

# Sermon Outline

## “LIFE IN HIS NAME”

### THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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#### I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

(JOHN 6:41-51)

##### I. Introduction

##### II. Grumbling (Jn 6:41-42)

- A. The Galilean Jews begin to grumble (v 41).
  - Jn 6:41: “So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, ‘I am the bread that came down from heaven.’”
- B. The people took offense at Jesus’ words because they knew who Jesus’ parents were!
  - Jn 6:42: “They said, ‘Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”

##### III. Unless (Jn 6:43-44)

- A. Jesus knew what they were thinking. He tells them not to grumble (v 43).
- B. Jesus repeats what he said earlier about how only God can draw people to him.
  - Jn 6:44: “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.”
    1. It is impossible for anyone to come to Jesus *apart* from God’s grace, *without* God’s drawing that person.
    2. Jesus is not surprised when the people reject him.
- C. We should expect to face rejection as teachers of the Gospel.
- D. But God always gets his people.
  1. While God does not draw everyone to his Son, everyone whom God has drawn will come to Jesus.
  2. There is no chance whatsoever that we can say “no” to the inner call of God.
- E. Many of us are here today because we have heard this call.
  1. It may have come to us in the form of a desire to be rid of guilt.
  2. For some of us, it wasn’t so much guilt as it was an intense desire to know God, to belong to One who is far greater than us.
  3. Whatever the seeming emphasis of that “voice,” we recognized it for what it was: *The Father was calling us.*  
—He was calling us to turn from sin, from death, from this present evil age, and come back to him through his Son Jesus Christ. And we did. And we’re still doing it.

##### IV. The Evangelistic God (Jn 6:45-46)

- A. Jesus connects his teaching ministry to Old Testament prophecy.

- Jn 6:45: “It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—”
- B. John 6:45 features a summary of texts in Isaiah and Jeremiah.
  - Isa 54:13: “All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.”
  - Jer 31:34: “And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.””
- C. Those passages speak of eschatological, “end of the age/new creation” reality. God will teach his restored people.
- D. By linking his own teaching to God’s eschatological, “end of the age/new creation” teaching, Jesus shows that God’s promise is being realized in and around him.
- E. When God teaches his people, they will all obey and go to the One whom God designates as his Messiah.
- F. John 6:45 also contains Jesus’ application of Isaiah 54:13 and Jeremiah 31:34: “Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—” (v 45).
  1. In other words, everyone who has experienced this “end of the age/new creation” teaching of God will go to Jesus.
  2. Jesus is where God’s eternal and perfect Law is finally fulfilled for his people.
- G. Those who have received this special, personalized instruction from God will inevitably be led to Jesus: “Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to *me*—” (v 45).
  1. God the Father’s “end of the age/new creation” teaching concerns his Son. God the Father points his people to his Son for eternal life.
  2. The great teaching that God delivers to his people at the end of the age is nothing short of evangelistic, Christ-centered, Gospel teaching.
- H. Jesus adds, “not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father” (v 46).

## V. Living Bread (Jn 6:47-51)

- A. Having explained that God always gets his people, and that God’s teaching always leads people to Jesus, Jesus comes back to his original point.
  - Jn 6:47-48: “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life.”
- B. Jesus makes yet another reference to the Old Testament Scriptures.
  - Jn 6:49: “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.”
    1. None of the Israelite fathers who ate the manna experienced resurrection.
    2. While the manna was a gift of God’s mercy that sustained their bodies during the wilderness journey, it did not confer eternal life.
- C. Jesus is effectively saying that the new and superior Food from heaven has come!
  - Jn 6:50: “This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.”
- D. Yet again, Jesus restates his main point.

- Jn 6:51. “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”
  1. That last phrase is a reference to his impending death by crucifixion.
  2. When Jesus the Son of God, YHWH in human flesh, goes to the cross to atone for the sins of his people, Jesus becomes living Bread for the world.

## VI. Christ-Centered Jesus

- A. If Jesus ever wanted to get himself out of trouble, now is a good time to stop. But he presses on with the message he received from God—that message is about *himself*.
- B. Why is it so important that our preaching and teaching always focus our eyes on Jesus? —Because God always leads people to focus on the Son (Jn 6:45); because the Gospel is the *priority* message of Scripture (cf. Lk 24:44-47; 1 Cor 15:3). The Gospel is the good news about Jesus himself.
- C. The ultimate blessing is Jesus Christ himself. All other blessings are the result, offshoots, of coming to Jesus and eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood by faith.
- D. The life that this Bread gives us is not first a better life in this present world of curse and sin. It is nothing less than the life of God’s future world. It is the life of...
  - the new heavens and the new earth
  - the Sabbath age
  - heaven
  - the Kingdom of God
  - justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification
  - the all-encompassing embrace of God himself.
- E. While this new life will shape the way we live our lives in this world, we should not confuse it with “a better quality of life” in this world, which we too easily define in terms of success, prosperity, and health.

## VII. The Father’s Priority

- A. Can we see more clearly God’s highest will for us? It is for every human being to partake of Jesus by faith.
- B. God’s intention from the start has been to glorify his Son as the Savior of sinners. —By giving his Son as the Bread of life, God is seeking the glory of his Son. He wants his Son to be gloried as the only Savior.
- C. People of this world/age reject this message because it humbles the pride of the fleshly man who wants to build his own kingdom and glory.
- D. The man who is of this world/age cannot receive this message of grace, faith, and seeming passivity, because deep down he always wants to be his own savior.
- E. If the worldly person has had some religious training, he will be perpetually stuck on that question: “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” (v 28) He might answer this question...
  1. by doing more religious or spiritual disciplines.
  2. by engaging in religiously-motivated “holy wars.”
    - Jn 16:2: “They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God.”

- F. If the worldly person is secular, he will find his “salvation” in purely earthly things like:
1. Personal fulfillment
  2. Money
  3. A personal kingdom (masked in language of “legacy,” “inheritance,” etc.)
- G. Gospel words
1. To secular Worldly Man, Jesus says, “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you....” (v 27).
  2. To religious Worldly Man, Jesus says, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent” (v 29).
  3. To people of every stripe and flavor of worldliness, Jesus says, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh” (v 51).

### VIII. Jesus Is Where It All Begins

**God’s will is for us to eat of Jesus and receive eternal life. God’s will is to glorify Jesus as the only Source of eternal life for his people. You and I were never meant to be our own food, our own saviors. From the very beginning of time, the Father’s intention has always been to glorify his Son as the true Bread from heaven, the true Savior of the world. So let us repent. Let us turn from all the ways we try to save ourselves (denying the depths of our own sinfulness, distracting ourselves in the world, building up our own kingdoms, etc.). Instead, let us cooperate with God’s plans by going to his Son. We do the will of God when we look to Jesus and eat of his flesh and drink of his blood by faith. Let Jesus be your Bread of life. Set your hope in him. Trust in him to give you eternal life the way you trust your lunch to satisfy your physical hunger. Only when you do this work of God can you be doing everything else God wants you to do. It all begins with Jesus.**

### Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today’s sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything with which you disagree or found difficult to accept?
3. Why did the Jews take issue with Jesus’ words, “I am the bread that came down from heaven”?
4. By referencing Isaiah 54:13 and Jeremiah 31:34 to explain what God does for him, how does Jesus help us to see his ministry in relation to God’s redemptive plans?
5. “Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—” (v 45). Based on this statement, what is the content and intent of the Father’s teaching?
6. How does Jesus contrast himself to the manna (v 49)?
7. What kind of life does the Bread of Life impart? What is its nature, its quality?
8. God’s intention from the start has been to glorify his own Son as the Savior of sinners. Discuss.
9. How do worldly people reject and resist the Savior? How should we respond to our Savior?