

I. John 6:26-71 – The Bread of Life Discourse

A. Introduction to the discourse

1. The crowd Jesus fed the previous day saw Jesus as the answer to their material needs: healing their diseases, providing food, and protecting them from Roman tyranny by becoming their king. They did not realize that their real problem was **spiritual**.
2. God had put Israel under Roman rule because of their **rejection** of Him. By rejecting the Son of God, they continued in their sin. This is the background to the following conversation.

B. John 6:26-34 – Seeking Jesus for a quick meal

1. John 6:26 – *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.”* Jesus knew that the crowd only sought Him to satisfy their physical **desires**. They were not following Jesus because they believed that the sign miracles proved He was Messiah.
2. John 6:27a – *“Do not work for the food which perishes...”* Jesus was referring here to the miracle of the bread and fish. These people had made a great effort to find Him so He could meet their physical appetites. Instead of trying so hard to get food that spoils, they needed to put their focus on the **eternal**. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
3. John 6:27b – *“...but for the food which endures to eternal life...”* Physical food satisfies only for a short while and then one must eat again; nevertheless, it does not keep a person alive forever. Jesus Christ, on the other hand, gives never-ending life. The people should have made more of an **effort** to seek after the eternal than the temporal. John 4:14, 11:25-26
4. John 6:27c – *“... which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal .”* The Son of Man is a Messianic title that emphasizes Christ’s humanity. Jesus Christ’s words and works proved God had given Him His divine **approval**. God approved Jesus for the task of imparting eternal life to humanity. Psalm 80:17, Daniel 7:13-14
5. John 6:28 – *Therefore they said to Him, “What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?”* As is always the case with the unregenerate, this crowd desired to **earn** points with God through their own efforts. Jesus was performing God’s works. They asked Jesus how they could also perform God’s works. Romans 10:2-4
6. John 6:29 – *Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”* *The work of God* is simply believing in Christ for salvation. Just as He had lavishly provided a **free** and undeserved meal for them the day before, so Christ also gives salvation by **grace**. Faith for salvation is the ultimate non-work. Romans 4:5
7. John 6:30 – *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?”* Although the Lord had **given** an amazing sign of multiplication and creation the day before, they not only asked for another sign but also set the parameters for the type of sign they would accept.
 - a. This demand showed the crowd’s **disrespect** for Christ.
 - b. And their next statement revealed their **true** intentions.
8. John 6:31 – *“Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.’”* Quoting from Psalm 78:24, the crowd erroneously asserted that Moses (not God) had given Israel bread (manna) from heaven. On the contrary it was **Yahweh** who had given them the bread. Exodus 16:4
9. John 6:32 – *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.* Jesus corrected His audience concerning **three** important misperceptions.
 - a. After the Exodus from Egypt, while Israel traveled in the wilderness, it was God the Father and not Moses who provided the **bread** from heaven.
 - b. Jesus used the present tense of the verb “gives” to inform His listeners that God is **always** offering eternal life. This was true not only in the past but also in the present and the future. John 8:23
 - c. We also observe that Jesus was being offered as **true** bread. In contrast to the manna from heaven, Jesus was the true bread from heaven. The manna had to be replenished every morning, but those who believe in Jesus receive life once and forever.
10. John 6:33 – *“For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.”* Unlike the Old Testament manna that merely provided physical nourishment, the true bread from heaven imparts eternal life. To us today it is obvious Jesus was speaking about Himself, but His hearers at that time did not **see** the connection.

The Gospel of John

11. John 6:34 – *Then they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.”* Although it sounds like they almost grasped the idea, the aorist imperative *give* DIDOMI (an imperative meaning to give it here and now) shows they were still focused on **physical** food and not spiritual bread. They wanted a material meal then and there, and always thereafter.

C. John 6:35-40 – Bread from heaven for the hungry crowd

1. John 6:35 – *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. Using I am EGO EIMI, Jesus again pointed to His deity. He invited His audience to come to Him as their true spiritual sustenance (food and water). He showed that to come to Him meant to **believe** in Him.*
2. John 6:36 – *“ But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.”* Although they had **seen** Christ and the sign miracle evidences, they sadly refused to believe in Him as their personal Messiah.
 - a. They demanded to see yet another supernatural **sign** in order to see and believe in Him. Jesus chided them for seeing Him, the true bread from heaven, yet not believing in Him.
 - b. As it was with this crowd, many people today are drawn to Jesus. Many people acknowledge His existence, and, just like they did in Jesus’ day, many want to **imitate** His good works. But few want to accept Jesus as the Savior.
3. John 6:37 – *“ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out .”* In this context (John 5:35), Jesus defined **coming** to Him as synonymous with believing in Him. When someone comes to Christ by faith, they are God the Father’s gift to the Son. Christ will not refuse them or later cast them out. John 6:35
4. John 6:38 – *“ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me .”* Jesus said His role was to do the Father’s **will**. This was in strong contrast to their refusal to do the Father’s will, which for them was to believe in the Son. John 6:39-40
5. John 6:39 – *“ 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 .”* The one who believes in Christ is the Father’s gift to the Son. The Son will never **lose** or discard any He receives. Christ also promised that He would indeed resurrect all who believe in Him on the last day. John 10:28
6. John 6:40 – *“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.”* Every individual believer in Jesus Christ is guaranteed not only to have eternal life but also to be raised on the last day. **Jesus** will personally resurrect all who have believed in Him. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17