

# LESSON 288

## BREAD OF LIFE

Related Scripture: John 6:52-69

**KEY VERSE:** "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."—John 6:33.

Lesson Scripture: John 6:35-51

### Introduction:

Bread is commonly called the staff of life, because many people depend on bread more than on any other food for their necessary nourishment. So bread is an appropriate figure for the spiritual food or sustenance for the soul provided in Jesus Christ.

Since the life of the flesh is in the blood, Jesus spoke not only of our eating His flesh but also of our drinking His blood. Of course this is figurative language used to represent our participation by faith in the merits of His flesh and blood.

Our lesson this week is taken from Jesus' great discourse on this subject. An outline follows:

1. Appetite, John 6:35, 36
2. Assurance, John 6:37-40
  - a. God's will asserted, 37
  - b. God's will accepted, 38
  - c. God's will assured, 39, 40
3. Antipathy, John 6:41-43
  - a. Murmured rejection, 41, 42
  - b. Murmurers rebuked, 43
4. Attraction, John 6:44-46
  - a. Drawn by the Father, 44
  - b. Drawn of the Father, 45
  - c. Drawn to the Father, 46
5. Affirmation, John 6:47-50
  - a. Life in believing, 47
  - b. Life in the bread, 48-50
6. Atonement, John 6:51

### Notes on the Printed Text:

**Appetite, John 6:35, 36.**

Hungry souls that come to Jesus never go hungry again; thirsty souls that believe in Him never go thirsty again. There is abundant provision in Him to meet all our needs.

Yet there are people who refuse to come, who refuse to believe. Seeing is not always believing; many people who saw Jesus refused to believe in Him and many more who have never seen Him have nevertheless believed. It is not so much a question of evidence as of conscious need and desire. Hungry souls need food; thirsty souls need drink; and we satisfy our needs through faith in Christ.

### Assurance, John 6:37-40.

Proof of truth is to be found in experience rather than argument. Most of our supposed knowledge, however, is merely an acceptance of what others have told us. And "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." (I Jn. 5:9.) When we believe God and experience something of His truth in our own lives, we should gain assurance that all His word is truth.

### God's Will Asserted, 37.

Clearly in salvation as in creation the initiative is God's. When the lost sinner comes to Christ for salvation, it is because he is a part of God's gift to His Son; and so of course the Son will not cast him out. This glorious truth is not due to any worth of our own. We are dear to the Son because we were given to Him by the Father, as we are dear to the Father because we belong to His Son.

### God's Will accepted, 38.

If the very Son of God in His incarnation subordinates His own will to the will of the Father, how can we do less? The will of the Son was never opposed to the Father's will, because when tempted He refused to consider what might be pleasing to His human nature; His only concern on earth was to do the will of His Father in heaven.

### God's Will Assured, 39, 40.

God did not give us to His Son so that we could be lost again. No—He finishes what He begins; He knows the end from the beginning and makes no mistakes. It is His purposeful will, sure to be accomplished, that the true believer in Jesus has everlasting life and shall be raised in the resurrection of the just. We have God's word for this; to dispute it is to call God a liar. (I Jn. 5:10.)

### Antipathy, John 6:41-43.

However, there is in depraved man a natural antipathy to God and to His truth. Born enemies of God object especially to those doctrines of the word of God which reveal them as the sinners that they are, eternally lost except for the intervention of divine grace.

### Murmured Rejection, 41, 42.

Judging from outward appearances and with a predisposition to justify themselves, the unbelieving Jews "murmured at him." At the moment, they did not have the courage to reject Him out loud; but they were too strongly attached to their sins to accept His claims.

### Murmurers Rebuked, 43.

Reasonable explanations are provided for souls in honest perplexity, but for rebellious murmurers the appropriate answer is rebuke: "Murmur not among yourselves." When we really desire to understand some difficult truth of God's word, we shall confer with Him instead of consorting with His enemies.

### Attraction, John 6:44-46.

Because of inherent depravity, by nature "there is none that seeketh after God." (Ro. 3:11.) True, it is the sinner's duty to seek after God; it is an aggravation of his guilt that he is satisfied to remain a sinner. Nevertheless the simple truth is that, left to themselves, apart from divine grace, sinners do not wish to be saved; they will not come to the Savior.

#### **Drawn by the Father, 44.**

So in order to give us to His Son, the Father must draw us; otherwise we never would come. When the gospel is preached, only God knows who will believe; and He tells us plainly that those who come to the Savior come because He draws them. There is no doubt, however, as to the destiny of the sinner who is drawn and so comes: "I will raise him up at the last day."

#### **Drawn of the Father, 45.**

Hearing the word of God and so learning of Him is the means that God uses to bring the sinner to Christ through faith. (Ro. 10:17.) Both the written word and the Holy Spirit Who by His convicting and regenerating power enables us to repent and believe the gospel are provided for us from God the Father in heaven. It is thus that we learn of or from the Father and therefore come to Jesus.

#### **Drawn to the Father, 46.**

Finally we come to the realization that God the Father is not visible to human eyes; no man except the Son of God become the Son of Man has seen the Father with perfect vision; only He is able to reveal God to us perfectly; and so in coming to Him we come to the Father, and in seeing Him we see the Father. (Jn. 14:9.) So the Father in drawing us to His Son draws us to Himself.

#### **Affirmation, John 6:47-50.**

"Verily, verily" emphasizes the importance and calls attention to the truth of the words which follow. Jesus spoke nothing but truth, and we need to heed all His words; yet we should give special attention when He says, "Verily, verily."

#### **Life in Believing, 47.**

If the faith is genuine, everlasting life is affirmed as a present possession. Surely there are conscious or unconscious hypocrites whose faith is bogus, but this is no excuse for disputing the word of our Lord. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Ro. 3:4.)

#### **Life in the Bread, 48-50.**

Under the figure of bread, Jesus explains the kind or quality of faith that saves: it is faith that personally appropriates the merits of Christ to our souls as eating appropriates the nourishment of bread to our bodies. A great difference, however, between natural food and the bread of life is that the fathers who ate manna in the wilderness died, but the sinner who by faith partakes of the merits of Christ, the bread of life, shall never die.

#### **Atonement, John 6:51.**

Christ Himself is this bread of life, or living bread. The life of the flesh is in the blood, and it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul. Because of His offering of Himself as a substitutionary sacrifice for sinners, and His resurrection victory over all the powers of death and hell, He is qualified to bestow the gift of everlasting life to all His people.

#### **Key Verse:**

"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."—John 6:33.

Bread of God imparts to us the life of God, "and this life is in his Son." (I Jn. 5:11.)