

# I Am God - I Am The Bread Of Life

## WELCOME

I'M ANT. Welcome. Sign & Drop.

**John 6.** We'll be starting at verse 35, and we'll be bouncing around in that chapter a lot after that.

## INTRO

### SERIES RECAP

Today in John 6, I'll be preaching on one of the handful of Jesus' "I Am" statements. Jesus reveals a lot about Himself in the book of John through these powerful statements where He says, "I Am \_\_\_\_\_." He says things like, "I Am the Good Shepherd. I Am the Way, The Truth, and the Life."

I know my friend Tim Olson came preached on Jesus' Statement where He said, "I Am the Resurrection." Jesus makes one of those statements here in John 6 as well, and we'll get to it in a minute. Before we get there, I wanna get you to do something for me.

### SERMON INTRO

**Finish this sentence,** "I'd be satisfied if \_\_\_\_\_... I'd be straight/good if \_\_\_\_\_. Man I don't need a million dollars or anything like that, but I'd be aight if I just had \_\_\_\_\_."

"I don't need a mansion, but I'd be ok if I had \_\_\_\_\_."

I mean, for real now, if you had to strip it down to the essentials that were necessary for you to feel like you were doing aight, what would you say that you need?

I like questions like these because they get straight to our hearts and show us what we believe truly matters, in order for us to be satisfied. They help us to see what we truly believe we need in this life.

### I AM STATEMENT

The I Am statement for this week that we'll be examining can be found in verse 35.

**35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life;**

He says that He is the Bread Of Life. He then goes on to explain what that means.

**...whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.**

## I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE - Explained

For the people that lived in this area, bread was the central food item in their diets. Bread was sustenance for them. Bread was survival. Some say that bread was present in the vast majority of family meals. They likely **couldn't imagine what life would be like without bread.**

As Jesus often did in His teaching ministry, He took **something physical, that they were familiar with** and used it to reveal something deep and spiritual about Himself and about them.

When He calls Himself the Bread of Life, He's saying that if you truly wanna live, if you truly wanna be alive and not just exist, you can really only find that in Him. **If you truly want your heart and your soul to prosper and find any kind of peace, there's only one place to find it.**

Let's be clear, He is saying that He is **THE** Bread of Life. Jesus is saying there are no other options for truly being satisfied in this life.

#### HUNGER AND THIRST EXPLAINED

He goes on to say that **those who come and believe in Him will no longer hunger and/or thirst.**

On more than one occasion in the bible, these physical appetites, are used to explain the cravings of our souls and our hearts. Deep, desires and cravings and longings that we wanna satisfy are at times referred to in the bible in terms of thirst or hunger.

Jesus is revealing that to have our deepest desires be satisfied, we need Him. He is what satisfies the hungers of our souls. He's saying if you really want to be satisfied in this life, the fullness of life is found in Him alone. I am the Bread of Life.

The Psalmist explains this longing that we have for God this way:

#### **Psalms 42:1-2**

*As a deer pants for flowing streams,*

*so pants my soul for you, O God.*

*2 My soul thirsts for God,*

*for the living God.*

*When shall I come and appear before God*

Animals often pant for one of two reasons:

1. Either because they're **extremely excited about getting something**, or
2. Because they're exhausted.

So whether this deer is panting because its excited because its found the water that it needs or because its exhausted and thirsty and is in need of a drink, the point is the same: **Our souls, on a deep, deep, level, crave and thirst for God Himself!**

Our souls pant and long for more of God, but because of how our sinful nature corrupts our hearts and our minds, we steer our search away from God and onto other things. So our **world is convinced that so many other things are the Bread Of Life:**

(Material)

- Money/Possessions
  - If I just had more money, man I'd be straight.
  - So many in our world just can't be content if our car/house/clothes aren't as nice as we think they should be
  - Even though so many millionaires have stated that having a lot of money doesn't actually fulfill you in life.

- The late great philosopher known as the Notorious B.I.G. said it this way... Mo Money, Mo Problem.
- In all seriousness, Hip Hop has for decades glorified the pursuit of riches, and now, more and more you hear the artists that get there say it aint what we thought it would be.
- J.Cole, in *Love Yours* said, "I think being broke was better."
- Why are these rich people saying this? Because Money isn't the bread of life. Jesus is the Bread of Life
- Money >> Control
  - So many today believe money is the bread of life, **not because it can buy you nice things** but because we trust in it to be **our shield, our refuge, our security**, more than we trust in God
  - We believe Money is the Bread of Life
- Fulfilling Our Sexual Desires (Sex)
  - This is why so many feel/are addicted to pornography
  - Or for some, its not pornography, per se, but rather fantasies about being with someone that isn't your spouse..
  - ... so many cheat on their spouses even though they know they risk losing their families! Its because they believe sex is the bread of life
  - This is why you've probably seen commercials that use sex appeal to advertise everything from cheeseburgers to automobiles.
  - This is why people get so offended and angry when you say that God has objective, righteous boundaries and rules that dictate how sex should be practiced and enjoyed.
  - Because our world believes that sex is the bread of life, and if you tell them that they should submit their sexual desires to the Lordship of Christ, they respond like you just tried to take away their happiness or change who they are at their core. Whenever someone begins to confuse their desires/urges with their core identity, they have begun to believe that this thing that they are desiring is the Bread of Life.
- Success
  - Maybe we're not where we thought we'd be in life or
  - Maybe we've failed at something we thought we would have succeeded in
  - And we truly believe that if we were just more successful, then we'd be straight.
  - We believe if we had just achieved more or gone farther in our career... or had more plans for moving forward in our future, then we'd be able to feel good about ourselves...
  - In our world, we often believe that success is the bread of life
- Respect
  - It pains us tremendously to show weaknesses and failures because we believe life is found in being able to achieve and maintain the respect and esteem of others

- We'd rather silently suffer and live defeated by something than admit to others that struggling so we can get some help. Why?
- Because we think respect is the Bread of Life. We think true life is found in having the respect of others.
- Comfort
  - We believe the way to truly find life is to make my life as comfortable as possible.
  - So we try to keep ourselves from making many commitments or taking on more responsibility than we absolutely have to because we believe comfort is the Bread of Life.
  - Nevermind that there are loved ones that we could sacrifice to help and bless. We just do what's most comfortable for us because we believe that's where true life is found

But Jesus said, **35 ... "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."**

And just as we struggle to believe that, the people of Jesus' day didn't grasp it either. Look at **verse 25**.

**25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" 26 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."**

So, Jesus, the day before, had just done the miracle of feeding the multitude of people with 2 fish and five loaves of bread.

Jesus refers to his miracle as a "sign".

**Sign** - something that exists to point your attention to something else, something greater. A sign shouldn't draw attention to itself. No, it is to alert you about something else that you should focus on.

He's saying "You aren't coming because you saw signs" (something meant to point people to who He truly is) He's saying, "You're coming to me **because you want another fish sandwich** like the one I gave you yesterday."

**27 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. For on him God the Father has set his seal."**

You're coming to me for something that's not gonna last when you should be coming for food for your Spirit, food for your soul that lasts forever that you can only get from the One (referring to himself) that God the Father sends.

#### JESUS - NOT JUST HIS GIFTS

They didn't understand Jesus to be the Bread of Life. You can tell because they're seeking Jesus primarily to get more **FROM** Him instead of to get more **OF** Him.

Christian, which do you care more about? Getting more FROM Him? Or getting more OF Him?

EXAMPLE: One way to spot this is by paying attention to how you respond when Jesus isn't giving you what you want most from Him. If that causes you to consider walking away from Jesus or maybe just disengaging from the things that help you grow closer to Him, then you're probably primarily seeking Him to get more FROM Him instead of to get more OF Him.

EXAMPLES: For example, there are some who have basically given up on following Jesus because Jesus hasn't given them the type of relationship they want. God, I've been following you for 10+ years now, and you still haven't given me a husband or a wife. What's the point in me doing this, if you're not gonna give me what I want.

... Missing the fact that Jesus came to be the primary, satisfying relationship in their life. They've created a Christianity where God is supposed to give them what they want if they behave and do a lot of Good stuff. They are working hard to get Jesus to give them bread, when Jesus wants us to work hard to be able to see and understand that He is bread!

In our culture today, most who are not aggressively against Jesus, see Him primarily as someone who gets them what they want and not primarily the One who Is what they want.

The truth is JESUS DID NOT COME INTO THE WORLD PRIMARILY TO:

- GIVE BREAD, BUT TO BE BREAD!
- GIVE YOU ALL THE THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT YOU WANT, BUT RATHER TO BE THE THING THAT YOU WANT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE

Listen, I gotta tell you this because I love you and I want you to be protected from some preaching that can sound great to your ears but is actually damaging to your soul. There are many **preachers today who talk more about how God is wanting to give you a blessing than they talk about the fact that He is your blessing**. This is harmful! They make Jesus out to be the key that unlocks the treasure that you've always wanted, instead of making Him out to be the greatest treasure in the universe! Don't get me wrong, He does delight to give gifts to His children, but understand that the primary gift that He gives to us is Himself.

Now earlier in the chapter Jesus teaches His disciples **2 things** that they should do since He is the Bread of life. Let's go back to verse 1 and read about this miracle of feeding the multitude with a 2 fish and 5 loaves.

### **JOHN 6:1-13 (Jesus feeds 10,000+)**

*1 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. 2 And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. 3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 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?" 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.*

- People hungry
- Vs 5,6 Jesus tests His disciple, Phillip. How we gonna feed all of these people?
- And its probably 10,000+ if you count women and kids. Where are we gonna get the food from to feed 10,000+ people?

Important to note. Tests are given by teachers, generally speaking. And class is in session, because Jesus is about to educate them.

(Energy build as you read through passage)

*7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little."*

A denarii was a days wage. So Philip says if we spend over half a year's salary, we wouldn't be able to feed all these people.

*8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down."*

Ohhhh... Jesus bout to show out

*Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.*

*11 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. 12 And when they had eaten their fill,*

That lets you know that people got enough. They were satisfied. That's important. Remember that.

*he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost."*

Jesus gets the bread, gives thanks for it, breaks it (you know he broke it because they had fragments left over), and gives it to the people. Everyone eats and everyone has enough.

## THE LESSON

If you connect that with what we already read, you can see that He is teaching His disciples something about ministry. He's teaching them something about what their job is as His followers.

Here's the lesson: No matter who and no matter how many people you find yourself ministering to. They all have this hunger in their souls, and you don't have enough in and of yourself to give them what they need to satisfy their hunger, so you give them the bread of life!

**By breaking the bread and feeding everyone with it until they are full, He's saying, I am the bread of life, and when my body is broken (talking about his torture and crucifixion), it will be enough for everyone! That's what you feed people! That's what they need! That's what everyone needs! From the business woman who's the CEO of her company, to the single mom working two minimum wage jobs, they all need the same thing! From the 8 year old boy that won't listen to a word you say, to the older gentleman who's retired from his career, they all need the same thing!**

Deep down, their souls all crave the same thing! They need the bread of life!

Christians in the room, know this. Everyone that you know - the people you

- Work with, go to school with
- Live with, play with
- Are related to,
- Love

They all need to be fed the message of our Crucified Savior. They need to see His:

- Righteousness - lived a sinless life on our behalf, walking this earth for 30+ years and never for a moment failed to love God and people perfectly
- Love - willing to die on the cross for the sins of His enemies that hated Him and wanted nothing to do with Him
- Faithfulness - Stayed on the cross and was condemned in our place for hours. He could have gotten down at any moment but He refused to abandon us in our time of need
- Forgiveness - Through His death, He washes away all of our sin and gives us credit for His righteous, sinless life
- Victory & Power - He didn't stay dead but instead He was raised from the grave with all authority and all power, triumphing over His enemies.

The Gospel of Jesus, the News of His broken body and shed blood where He offers salvation from the curse of sin to all who place faith in Him, is what everyone needs!

So Christian, sharing this message with those we come in contact with is what we do, because He's the Bread of Life!

#### FEED YOURSELF

*12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost."*

He has His disciples gather the leftovers. Not a trick question: How many disciples did Jesus have?

*13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.*

He has twelve disciples, and there were twelve baskets left over. You think that's a coincidence? Why would John include the number of baskets in there, if it wasn't significant? There is significance to that number. Each of the twelve disciples had his own basket. Here's the message, and it's our second point: The Bread Of Life Is Enough For You Too.

#### MISSIONARIES NEED THE GOSPEL TOO

One thing that I've noticed in myself and others who really take up the call to share the good news of Jesus with others... It's very easy to begin to believe that other people need Jesus more than you do. It's easy to focus more on the growth of others than on your own growth. It's easy to be very focused and driven in our desire to encourage others in the Lord, while forsaking the need that we ourselves have to feed on the Bread of Life.

See, the Bread of life is enough for everyone you share Jesus with, and its enough for you too.

- LifeGroup Leaders
- City Kids Volunteers
- Christians

I just gotta ask you, are you encouraging others to spend time reading and meditating on God's Word, while you never make time to do it yourself? Are you working to see others know Christ more, while you're lackadaisical about your own growth?

All the Leaders in City Church, I hope you know that you need the Bread of Life as much as everyone else you know. Christian, we never get so mature that we arrive at a point where we no longer need to feast on the bread of life. No, if anything, the more we mature, the more we see our need to feast on the Bread of Life, and the more we desire to do so.

So, if we find ourselves lacking in our desire to seek Christ in His Word, it is evidence that we don't truly believe that He is the Bread of Life. I know this is often true of my own life.

I wanna share with you a passage of scripture that I heard a brother preach on that really challenged and convicted me in this area, and the Lord used it to renew my mind in my understanding of what it really means to love Him.

#### WHO HAVE I IN HEAVEN BUT YOU

The author of Psalm 73 writes from a place of being frustrated with how it seems that those that reject God are prospering, and here at verse 24 is coming around to the idea that having God is better than having all the riches that he sees others possessing. Years ago, this passage completely changed the way I understood what it means to love God.

#### Psalm 73

*24 You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will receive me to glory.*

The author states that God is a guide in this life and will get us home with Him in heaven

*25 Whom have I in heaven but you?*

*And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.*

*26 My flesh and my heart may fail,*

*but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

To say that something is your portion is to say that that thing is enough. That its enough for you. Its what you need. Vs 26 states that though my body may be failing and though my heart (emotions, feelings) may fail me, **My God is my strength, and my God is enough!** He is my portion. He is enough!

But verse 25 is the one that messed me up. After talking about God being our guide in this life and then receiving us in the next life, the author asks a **rhetorical question**, "*Whom have I in heaven but you?*"

He's saying, you're my one true desire in this life, and even when I get to Heaven you're still all I got. You're still my only hope.

A pastor that I listened to a lot when I first started studying preaching was a pastor named John Piper. He has a quote that rightly causes us to question whether or not we see Jesus as the Bread of Life or not that I wanna share with you.

"Would you be satisfied to go to heaven - have everybody there in your family that you want there, have all the health and restoration of your prime, and everything you dislike about yourself fixed, have every recreation you've ever dreamed available to you, and have infinite resources of money to spend - would you be satisfied...if God weren't there?"

**- John Piper**

If you got to heaven and there was no more sickness or poverty or grieving or pain at all... if you got there and you didn't see or find God. If you had everything else that you could ever dream of, but God wasn't there... how would you feel? If you would be satisfied without God being there... If I'd be satisfied without God being there, then I have come to believe that something other than God is the true bread of life.

God used that to open my eyes to the truth that in my heart I often love His gifts more than I love Him. I far too often just want "a good life" more than I want Him.

If that's you today, I just wanna gently call you to repent from that right here and right now. Confess that to the Lord. Ask Him to help you to see Him as the Bread of Life. Ask Him to help you be more consistent in meditating on His Word. Ask Him to give you a burning desire everyday to seek Him.

#### COMMUNION IS WHAT WE NEED

And again Christian, if that's you today... I'm excited that you get to partake in Communion today! Because feeding that multitude of people isn't the only time that Jesus broke bread and passed it to His disciples. He did it again the night before He died, when He passed the broken bread to His disciples. He said this is my body broken for you.

Communion is a reminder and a celebration of the truth that Jesus is the Bread of Life. Communion is a reminder that Jesus Himself, came down to earth with so much love for me and so much love for you that He allowed His body to be broken by His enemies while He died for His enemies!

Communion is a reminder that Jesus is **gracious**, and **Holy**, and **pure**, and **powerful**, and **merciful**, and **faithful**, and **glorious**.

Communion is a reminder that you will never find a greater:

- Love
- Sacrifice
- Commitment to your well-being

- Security
- Peace of mind
- Reason to rejoice
- Person to trust

Communion is a reminder that:

- what our hearts really long for is Jesus, the Bread of Life.
- Who have I in heaven but you!
- Heaven is not heaven without Him!
- Life isn't life without Him!
- The Bread of Life is really what satisfies us!!