

Jesus Explains His Centrality

John 6:30-40

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Introduction: The week leading up to the Passover was a week of travel. Regular work stopped in Israel and almost everyone headed for Jerusalem for a week of activities intended to remind them that God was their only deliverer from Egypt. By the time Jesus appears on the earth they had forgotten God and were focused on Moses.

Every Hebrew knew the story. But they had become focused on the Story and not on God who had led them out into the desert where He delivered them from Egyptian slavery, supernaturally protected them and fed them. Water where there was no natural water and bread where there were no grain or ovens. In short, they were entirely dependent upon God for their very lives. This is the festival in the context in which John six occurs. Jesus was becoming renown in Israel. The holiday crowds, free from their daily work, were beginning to follow Him to see His powerful miracles.

John 6:2 ² A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.

Jesus led them to a hillside somewhere along the shore of Galilee where no food could be found. People can only carry so many provisions as they walk and they were in need. And so...just as The Father had fed Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, Jesus feeds them again in the wilderness of Galilee. John describes their reaction;

John 6:14-15 ¹⁴ Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." ¹⁵ So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

While the crowd slept, Jesus orchestrated a huge storm upon the lake that threatened the lives of His disciples, went to them in their helplessness, showed them again... His total rule of the forces of nature and brought them immediately to safety on shore.

In the morning the crowd pursues Jesus to the other side of the lake. They have observed a notable miracle and through it Christ had satisfied their physical hunger. Christ does care about our physical needs. He made us physical and then made a world...a creation to satisfy our physical needs. We call this God's common love and grace for humans. This is why you should be gracious and try to bless unbelievers. God does that!!!

Matthew 5:44-48 ⁴⁴ "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends **rain on *the*** righteous and *the* unrighteous. ⁴⁶ "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

BUT.....there is another aspect to life that goes largely unknown by men. We eat three times a day because, hunger returns to remind us. But there is a hunger of the spirit or soul that gnaws on us and it cannot be satisfied by food, drink, pleasure or possessions. But...men apart from God have no choice but to try to satisfy it with the things of this world. Here Jesus uses those physical hungers to speak to us about our spiritual ones. Men hunger and thirst for more than food and water.

THE WORLD CANNOT SATISFY YOUR SPIRITUAL DESIRES!

It was never intended to! You were made to find completeness, satisfaction, love and joy in God and God sent His own Son into the world to bring us to that one and only source of life and satisfaction.

This Crowd is a million miles from understanding this....as are most people in the world and even in churches today. So, Jesus uses the physical hunger they are experiencing and His own Divine ability to feed them, to bring them and us to understanding. May He bring us there as well today....

John 6:26-40 ²⁶ 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, 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. ³⁷ "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

Like us these folk got up each morning on a mission to satisfy their physical need for food, shelter, money and safety. A little comfort and happiness was welcome as well. And if they are obtained today....they must also be obtained tomorrow because our needs return, our desires are never fully met and at some point life seems futile and unfulfilling. The physical things of the world never can satisfy the inner longings of your soul:

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Jesus now leads the crowd...and us.... from what they know and understand to this unknown. They do not know that the physical world cannot satisfy the longings of the human spirit. The more we have of this worlds provisions the more we sense our need.

Ecclesiastes 5:10-15 ¹⁰ Whoever loves money **never has** money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. ¹¹ As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? ¹² The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep. ¹³ I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner, ¹⁴ or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when he has a son there is nothing left for him. ¹⁵ Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.

Jesus takes this opportunity to offer you true life...enduring life with its enduring satisfaction and joy. Not just life for several decades. Not life with meaningless and constant struggles, anxieties and unfulfillment, but His life.... the life of God that Christ gives to us through trust. He takes our sin and punishment and then gives us His righteousness and blessing.

John 6:27 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, God, has set His seal."

You cannot do a single thing to make this food or obtain this. Just like the Manna in the desert of the fish and loaves by Galilee. You may stand back and watch. You may stretch forth your hand and receive, but you may not contribute in any way.

Polls tell us that 80% of professing Christians believe that God will give them material things in this life in exchange for something they believe, say or do. If you can just figure it out then you can have "Your best life now."

"The moment you speak something out, you give birth to it. This is a spiritual principle, and it works whether what you are saying is good or bad, positive or negative" -- Joel Osteen

This is how the crowd with Jesus revealed the same error. The error of using God to get what we believe will satisfy us rather than receiving from God what will truly satisfy us.

John 6:28 ²⁸ Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?"

Jesus responds by saying...."THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO! ONLY TRUST ME TO GIVE YOU TRUE LIFE [ETERNAL] AND THEREFORE TRUE SATISFACTION.

Physical Life is fleeting and unsatisfying

John 6:30-34 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.'"

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: When Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." **John 6:29**, it went in one ear and out the other. The question on their mind is what do we need to do to get God to meet our perceived needs. They went back to the Manna that was provided for them in Sinai. They are thinking of the bread that was provided for them the day before by Jesus. The question on their mind is simple...."what do we need to do to get you to provide what we want?" If you want us to believe in you then you need to give us more physical bread.

Now let's talk about this for a moment. Is Jesus unwilling to provide food for you to eat? Does He think we are selfish and self-centered because we desire food, shelter, clothing, human affection and happiness? NO....in fact, Jesus said God cared about such things....

Matthew 6:25-33 ²⁵ "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? ²⁷ "And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? ²⁸ "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, ²⁹ yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰ "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! ³¹ "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' ³² "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

God cares about your physical need, but Christ came into the world to also meet your spiritual need. It is not an either or as Jesus clearly taught. The need for eternal life and eternal satisfaction and for eternal joy is a vital human need. Because of sin and the fall, this world can never ever give us true life with all its joy. Jesus is calling out to you to seek life in Him and not in this world. He affirms that He cares about your physical life but it is imperative that we seek our lives in Him not in this world. This is what John met when He said,

1 John 2:15-17 ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world- the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions- is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

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. "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." : Jesus is turning the spotlight on God and away from mankind. He is explaining how the physical bread that only satisfies for a few hours and gives life for a few decades and the eternal bread that satisfies and gives eternal life both come from God.

Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread.": They want the bread, but now we will see if they will take it when it is offered. Jesus has made the point that this life does not satisfy our inner most cravings and that it is fleeting. Many bitter and hostile men will agree with that evaluation. By the time we have lived a portion of our life we find it to be a bitter disappointment. So God offers them and us a remedy. It is a remedy of His choosing and not ours. It is singular! It is narrow! It is unique!

Jesus Alone is Sufficient and satisfying

John 6:35-40 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. ³⁷ "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

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.: This is a bold and overt assertion. Before making it Jesus has set it up by satisfying their physical hunger...which He knew full well would return the next day and then exhorting the crowd to work for something that with enduring ability to satisfy them.

There response is very much like men in every age. "Just tell us what to do God and we will do it." Do we need to be more sincere, more religious, more moral, more studious...just tell us "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" Jesus has told them but the answer seems like nonsense to them. They either do not hear it or they put it through their human works filter. Salvation in the church today is a strange mixture of works and grace. It is preached that if you will do something for God then He will do something for you. If you will believe and pray a sinners prayer than God will give you grace. In short...God will trade you grace for faith...but Jesus will have none of that. He asserts that the only thing to do is trust what He has done. No prayer, no religion, no ritual. The Gospel reality is that we have come to the God of Creation looking for a way back to God. We ask what we can do and He responds by saying nothing whatsoever.

As Jesus continues the analogy of bread for salvation he says that He is Salvation. Now listen carefully to this fine point. It is not what you believe about Jesus that will save

you. It is Jesus who will save you. You can know practically nothing about Christ and be saved...I did! You need to trust what He says and what He does. Not yourself, not your church, not your morality. Jesus is salvation...Not You or me or anything we will ever do. "Lord, always give us this bread." I am the bread of life!

If you are trusting a prayer, a profession, or a confession you need to trade all of that right this minute for a possession. That possession is Jesus. He paid for your sin....you will never pay for a single one. He lived a pleasing and sinless life before God....you will never be able to do that. He loved God perfectly.....you will never be able to do that! Do you see what Christ is saying here? He is the gospel! He is salvation! He is the bread of Life.

But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe: I have noticed a strange reality in men. They do not want to trust Christ this way. It is too radical! It crushes the value of their own morality and goodness into dust. It makes them the same as a wicked and vile sinner before the throne of God. We are better than most men...aren't we? Is there anyone here who has not said something similar to the Pharisee that prayed...."God, I thank you that I am not like other men!"

You cannot add Christ to your own religion, piety or morality. You must take that off! You must sweep everything else off your plate and eat the bread of life. When Jesus said "and yet you do not believe." He says that we have seen His deity and beauty, but we do not consider that enough. We are unwilling to trust the God of Creation with our own eternal souls. We might eat some of that bread but do not believe that we can eat only that bread and live.

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.: What a dilemma! God offers an absolutely free salvation and most men...even professing Christians do not want it at that price. They want to pay something, do something.....work for something! Our own pride is at stake.

Jesus explains that the Father has given Him children and that because of that gift they WILL absolutely come to Him. Well what if you have not been given to the Christ? How can you know if you can come? This answer is pure and uncomplicated. If you want to come you may come. Nothing stands in the way of simple and total trust in Jesus Christ. He will never cast you out if you will come.

BUT...you must come to Jesus. Nothing is said about sinner's prayers or doctrinal confessions. NOTHING!! Nothing is said of candles, baptism, membership or study. Only Christ is offered. No sin stands in the way of coming because..."this man receives sinners and even eats with them." The man wants to come to Christ should freely come at this very hour...not this afternoon or tomorrow....but now. He will never cast you out.

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.: This is the entire reason Jesus left Heaven. He came to gather up the ones that the Father gave Him before the foundation of the earth was laid. He calls to them to come. To cease striving with themselves, their sin and this confounding world. To come to the one who did absolutely everything for them. Lay down your sin at the foot of the Cross and by all means strip off all your own righteousness as well.

Ephesians 1:3-6 ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day: The will of the Father in this text is to get the saved. To gather up the children for the family. To complete the bride for His Son.

Let me review....Jesus is the Gospel. He is the bread that all men must eat. He saves; not religion, morality or doctrine. Until you know this you do not truly know Christ. He came down from heaven for this very purpose...to bring men to Himself so that they might have eternal life. Because God purposes or wills to gather all the ones He chooses....and because God is Sovereign over Creation then it follows that God also purposes that Christ will lose exactly no one between now and the resurrection. If God can set His affection on you by name before He even created the world then He can and will keep you safely in His possession until the day of your resurrection.

"For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.": How does God purpose to save then if it is not through doctrine or a sinners prayer. He tells us right here. It is The Father's will to save men who behold His Son and Trust His Son.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 ²² For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; ²³ but we **preach Christ** crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Two things then are required for salvation. **FIRST:** You must see the true and Glorious Jesus Christ and not the emaciated and emasculated one the world offers. He is the creator and sustainer of all things. He is the life giver....the only life giver and He sustains your life along with all created matter in the universe.

Colossians 1:16-17 ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

SECONDLY: You must believe. This means put your trust in Him. Relinquish all trust in yourself and all hope and believe that this Christ who you have beheld in Scripture and heard proclaimed from Scripture has satisfied every single requirement of God for Salvation and He has done it on your behalf.

There is no sliding scale here. Jesus did not do 50%, 70% or even 90%. Jesus did everything and your sole response is simple, childlike trust in that work accomplished on your behalf. Next week we will see what the response was to such a glorious offer. **BUT**

today the only response that matters is ours. Is this how we see Christ? Is He enough for you? Can you take your eternal soul and place it into His nail pierced hands for safe keeping? Or....will you hold back? Fearful of belonging fully to Christ...afraid to trust Him fully. Here....let Paul and the Holy Spirit plead with you today....

CONCLUSION

Romans 8:29-39 ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; ³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? ³³ Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴ who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." ³⁷ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.