

# Two Kinds of Bread

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala emphasizes that true satisfaction and fulfillment come from a personal relationship with Jesus, the bread of life, rather than from material possessions or physical needs.*

**Duration:** 21:24

**Scripture:** John 6:26-31, John 6:35, John 6:47-48, John 6:51, John 6:66-68

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story in John 6 where Jesus feeds the crowd with loaves of bread. He emphasizes that the people were more interested in the physical food they received rather than understanding the spiritual significance of Jesus' actions. Jesus then tells them to seek food that endures to eternal life, which is found in believing in him. The preacher highlights that Jesus offers eternal life and satisfaction that worldly possessions cannot provide, urging the audience to focus on the spiritual rather than the material.

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## Transcript

Let's look at John 6 and read a famous little story about Jesus, and let's see what we can make of it this morning for the benefit of our souls. When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, Rabbi, Rabbi means teacher, when did you get here? The crowd asked him that, and Jesus answered, Very truly I tell you, you were looking for me not because you saw the signs I performed, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, for on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.

Then they asked him, What must we do to do the works God requires to get that food? In other words, Jesus answered, The work of God is this, to believe in the one he has sent. So they asked him, What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jesus said to them, Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven, for the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

Sir, they said, Always give us this bread. Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

This is an interesting thing that Jesus in the midst of his ministry had fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes. Then he crossed the sea of Galilee, and the crowd went after him. That is what proceeds in John 6. They said, How did you get here? We are following after you.

Then Jesus said something very rare in Scripture there, because he knew what the hearts of people are like. He said, I know why you are after me. I know why you are following me.

You are not following me because you know who I am and you understand spiritual truth. You are after me for another free meal. When you were over there and I was teaching and I multiplied the loaves and the fishes, you got full with the food.

That is what you want. You want more food. You want more physical blessings from me, but you do not know what I really came for.

I did not come to feed you lunch. That is not why I came. I came for something much deeper.

So that first truth there we have to stop and analyze. God knows why everybody comes to church. God knows why everybody says they believe in Jesus.

There are some people who are just looking to get physical help in their life, to fulfill their dream. They figure Jesus might help them to get there. They want a better job.

They want a bigger car. Jesus will give me that. Jesus knows about people like that who just follow him for things, because that is what those people were doing.

Following him for, in this case, bread, a meal, which is symbolizing everything material that God can do for us and does often do for us. These blessings that are beyond our comprehension. But sometimes while one person has an executive job and gets a promotion, another Christian is having their head cut off on a beach in Egypt for the cause of Christ.

So obviously Jesus is more than just the supplier of our physical needs. And he picked that up in them and he said to them, don't labor and don't be running around living for the bread that's physical. Or may I go further? Don't spend your life searching after physical things to think that any of that will satisfy.

That includes relationships with other people. Jesus said don't labor and toil for the food that perishes and passes away. You want to go after something? Go after the food that truly satisfies and it ends up giving you eternal life.

The food, the bread that comes down from heaven, the manna in the wilderness, or the food that we eat every day, what does that do? It just sustains life. It keeps you going. But it's physical and it can only satisfy physical needs.

The newest phone, the best car, the new pair of clothes, whatever that is about, it only satisfies for a little while. It's temporal like bread. I don't care if you eat a loaf at the end of the meeting, you'll be hungry before you go to bed tonight.

And the next day you'll need more bread. That's the way it is with everything that satisfies carnal appetites. Jesus wasn't saying don't have a job and don't make sure you support yourself.

No, he was saying don't waste your life running after things that truly don't satisfy and they end when you die. Or somebody can steal them from you. How much money is lost in the stock market on certain days when there's a downturn? In other words, whatever we have physically, we either can lose it, it's susceptible to loss, or number two, it'll pass away when you die.

When you and I die, what are we going to take with us? The Bible says naked we came into the world, naked we're leaving. You can't take one thing that you have. All the things that you and I worry about, fret about, you know the old saying, you don't end up owning things, sometimes the things own you.

You worry, you fret. It's like the first time I ever got a car when I was in college, my parents were nice enough to buy me a car, an old car, but I was just happy to have something that moved. I ended up first car in college.

I remember, you know, I cleaned it up even though it was a used car, had it all, parked it, and that first night in the dorm sleeping, I was worrying about a car. Like when somebody break in, would he get a dent? The thing started to own me. That's the way it is with physical things.

But they pass away, they pass away. But more important that what Jesus is teaching here is nothing physical, nothing material satisfies. It only satisfies the part of your body that corresponds to it.

Your stomach for food and all our other appetites, it satisfies only that for a season. But it can't satisfy anything spiritual in you. We are spiritual first, we are physical second.

And the spiritual part of us can never be satisfied by bread or a phone or a vacation or even a wife or a husband. The spirit side of us longs for something spiritual. It's longing for God.

This is why some of the wealthiest people in the world are some of the most miserable people in the world. Because here's another thing about satisfaction. You only get satisfied up to a point, and then you need more next time.

How do drug addicts start? It's the same with a lot of other things or sexual addictions. You start with something and then it satisfies, but then next time it doesn't satisfy anymore. You gotta up the dosage.

You just do a little Oxycontin. Now you need more Oxycontin. Why? Because the body says more, more.

But no matter how much you take, you're never satisfied. So Jesus is saying don't spend your life laboring for things that don't satisfy. Now, the world we live in, especially this country, is so materialistic and it's bent.

It's so commercial and it so understands and accents and feeds the carnal desires, the desires of the eye, the desires of the flesh, the pride of life, walking around with the newest and the best. The world totally, Madison Avenue, they totally understand that. So they feed that.

And that's what the way our culture is, especially here in America and elsewhere. It's material-minded. It's earthly-minded.

It's not heavenly-minded. And Jesus said is get your mind off of the things on earth. They'll never satisfy.

They'll pass away. Then what are you going to be left with when you die and everything you amass is going to be left to somebody else? What are you going to do? No, go after the bread that truly satisfies. Go

after the spiritual, invisible food that will satisfy you, give you peace and joy that nothing in the world can give you.

And then when you die, you don't lose it. It issues into eternal life. You live forever.

This is so true of our society that churches have picked up on it. So now we have churches and ministers who bypass the spiritual and they make God the supplier only of your dream, of your, very bad word if you hear it used, your destiny. Destiny is not a word used in the scripture.

You know, follow your destiny, whatever that means. Know where to live to do the will of God. That's where joy comes.

Jesus said, my fulfillment comes from doing the will of him who sent me. So now you'll hear preachers and ministers mention Jesus, but he's like, it's the Jesus that fills the belly only. Are you a little bit down? He'll get you that better job.

Why are you driving that old car? Just give the money to me and you'll prosper. As if the money would satisfy you. Money can't satisfy.

Do I get an amen? And religion now is fine tuned that and Jesus and the real meaning of the scriptures, the whole counsel of God has been thrown under the bus. And now you have the Jesus who just exists as a master card in the sky to give us what we want. He serves us instead of me serving him.

There's no fulfillment. And that's wrong. That is not the word of God.

We serve God. God doesn't serve us. How many are happy to serve God? We don't want God running around at our beck and call.

Can we pray? Does he supply our needs? Yeah, but that's not why he came. So now when they heard that, that there's another bread that truly satisfied, it's why so many, by the way, Christians are dissatisfied because instead of getting their fulfillment in Jesus and spiritual things, and that peace that passes all understanding, the joy that God talked about, that has nothing to do with your circumstances. Look at me here as I bring this to a close.

I don't feel like talking so long. I want to pray with somebody. Did you know that there's a peace that God gives that has nothing to do with your circumstances? You could lose your husband and you could be totally alone with two children and not know what to do.

And God can give you a peace that has nothing to do with your situation. How many believe that? Put your hands together. Let's say amen to it.

Did you know there's a joy that has nothing to do with a comedian making you laugh? You don't have to go to a movie to get entertained. You have joy unspeakable. You don't have to run to look at this.

I got to see that. I got to do that. No, you're totally content with what you have because you have Jesus.

When you have Jesus, you have everything. You have peace. You have joy.

But if you're just looking at him to give you the things that you need, you end up in no man's land. You kind of believe in Jesus like they did, but a Jesus that only satisfies another physical appetite. They said, oh,

wow, we want to work for that food.

Yeah. Why should we work to get money for bread that doesn't satisfy, although we need that for our bodies? Tell us what kind of money, what do we have to do? What kind of job do we have to do to get that bread, that other bread? And now this is one of the most profound things Jesus ever said. Jesus said, this is the work.

What should we do to do the work of God? What work should we do that we can get that bread? What does God require so we can get this other kind of stuff? And Jesus said, this is the work of God to believe. You have to do a thing. You don't have to climb a mountain on your knees as a sign of devotion.

You don't have to give away 90 percent of your income. You don't have to prove anything to God by living a certain way for 30 days so that now you can earn that bread. No, this is the amazing thing about God's grace and his love.

He says, just believe. Would you just believe? Now, belief means more than mental belief because many people have a mental belief in who Jesus is, but they never really experience him as the bread of life. Listen, that's the culmination of this passage.

They said, how do we get it? Give us that bread. He said, I am the bread. When you have me, you have everything you need.

Just think how that's been lost to most American churchgoers' mentality. But when you have Jesus, you can make it through anything, any storm. Money won't get you through the storm.

A girlfriend or a boyfriend won't get you through the storm. Jesus gets you through every storm. He said, I am the bread of life.

Notice, it's not something I give you. I am the gift. You have to have me.

You have to believe in me, but not just mentally. Belief here means have faith in me, means to open your heart and receive him as your everything. Become vulnerable and say, Jesus, I need you.

Come into my life. Run my life. Be my life.

Sustain me. I need a personal relationship with you. Brothers and sisters, it's getting dark out there.

In my own spirit, I just feel time's running out. Whoever we're going to try to get to know Jesus as the bread of life, we better get going to it. But if you're here today and you're living a dissatisfied, frustrated life with inner anger, inner frustration, how many people do I have? I counsel over the years.

There's an edge. There's an emptiness. They're going to church.

They even know Bible verses, but they don't know him as the bread of life. I am the bread of life. When you eat of me, you'll never be hungry again.

When you drink of me, you'll never thirst. You won't be having panic attacks and running around and be wondering, oh, what's wrong in my life and all of that. He'll help you through every situation you're in.

He becomes your strength. He doesn't just give strength. Listen, he is your strength.

I am the bread of life, he said. I'll sustain you. I'll bring you through every situation.

So burdened today by some of you that might be sitting here and you know about church, otherwise you wouldn't be here. And you even know something about Jesus, but maybe he's only the person you go to when you're in trouble. He doesn't want to be the person that you go to when you're in trouble.

He wants to be your life. He wants to be everything to you. There's a dimension of him in your life that maybe you've never even experienced.

That's what he was telling them. Don't see me as the supplier, just Jehovah, Jireh, the God who provides. See me as your very life.

And did you know that this teaching became so difficult that many would not follow him? After this? In John 6 it says, after this, many said, I'm out of here. We don't mind getting free lunch, but this other thing of him being my very life? Oh, brothers and sisters, let me give you my testimony. Only Jesus can satisfy your soul.

Do you hear me? Only Jesus can satisfy your soul. Let's close our eyes. I got this burden yesterday that their, you know, frustration, dissatisfaction, just that reaching inside.

I need something else. I need more of that. I need this.

I don't have that. What am I going to do over here instead of just resting and saying, Jesus, I receive you as bread of life. I want to partake of you in a relationship in union with you so that I'm satisfied.

I need that peace and that joy. If you're here today and would like me to just pray that Jesus becomes everything to you and that searching and the frantic restlessness ends and you find rest in him, that's what it is. That bread brings rest.

Jesus brings rest, inner rest. You can be on vacation in Puerto Rico and be in turmoil. And you can be in the middle of a battlefield and have rest.

It all has to do with Jesus. He said, I am the bread of life. Let me in.

He's standing at the door and knocking sometimes at Christian's hearts at a church's door. Let me in. I want to just listen.

I want to be what you need. Please let me in. I will supply what you're lacking in your life.

Anybody here that I can pray for, just stand where you are in the balcony downstairs. Pastor, that brief word was for me. I want him to be the bread of my life.

I want to labor and trust him to be the everything that I need. I'm tired of running after this and after that. And I just don't want him supplying physical needs.

I want him as my very life. Just stand up right where you are. Thank you.

Thank you. Stand up. God's going to help you today.

Maybe he brought you here just to hear this. You could be a churchgoer. You could be a Christian or you could not even have ever received Christ.

But what you're saying is, I believe in Jesus. I want him to live inside me and be my very life and supply what nothing in this world can supply and wash away my sins and bring me peace and joy and live forever. Listen, he's offering to give you life forever, eternal life.

Where would you and I be when we die? That's the main question that Jesus came to settle. Just stand so I can pray for you. Everybody who's standing, come quickly here to the front.

Come on. Come down and let me pray over you. I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry. Whoever believes in me, they'll never thirst again. Other people will be frantic, but they'll be satisfied.

I'm the only one who can satisfy your soul. That's what Jesus is saying to us. It's not about membership in a church.

It's not memorizing a verse. He doesn't want you to have to do anything. You don't have to have a private reformation.

He'll do the reforming. Just start by believing, by opening your heart. God brought you here today.

You here in the front, if you've never been baptized or if you're a Christian and you're coming here, but you've never obeyed the Lord and believed and baptized as an outward sign of that, you make sure that happens. But now I want to pray with you here in the front. Just lift one of your hands up a little bit to the Lord and repeat after me.

Dear Jesus, you are the bread of life. You are what I need. You are my Savior as of this moment.

Forgive me of my sins. Have mercy on me. Come into my life as Lord of all, as Savior of my soul.

I believe in you that you died for me, shed your blood for me, rose again on the third day, and I crown you now as King of my life. Take care of me. Teach me how to live.

Give me a new mind. Feed me by your word. Teach me how to pray.

Give me Christian friends because I am going to serve you, and you're going to take care of me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Thank you for your love. I make public confession of my faith in you this very day in Jesus' name.

And I'm not turning back. By the grace of God, I am not turning back. The world and everything in it will pass away, but your word will never pass away.

Thank you, Jesus. Let's put our hands together and all of us clap for who Jesus is.

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