

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 25TH - 26TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

## FOOLISH PURSUITS (JOHN 6:22-40) LOSING THEIR "BREAD TICKET"

When the people couldn't find Jesus or His disciples, there was a mild panic. Only one boat with the disciples had left, and Jesus wasn't with them. What would the people do without the One who could provide much needed bread for their hungry stomachs?

- The people weren't looking for the Giver of the gifts, but the gifts.

### HE KNOWS

Over and over in the Gospels we see that Jesus knows what people are really thinking. We see that on display here. The people saw the results of Jesus' work and wanted more of that. They didn't see what the miracle was pointing to...that the Messiah, Jesus, had come!

- Jesus is more than a miracle!

### SO MUCH IS WASTED ON WHAT'S TEMPORARY

The people thought their biggest problem was an empty stomach. Whatever would take care of their physical needs would be their passion. However, their biggest problem was a cold heart toward God, evidenced by rejecting His Son, the bread of life from Heaven.

- There is a "work" required to be saved, that we believe in the finished works of Jesus.

### PROVE IT!

If Jesus was really the Messiah, surely, He would perform signs to support His claim. Like Moses giving the people bread, what was Jesus going to give the people? But Moses didn't give the manna, God did.

- God now has given the people His Son who alone can give eternal life to the world. Jesus IS the proof!

### "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

This is the first of seven "I Am" statements by Jesus. As the bread of life, Jesus satisfies all our longings if we will believe in Him. Eternal life, eternal satisfaction in Jesus, is available to all but is conditional on faith.

- Seeing and knowing Jesus doesn't guarantee faith. Faith does guarantee we'll see Him and know Him truly.

### THE FATHER AT WORK THROUGH THE SON FOR US

People are notoriously fickle and double-minded. Without God's help, we'd never come to Him. The Father loves us and gives us to Jesus, who promises He will never lose a single one of us. The Father has determined that faith in Jesus secures eternal life for all who believe.

- This is God's love at work for us.

### MORE TO LIFE THAN THE HERE AND NOW

Not only is there hope for the here and now, but there's also hope for life after death and for help when the Day of the Lord comes. In John 11, Jesus will raise Lazarus from the dead as a precursor to when He will raise everyone from the dead as His return.

- We live in anticipation of that day by faith in Jesus.

### HELP (JOHN 6:41-59)

#### NO ONE LIKES TO BE TOLD NO OR CORRECTED

The people wanted physical bread that would never run out, and Jesus gives them Himself which, wasn't at all what the people were looking for. So, like the Israelites of old who grumbled against Moses, the people grumble against Jesus.

- If we look to God as a cosmic genie, when He "fails" us, we'll grumble, too.

#### SHOOT THE MESSENGER

Since the people didn't like Jesus' answers to their demands, and since they couldn't refute His teachings, they went after Him and His lineage.

- People today will ignore the teachings of the Bible because of the stumbling of God's people. While we should live holy lives, the message stays the same.

#### FULLY GOD, FULLY HUMAN

Jesus is unique among all humanity and will never be duplicated. Since the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, people have tried to deny the truth of His full deity and His full humanity. Again, knowing their thoughts, Jesus rebukes their unbelief.

- Whether we believe it or not, truth is still truth. Some will reject it; others will submit.

#### WE NEED HELP

In this passage, we see the beautiful truths which seem to contradict one another: God alone draws people to Himself while at the same time holding people responsible for their unbelief. Is God sovereign over all things, including who will be saved or can mankind choose to receive or reject Jesus? YES! This is what is called an antinomy.

#### A BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY

Jesus says that everyone who listens to the Father and learns from Him will come to Jesus. So, there's clearly a responsibility on our part. But our only hope is to have our eyes opened so that we can see the Father through His Son. Instead of arguing over this, we should embrace it to the glory of God.

- Mystery reveals the glory of God.

#### JESUS IS BETTER

Jesus is better than Moses because He gives the people something better than manna: Himself. Jesus is better than manna because it could only satisfy hunger temporarily and could not stop death. Jesus, as the bread of life, can satisfy eternally so that those who eat will never die but will live forever with Him.

#### WE LOVE GOD THE FATHER AND GOD THE SON

The Jewish believers claimed to love God but were rejecting His Son. Jesus was sent by the Father and remains in Him. If the people will follow Jesus, they will remain in Jesus and He in them, which will demonstrate that they do love the Father.

- We cannot pit the Father and Son against one another, they are One.

#### CANNIBALISM?

Jesus says that the only hope people have is to eat His flesh and drink His blood. As Jesus often does, He takes physical items and teaches spiritual truths through them. "Eating His flesh and drinking His blood" is a picture of us trusting in Jesus' finished work alone for our salvation.

- We have no salvation apart from Jesus.

#### THE PICTURE OF COMMUNION

This is why we close every service with communion. Through the cracker, we are reminded of the body of Jesus being beaten and crushed for us. Through the juice, we are reminded that blood must be shed for reconciliation with God.

- Communion is to be taken seriously and joyfully to help us remember.

#### THE PATH (JOHN 6:60-71)

##### THE EXCLUSIVITY OF JESUS IS HARD

The people stumbled over two things: 1) They incorrectly thought Jesus was being literal about eating His flesh and drinking His blood. 2) That salvation, the eternal bread, was only available through Him.

- People still stumble over Him and over His Word today. They want to be the masters of their own lives, not Jesus.

#### YOU THINK YOU'RE OFFENDED NOW...

Jesus' most offensive moment was still to come in His death on the cross. His sayings are hard, but His sacrificial death on the cross will be the hardest act to see. The only way for this offense to be overcome is through the Spirit's help. Either Jesus is the Lamb of God slain for sinners or He's a pawn in the wrong place between religious and political leaders.

#### TRUE DISCIPLES

Just because someone is following Jesus doesn't make one His disciple. In vs. 60, they are called "His disciples," but then Jesus says in vs. 64 that some don't believe in Him.

- Following Jesus requires more than verbal affirmation. Jesus requires all of us. He knows our hearts and knows whether we are all in with Him and for Him.

#### WHY GOD THE SPIRIT HELPS

Coming to Jesus is such a radical repudiation of all that our flesh desires, the world demands, and the devil denounces that we can only follow Him with the help of the Father through the Spirit. As we see in vs. 66, many of His so-called "disciples" turned away from Him.

- The Spirit seals us (Eph. 1:13) and testifies we are God's children (Rom. 8:16).

#### TWO PATHS

Back to free will, there's always a choice to be made with Jesus. Many decided to turn away from following Jesus. It had to hurt Him. He asked the 12 what He asks us, "You don't want to go away too, do you?" And while Peter would sometimes fail, he didn't here as he answers for his friends with an affirmation that rings true today.

#### ETERNAL LIFE ONLY FOUND IN THE SON

Peter, speaking for his friends, knows they have found what their hearts have been looking for in all the world's pleasures and pursuits, but which left them empty. There is eternal life found only in Jesus, and by faith they believed it.

- We have nothing to offer anyone but Jesus.

#### PROXIMITY TO JESUS DOESN'T GUARANTEE FAITH

Judas Iscariot was called by Jesus, taught by Jesus, loved by Jesus, and sent out by Jesus. But he never belonged to Jesus.

- Many people hang out with Jesus and His people. They come to church, serve the body, and even wear the t-shirts. Doing the work of Jesus isn't the same as knowing Jesus.

#### "BREAD TICKET" OR BREAD OF LIFE?

- Do we only seek Jesus when we need something from Him?
- Do we enjoy His gifts more than we enjoy Him?
- Would we still be happy if we had peace, joy, happiness, contentment, a good career, good kids, but no Jesus?

#### HELP COMES FROM THE LORD

- Has Jesus, or the church, "failed us" so that we want nothing to do with Him or the church?
- Are we trusting in Jesus and His finished work so that He alone gets the glory?
- Do we see the beauty of communion so that it is a meaningful act of worship or just an add-on to an already long service?

#### WHICH PATH?

- There are two paths available to every human being on earth and in this place.
- Choosing Christ is the best path but not the easiest.
- Do we bear the fruit of what a true disciple should?
- Just because we are near Jesus doesn't mean we know Him.

#### AN INVENTORY

- Are we taking advantage of what Jesus has given us so that we can follow Him faithfully: prayer, the Word, worship, community, and service?
- Are we unashamed to proclaim Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God?
- Are we patient and loving toward those who are still choosing their path?