

- I. Jesus speaks truth to the crowd about themselves and about Himself
  - A. John 6:26-36 . . . Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. [27] Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, [who is] God, has set His seal." [28] Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" [29] Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." [30] So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? [31] Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'" [32] Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. [33] For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." [34] Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." [35] Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. [36] But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.
  - B. Pray
  - C. Review
    - 1. Last week we looked at verses 27-29, and today we will begin at vs 30. But before moving on, I want to point out both an interesting and significant fact about the Gospel of John.
    - 2. In writing his gospel, John never uses the word "faith" – which is a noun and indicates a person, place, or thing. Instead, John uses the word "believe" – which is a verb and indicates action. And John's commitment to making it clear that believing in Jesus includes the actions and activities of faith that he uses the word "believe" 98 times.
      - a. But why would John use the word believe and not the word faith? I can't say for sure, but one possibility is that by the time John wrote his gospel, the church was facing the same challenges we face today in relation to faith, sanctification, and eternal life.
      - b. In other words, it is probable the word "faith" had begun to be used as if a Christian could possess faith in God and in His son

Jesus Christ apart from the actions and activities that are the natural expression of such faith – such as obedience.

- (1) Now I am not saying that those who treat faith as something they carry around with them – like a suitcase full of church attendance, worship music, church doctrine, theology, and favorite Bible verses, are not religious in many and even commendable ways, for many of them are.
- (2) But what I am saying is that they are not godly in the ways saving faith naturally makes us godly.
- c. And why are they not godly? Because, in looking for eternal life one day, rather than looking for a changed, godly life today that leads to eternal life, they treat their faith as a thing to possess rather than a living, all-consuming, life-transforming belief system that they intentionally and persistently apply to how they live, day by day – in thought, word, and deed.
- d. John the Baptist put it this way in John 3:36, “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
3. My point is simply this: believing is the activity of obeying, and obeying is the proof that you believe unto eternal life.

## II. When what we have seen is not enough to believe without seeing more

- A. John 6:30-31 . . . So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? [31] Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'"
1. To help you get a sense of this crowd's mindset, I want to remind you of their activities and experiences surrounding this response to Jesus.
  - a. For example, they had first hand experience with Jesus' miracle of feeding the 5000 from a single bag lunch of five loaves and two fish. And yet, this personal experience was not enough to convince them to believe in Jesus or take His words as truth.
  - b. Though we do not know for sure, it is probable the disciples had been telling the story of Jesus walking on water, and that after getting into the boat, He took them to their destination in a moment of time. Surely, a story like this would spread quickly in a crowd like that. And if they heard it, it should have been enough to convince them to believe in Jesus and take Him at His word. But it wasn't.

- c. And we know from John 6:2, that this same crowd of people began following Jesus, in the first place, because of the signs they had seen. Yet even though they saw those signs, they still did not believe in Jesus or take Him at His word.
- 2. Is this not like too many of us? Regardless of what Jesus had done, it was not enough for this crowd to trust Him and take Him at His word when faced with a new challenge to believe in Him. And so they wanted Jesus to prove His trustworthiness, again, by performing another sign or giving them another miracle.
- 3. We sing these words, "How good is the God we adore, our faithful, unchangeable friend. His love is as great as His power, and knows neither measure nor end! 'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last, whose Spirit shall guide us safe home. We will praise Him for all that is past and trust Him for all that is to come."
  - a. I am not questioning our praising God for what He has done, for most of us do that, if not during the week then at least on Sunday.
  - b. What I am asking is for you to consider if what God has done is sufficient to convince you to implicitly trust Him regardless of what comes.
  - c. In other words, is what God has done – for you – enough for you to unquestionably and fearlessly trust Him when a new, difficult, painful or sorrowful situation comes along?
  - d. If what God has already done is not enough for you to trust Him unquestioningly for what is to come, then you will, like the crowd in John 6, want Him to prove himself trustworthy again before trusting Him again.
- 4. From my reading of God's word, the message I get is that if God never does another thing for us, what He has done, in creation, in making us in His own image, in saving us, and in sanctifying us, ought to be enough for us to trust Him implicitly regardless of what comes.
  - a. Paul says as much in Romans 8:32, "If God who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, will He not also with [Christ] freely give us all things?" In other words, if God freely gave His son for our eternal salvation, can we not trust Him to freely give us everything else that we need for life and godliness? Of course, the answer is "YES, WE CAN!"
  - b. And John simply assumes that what Jesus has done is enough for us to believe in Him today. We read this in John 20:30-31, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; [31] but these

have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

5. One of the sad realities within the Body of Christ is that too many Christians unquestioningly trust in the saving work of Jesus for eternal salvation, yet they do not unquestioningly trust Him to be their provider and protector, and to work things out for good in the face of much less important things, because they are temporary.
  6. God is perfectly good. There is no evil of any kind or any amount in Him. And in spite of what we do not understand or cannot explain, He has shown Himself to be completely trustworthy. Therefore, I am urging you to continue reminding yourself of what God has done, and to use those reminders as encouragement to implicitly trust Him for what is currently happening to you, or to your family, or in our world – and to trust Him just as fully for what is to come.
- B. John 6:32 . . . Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.
1. There are two truths in this verse that I want us to look at.
  2. First, the manna in the desert that fed the Israelites for forty years did not come from Moses, but from God. This is an important truth, because the group of Jews who were talking to Jesus talked as if it was Moses who fed their forefathers in the wilderness.
    - a. There is no doubt that God has and continues to use people to accomplish His purposes, carry out His plans, minister to His people, carry the message of Christ into the world, and be salt and light in the world. And without question, God used Moses.
    - b. However, the fact that God uses people ought never be a reason to think that it is the person, himself or herself, who has blessed you or helped you or taught you. Why? Because regardless of how godly or intelligent or wise or well-known that person is, it was and is God working through that person.
    - c. Paul confirms this when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:10, “By the grace of God I am what I am . . .” Without question, Paul did many great things to spread the gospel and build the church. Yet it was not Paul, alone, who did them, but God through him.
  3. The second truth I want to talk about deals with the words, “true bread” – which Jesus says comes from heaven.
    - a. The word true speaks of that which is actual or genuine as opposed to that which is counterfeit or pretended.

- b. Therefore, if there is true bread, that is, actual or genuine bread, there must also be false bread, that is, counterfeit or pretend bread.
  - (1) And if we keep this truth within its context, we see that Jesus, whom God sent from heaven, is the true bread. Therefore, if we eat this bread we will be given eternal life.
  - (2) In contrast, there is earthly bread made from dough which this crowd was asking Jesus to abundantly supply them. However, in relation to eternal life, earthly bread is a counterfeit or pretend bread because no matter how much of it you eat, it will never result in being given eternal life.
- c. This takes us back to vs 27, where Jesus says, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you.” What do you want most from God? Of all the things God can give you or do for you, what is it you want the most? Jesus, himself, is the true bread, and though the devil and the world offers us many attractive, pleasurable, gratifying, empowering things, compared to Jesus they are worthless, and in relation to eternal life they are useless.

C. I want to point out two more ways to look at this contrast between that which is true, or that which is actual or genuine, and that which is false, or that which is counterfeit or pretended.

- 1. The first way I want to point out comes from four statements about what is true. You will need to fill in what the false or counterfeit look like.
  - a. Jesus is the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man (John 1:9).
  - b. Jesus is the true vine, and His Father is the vinedresser (John 15:1).
  - c. Jesus’ Father is the only true God (John 7:28, 17:3).
  - d. And in relation to worship, Jesus and His Father are seeking true worshipers who will worship them in spirit and truth (John 4:23).
- 2. The second contrasts I want to point have to do with Jesus’ use of comparing two separate things – one earthly and the other heavenly, or one human and the other spiritual.
  - a. For example, in vs 32, Jesus speaks of two kinds of bread – one earthly and one heavenly.

- b. When talking to Nicodemus, Jesus speaks of two births, one physical and one spiritual (John 3:3).
  - c. In that same conversation, Jesus speaks of two kinds of wind, the kind that is produced by weather and the Holy Spirit (John 3:8).
  - d. And in talking with the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus spoke of two kinds of water, the water that come from a well and quenches our thirst temporarily, and the living water that Jesus gives and satisfies us forever (John 4:10).
- D. These examples of what is true or genuine compared to what is false or counterfeit, or between what God gives compared to what the devil and world give – should remind us that we are constantly faced with choosing between two realities, the earthly, temporal reality and the spiritual, eternal reality.
  - 1. And it isn't as if this is always a good vs. bad choice or a right vs. wrong choice, for we were created to live in both worlds.
  - 2. However, it is a choice of priorities, that is, which reality or which world we will value more than the other. It is a choice of values, that is, which world will we value most. It is a choice of love, that is, who and what will we love the most. And it is a choice of time and energy.
  - 3. Therefore, as you make these choices, day after day, I urge you to bear in mind that where your treasure is, there your heart is also.
    - a. So if you are unsure where your heart is in relation to the earthly and spiritual, look at your choices.
    - b. And when I say look at your choices, I don't mean look only at what you choose to do, but look at how your choice of what you do effects what you ought to do yet do not do.
- E. John 6:33 . . . For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world."
  - 1. Though the manna came from heaven and was given to Israel by God, the bread Jesus is speaking of is Himself. He is the one who gives life to the world. This is confirmed by the context and Jesus own words, for He goes on to say that He is the bread of life (vs 35), that He came down from heaven (vs 38), and that He is the living bread that came from heaven (vs 51).
  - 2. There is one more point to be made here: Just as the manna fed Israel and sustained them in the wilderness, so Jesus feeds anyone and everyone who will come to Him. And the food He gives sustains a believer's life forever.

- F. John 6:34-36 . . . Then they said to [Jesus], "Lord, always give us this bread." [35] Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. [36] But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.
1. Sadly, this crowd was so focused on getting a free and unending supply of earthly food that they totally missed the deeper, far more life affecting food Jesus was offering them.
    - a. For example, the bread that could give them eternal life was standing in front of them, but all they wanted from Him was earthly bread that could only sustain them temporarily.
    - b. However, before you condemn them for their shallowness, ask yourself if you have missed or miss applied one or more of God's truths because you were too focused on earthly things, such as earthly needs, wants, possessions, pleasures, riches, power, approval, and fame?
    - c. Oh how much we need to mean the words when we sing, "Be Thou my vision, or Lord of my life!"
  2. In vs 35, we see that coming to Jesus is synonymous with believing in Jesus, just as believing in Jesus is synonymous with obeying Him (John 3:36). To think you can come to Jesus without believing in Him is just as much a false conclusion as thinking you can believe in Jesus without obeying Him.
  3. And in vs 35, Jesus expands His metaphor from being the bread of life who totally and eternally satisfies [spiritual] hunger, to also being the One who totally and eternally quenches [spiritual] thirst. This is an important expansion of metaphors because it prepares us for Jesus saying that we must eat His body and drink His blood to have within us the life He gives.

### III. Conclusion

- A. Finally, in vs 36, Jesus reminds them that though they have seen Him in action and heard Him speak, they still did not believe in Him.
- B. The point I want to end with is that seeing or hearing does not always lead to believing and obeying. Knowing how to become a Christian and knowing what God expects of a Christian does not make you a Christian. "It is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified" (Romans 2:13). If our faith in God and in Jesus do not produce the actions and activities of such faith, it is not saving faith.