do what God's called you to do.

Shall we pray together? Every eye closed. If you're here today and say, Pastor, a vessel of honor for God is what we're going to sing. Sanctified, holy, that I might be a vessel of honor for God.

How do you honor God? You honor God by doing his will. Not climbing a mountain, not giving a million dollars. God is looking for the little things in life.

If you're here today and you feel God calling you to something, but it's hard for you to step out and do it, just get out of your seat and come. Whether it's a call to the mission field. I know it's God's will, but it's hard for me to do it, Pastor.

It's hard for me. I'm fearful. Sometimes I'm not sure.

Just step out of your seat and come up here and stand here in the front. Just those people first. I feel a call to do something that I'm not doing yet, and I want to tell God today I will do his will as he strengthens me and helps me.

Maybe the will of God is to go to someone who's hurt you. You know it's the will of God, and apologize because there's a wall now between you. Oh, listen, to say I'm sorry, to ask for forgiveness.

I know that's God's will, but it is so hard for me, Pastor. But I got to do it. I got to do what God told me to do.

Anybody here, I'm doing God's will, but the enemy's trying to discourage me? Oh, somebody who's visiting here tonight, you are so discouraged. The enemy's trying to pull you away from the thing you began to do. You got to finish his work, not start the work.

That's good. Now you got to finish the work. You get out of your seat and just come and stand with us.

Pastor, I want grace from God to finish the work. Father, we need your Holy Spirit to find out your will. Then we need your grace to do your will.

Then we need your strength to finish your will. I thank you for the people you're raising up right here at this altar, Lord, to do great things for you because that's your plan for their lives. Whether they'll be well known or little known, it's going to be great in your eyes, God, because they're doing your will.

Help this church to do your will. Help the pastors to do your will. For those whose arms are tired, they're discouraged, today lift them up and strengthen them, Lord, to finish the work that you've called them to do.

Whether it's the work of a housewife, on a job, in a prayer band, whatever, whoever is here today, Lord, give us the boldness and the faith to step out, to do what you've called us to do, to speak out, to pray out, to study out according to your will. So, Lord, we simplify our lives in closing. Just every day I only have one rule, to find your will and to do it.

That's all. I don't have to go anywhere, stay anywhere, just to find your will and do it. Lead us in the good way we should go, for we pray this in Jesus' name, and everyone said, Amen.

We've had a sweet time with the Lord tonight, haven't we? Turn around and give a bunch of people a hug, will you please? Give a hug to a bunch of people.

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