

# Jesus is Really Good Bread!

- Introduction (Show Slide #1)
  - Introduce my family that has come journeyed here to be part of my journey where God is taking me.
  - Introduce my Dad's famous 3 presentation outline. Be Sincere, Be Brief, and Be Seated.
    - Talk about Sincerity
      - Some of you know me and some don't.
      - I am a sinner. The irony that I am standing up here proclaiming a gospel and a God that I once ran from...
      - We like to judge Christians, but I am not a Super Christian. I am a normal guy.
      - I come here not in my name but in the name of my redeemer, my savior, and my lord.
      - I don't have to be amazing because Jesus already is.
    - Talk about Brevity
      - I am a Software Engineer by day.
      - Bicycle example.
      - So the real question is "How long do I plan on standing up here for?"
      - Preach yourself the Gospel every day.
    - Talk about Be Seated
      - I plan to when I am finished.

- Message Introduction
  - With that said, are you read for some good news this morning?
  - Everyone stands and finds John 6:1-15 in their bibles. (Show Slide #2, 3, 4, and 5 as I read). Everyone is encouraged to Read along.

*John 6:1-15 (ESV)*

*After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"*

*Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.*

- Prayer
  - Father thanks you for your word and the freedom to read them this morning. Thank you for allowing us to question what it is you are telling us and boldly proclaim the name of Jesus this morning. I thank you for taking a pretty unreliable guy like myself and making me your servant. Guide my tongue to speak only your words, and open the ears and eyes of this church and all who hear to your amazing grace.

- Message (Everyone is seated. Move to Slide #6 - Blank)
  - Many will leave and go eat Sunday Dinner.
  - Sunday is one of the only days when a meal between and 11 – 3 can be called Dinner.
  - On Sundays you do things you normally would not
    - You invite a family or two to join you for dinner at a restaurant.
    - You have people over to your house.
    - This is not the typical Tuesday.
    - Some of you only woke up this morning because you thought there would be food after...no need for confession.
  - Food is really important
    - Food keeps us alive. And sustains are day to day activities.
    - Provides a social setting
      - Plans can be arranged around a box of pizza.
      - Deals can be finalized over a steak dinner.
      - Friendships can be cemented through conversations around Taco Tuesday taco platter.
    - The bible tells us in Genesis about a snake time around a fruit tree that went horrible wrong.
    - Movies with food references in the title like these indicate a culture that still finds food as relevant as it was from the beginning of recorded time.
      - Meatballs
      - American Pie
      - Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
      - The Hunger Games
  - Exodus 16
    - Put a pin John Chapter 6 and let's go back to Exodus Chapter 16 for a minute.
    - Here we find the people of Israel have just miraculously escaped the enslavement of the Egyptians and Pharaoh's army has been crushed in the Red Sea.
    - This is a time of great excitement and rejoicing...and the chapter opens with the complaints of the people. They are hungry and

now they are thinking this was not a good idea. In Exodus 16 verse 2 we find this jewel. (Show slide #7.)

And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

- If you are confused here you should be. The slaves of Egypt were not sitting around pots of meat. They are hungry and they are afraid and they start complaining. Sound familiar?
- Even today we romanticize the past. The past when we were younger, smarter, faster, slimmer, and had more money in our wallet and hair on our heads.
- My College Days Example (Show Slide #8)
  - Texas Tech football game.
  - I graduated back in 2003w
    - when the campus had less buildings then it does now
    - and the football stadium did not have all the additions that it does now
    - The band did not sit in the end zone but rather had pretty nice seats up by the student section.
    - Can I be honest with you without you guys getting mad at me? I think the football team was better than too.
    - The masked rider road a little faster
    - Raider Red shot two short barrel shotguns up in the air when the Red Raiders scored.
    - The announcer was different
    - and the crowd yelled different stuff.
    - The truth...it was pretty much the same...everything was still pretty much the same.
    - The crowd still yells stuff...some that I cannot repeat here
    - the band still plays and marches like no other.
    - The horse still runs around

- and to tell you truth my son Isaac is really afraid of anything dressed up in a costume so it is probably better off that Raider Red is not armed.
- You see the glamor of my college days had caught up with me...and someday soon will be another generation disappointed that things were not like they were when I was FILL in the BLANK. (Go to Slide #9 - Blank)
  - Often times we look around our world at what God has given us and we quickly realize it is easier to take account of our burdens rather than our blessings.
  - Loss/Bad Column.
  - We got out of Egypt but now we are hungry.
  - I got a car but it was not the one I wanted with the turbo charger and 4 wheel drive.
  - Constantly trying to tip the scales to show how bad and unjust our lives are.
  - We would love to tell everyone about how great our lives were when we were slaves and we had pots of meat and bowls full of bread and are quick to leave out the beatings we took that really make us who we are. The beatings that God delivered us from.
  - It is easy for us to lose sight of what it is that we “need”. If we could just keep the “need” in our life down to what we really need it turns out we do not need very much.
- Luckily for the former slaves of Egypt and us...God hears the grumbling of the people and rains down bread from heaven so that every morning the people wake up and know that it is God who has delivered them from Egypt not to die but to be a redeemed people.
- The Bread is important because it has a name.
  - Pets
  - Cars
  - Children
- Isaac and Isabel Story (Baby A & Baby B).
- The Mana becomes a key component of their survival. It provides nourishment and flavor for their day to day lives. In verse 31 we read

more about the mana...what it looked, felt, and tasted like. (Show Slide #10)

...It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

- God provides very specific instructions on the collection, consumption, and shelf life of the Mana. The instructions are clear that they are to gather up an 'omer' for each person. Nothing more and nothing less.
- On the day before the Sabbath the people were to gather twice as much.
- An omer is approximately two quarts...half of a gallon. (Show Slide #11) In modern language that I understand, 2 quarts of Blue Bell ice cream.
- When the people did not gather enough they did not eat...when they gathered too much it went sour on them.
- In verse 32 something interesting happens. God gives them another order regarding the mana. He tells them, (Show Slide #12)

'Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"

- Aaron carries out the order placing a day's portion in a pot. The pot will take up residency in the arc of the covenant and will represent the daily provision of the Lord. (Show Slide #13 – Blank)
- Back to John 6
  - It is important to understand the Old Testament otherwise what Jesus was doing makes zero sense. Jesus did not wake up one morning and say, "This is going to be so cool...check out what I am going to do with this bread today."
  - My research is pretty sketchy here but I think what we read here is the account of the first Sunday dinner. 12 invitations have been sent out and 5000 plus ones show up. Jesus the ultimate dinner host looks up and sees a hoard of people coming and one thing is clear, he is going to have to feed them.

- The conversation that follows is pretty amazing. It depicts the cultural problems of the time. Listen to what is written in verse 5 (Show Slide # 14)

*“Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?”<sup>6</sup> He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.<sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii<sup>[a]</sup> worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.”*

- So the first thing that comes to mind is that maybe they need to go to the store...they need some more hot dog and hamburger buns, but they have a lot of people to feed. They will need 200 Denarii.
- (Show Slide #15) A denarii was the Roman currency of the time and it was 3.24 grams of silver. 200 Denarii would be roughly half a year’s worth of wages or more.
- We are talking about a lot of money. We cannot possibly feed these people so the alternative is to send them away. Tell them to go get their own food with their own denarii.
- This is a common and recurring cultural phenomenon. We want nothing more than to provide for ourselves...if only everyone else would worry about themselves the world would be a great place and I wouldn’t have to worry about anyone else.
- As Americans we believe that what we can buy can make us happy somehow. We live in a culture of consumerism where we try to earn and then buy pretty much anything to make us happy for an incredibly short time.
- (Show Slide # 16) The literary power house Mad Magazine puts it this way, “The only reason a great many American families don't own an elephant is that they have never been offered an elephant for a dollar down and easy weekly payments.” There is some ugly truth in this.
- Pay it forward example
  - Some of you have either been the recipients of this or you do this sometimes. I read an article and I will read you part of it.
  - Starbucks Disclaimer
  - (Show Slide #17) The article is titled “378 people ‘pay it forward’ at Starbucks”.

“An act of kindness at a Starbucks drive-thru in Florida inspired an 11-hour chain of paying-it-forward. A woman drove up and paid for her own coffee at 7AM Wednesday...and also asked to pay for a caramel macchiato for the driver behind her, who then did the same for the next customer...in total 378 people agreed to keep it going...At 6PM the 379<sup>th</sup> customer ended the chain by ordering a coffee and declining to pay for the next one...The Barista said he doesn't believe that the final customer understood the pay-it-forward concept.”

- I know that this story is supposed to make me feel all warm and fuzzy but to tell you the truth it is troubling to me.
- Some would argue that 378 people did something amazing that day and got something out of it. Maybe they did I don't know.
- My simple mind starts to think like this, “If someone gives me \$5 to pay for my order and I then take \$5 and give it to the next guy in line...the order still costs me \$5.” I did not accept any kind of gift here...I simply took the gift and passed it on to the next guy. This to me is a problem.
- In fact out of 379 people the only people that really matters much at all is the first lady who gave the gift and the last guy who accepted it.
- Our culture keeps replaying this message to us, “If you didn't earn it somehow then you can't keep it.”
- Can I tell you something church? I would much rather be the 379<sup>th</sup> guy in that line than anyone else that day. I want to be the guy who accepts the gift free and clear. If you want to buy my lunch go for it.
- Our culture really points the finger at the 379<sup>th</sup> guy and says, “Well...there is nothing he really did to earn that and even more he is kind of a jerk for accepting a free coffee without doing something for someone else first. How does he sleep at night?”
- In response to that I would have to tell you that is some really good news! That is a gospel truth that we cannot earn the gift of Jesus. No matter how much we pay, or how hard we work, or how much we clean ourselves up, or how much we do for others, or...the list keeps going on and it will never stop.
- But that is not the message of gospel. The message of the gospel tells us that we did not do anything to deserve, and you cannot buy, and you can never be good enough because Jesus has already done it all, he paid

it all, and he is good enough to be my savior and my barista at Starbucks.

- Jesus is not a consumable product.
  - Jesus is not something you can buy, not something you can earn, and he is certainly not a tool for you to use. Our culture really wants us to believe the opposite. Are you ready for the truth? You don't get to consume Jesus...when you give your life to Jesus...it is you who are consumed.
- Back in John chapter 6 we see this exchange... (Show Slide 18 – Blank)
  - the crowd really wasn't invited and they cannot pay to feed themselves and Jesus responses tells us they cannot be sent away.
  - The disciples do what any good host should do...
  - they go to the pantry and try to figure out what they can do. All they come up with is five loafs of barley bread and a couple of fish.
  - This sounds a lot like our pantry at home the day before we go shopping for groceries again. Everything has been consumed and we are down to the bottom of the barrel...the stuff that no one wanted to eat anyways. Historically, barley bread would have been eaten by the poor. Barley was grown mainly to feed the animals.
  - Everyone is worried. The disciples have just told a hungry mob to sit down which means they are now expecting to eat and a boy has quite possible given all he had to eat to Jesus.
  - Jesus is not worries. He already knows what is going to happen and he knows how to feed the people...and he does. Everyone has their fill and there are left overs! The people come looking for him the next day and Jesus answers them in verse 26 (Show Slide #19)

..."Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you had your fill of the loaves."

- This is in stark contrast to why the people came in the first place. Remember earlier the people came because of the signs and miracles but now they are here for the bread of life. They came for a one time miracle and they leave with something much more valuable. The people got the bread of life. The people got a taste of what fed the people of Israelites as they wandered in the desert for 40 years. Maybe you came

today because you heard of a miracle. It is good that you are here. But that miracle always point to the Father who provides us our daily bread. In verse 32 Jesus says to them (Show Slide #20)

...Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

- Jesus is the “True Bread” of heaven. No matter the reason you are here today, if you get ahold of that fact then you will never be hungry again. The searching for something that will fill you up will be over.
- When Jesus feeds his people there are leftovers. There is enough for each person to have their fill, and because I cannot give you my food I can freely give you the excess that has been provided for me to give to someone else. You cannot have what I have because God has set that aside for me...but do not fear because there is something set aside for you too.
- Feast of Unleavened Bread
  - I want to bring you back to a feast that the Jews of the time would understand. They Feast of Unleavened Bread is presented in Exodus 34:18. It says, (Show Slide #21) (Worship Band Return)

“You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month Abib, for in the month Abib you came out from Egypt.”

- Unleavened bread is a bit of a mystery. The Egyptians had many technologies that we still take advantage of today and one of those is baking.
- They would take a lump of dough and leave it out where it would collect all sorts of fungus from the air...like yeast.
- They would then take a small lump of the old bread and push it into the center of a new piece of dough. The nasty of the old dough would quickly spread through the new dough causing it to rise, or leaven.
- It sounds kind of nasty to me.
- The early church had these problems where something would get into and quickly spread through it like a cancer. Letters were written and read to the churches to try and correct these problems before they

exploded and infected other churches. 1 Corinthians is one of those letters which dealt with sexual immoral acts that the church was boasting about. In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 Paul writes this, (Show Slide #22)

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

- (Show Slide #23) During The Feast of Unleavened Bread the Jewish custom involved the families first cleansing their homes of leaven and then they prepared unleavened bread to eat to honor and remember how God miraculously set the people free from slavery in Egypt.
- Then would cook it on a grill leaving striped grill marks like these. Then the Father would take one of the pieces of bread and break it in two.
- The pieces would then be hidden somewhere in the house. Buried out of sight.
- The children then would seek out the hidden bread and when they found it they would present it to the Father who would take the redeemed bread and give to the child who found the bread a prize. Then the family would eat the bread.
- The unleavened bread in this story is Jesus. (Worship Band Starts to Play)
  - He is not full of the old stinky rotten bread that is penetrating his life...when Jesus was pierced, his body was broken, he rose a brand new piece of bread...free of Levin...perfect so you do not have to be.
  - Don't miss this today! If you hear nothing else today hear this, Jesus is the unleavened bread that you need.
  - Some may ask this question, "How do I get the Levin out of my life? How do I purge sin from me?" My response is that you are asking the wrong question...what you should be asking yourself is "How do I get more of Jesus into my life?"
  - May I make a suggestion? Read God's word. Meet with Jesus daily and really get to know him.
  - Get involved with a community of believers...this church is a great place to start and one of the many small groups would not hurt.

- We serve a God who wants to know you and He really wants you to know him.
- I am pretty sure when you search out God's heart you will realize that you are loved beyond measure by a God who is willing to do anything to feed you. And that is really good, gut busting, news! (Go to Slide #24 – Blank)
- Conclusion and Call to Worship
  - So here is the question for you...what are you going to do with your old stinky nasty bread?
  - Some of you may have noticed that when you hold on to things in your life because it feels good to you to do so
  - But what happens is those things seep into other parts of your life.
    - What started as anger towards one person has made it so that no one can really get close to you anymore.
    - An addiction has gone from the computer screen, a bag, or a bottle has changed your life in a way now that no one seems to recognize you.
    - Hurt over a loss in your life has made it impossible for you to forgive people.
    - Something you have turned to in order to fill you up has left you with a gaping hole inside of your heart.
    - When your hands are full holding on to these things it is impossible to hold on to the things in our life that we really love.
  - If you would all close your eyes and bow your heads for a moment.
    - There are three groups of people here. Some of you have some really bad bread...others may have small pieces of bad bread that are slowly growing. You need to let those things go...let Jesus deal with those things so you can cling tighter to him.
    - Another group of people here have been in line at the Starbucks way too long. You keep passing the gift off because you are not ready, worth, clean enough, smart enough, have faith enough, and on and on. This morning all God wants of you is YOU.
    - The last group here are simple consumers of church. You go from service to service with a Jesus tool belt using Jesus for what you want when you want. Your life hasn't changed much from the

time you first gave your life to Jesus because you are not ready to allow Jesus to consume you. Maybe this morning it is time to allow God to use you instead of you using him.

- The worship band will continue to play and our elders and pastors will come to the front to pray with you. If you fit in a category and you need some True Bread this morning then this is your opportunity.
- I am going to pray for you and then I am asking you to boldly come forward and get prayer today.
- Prayer
  - Father thank you for feeding your people. Thank you for reminding us that when we come for you for food we are not getting turned away and that we are loved. As the people pray this morning I ask that you stir in our hearts and show us our old bread that you are ready to replace this morning with new and fresh bread.