

November 1

Mark 6-7

Matthew 14-15

John 5-7

Today, our key theme is bread. Bread and more bread. Vienna loaf, rye bread, wheat and white. Jesus multiplies bread, calls himself bread, warns them about yeast, and tells them they have to eat him in order to live.

When Jesus feeds the multitude, he looks back to Jewish expectations that come from the Elisha and fulfills them. Jesus multiplies bread, heals people and brings resurrections just like Elisha, a messianic type.

There was something so awesome about this multiplication miracle. Most miracles were 1-1, but this time, we know at least 5,000 people witnessed it and participated in it. The hungry were fed. The disciples were mystified. Faith was grown. Jesus used the meager offering of a little boy to change the entire scene.

But there was deeper symbolism. John tells us it was near the time of the Passover. The feast of Passover and unleavened bread were clear symbols of the rescuing power of Jesus. The manna from heaven in Exodus was God's provision to feed his people. Jesus was from heaven and now claims to be God. Is Jesus symbolically claiming that he IS the rescue of God? That he is God's provision? You bet!! The miracle gives credibility to the claim that he IS the bread of life.

Interestingly, the people want to make him king after this. They get that he feeds them and they get that he is claiming to be from heaven... and the messiah. SO! Let's get behind him and make him king. Let's put him in a position of authority...

What they don't realize is that Jesus is proving by miracle that he already HAS all power and authority. He does not need their stinking authority! He already has it.

John tells us too that 12 basketful of leftovers were collected after the meal and he alone notes the mood and mind of the people afterward, which was to make Christ king by force. That is the reason Jesus withdrew into the wilderness after performing the miracle. Because Jesus is already the king of the Kingdom of God, he withdraws to the desert – partly to get away from these people. Their idea of kingship was very different from His.

So here is the question – are you depending on Jesus as the bread of life. Jesus says “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every WORD that comes from the mouth of God.” Jesus IS the bread. God’s word is our bread. Are you eating him?

Jesus' words about the bread of life created a huge uproar because His hearers were unable to discern the spiritual meaning of His words and thought He was talking about some kind of cannibalistic action when He said, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life." I can imagine people – If I have to eat this guy – I am out of here! And some denominations have built an entire theology around this idea. The idea is that when a priest blesses the bread and wine, it becomes literally flesh and blood of Jesus. And it is by ingesting these things that you receive grace.

Our church teaches that when Jesus said I am the Bread of Life, He was speaking metaphorically. He did not mean to be taken literally. He is not encouraging cannibalism in any sense. He is saying, Feed on me "spiritually," drink my blood spiritually which is exactly what happens when we partake in a communion service and also when we trust Him for our life on a moment by moment basis. We remember Jesus as our sustenance every time we take communion.

This will become a symbol of Jesus body broken for us. We remember his sacrifice as we take in the bread. We remember that Christ in us is the hope of glory.