

2 Samuel 18: 5-9, 31-33

Psalm 130

Ephesians 4: 25-5:2

John 6:35, 41-51

August 9, 2009

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Most of you here this morning have never really been so hungry that you were close to dying of starvation, unless of course you were in World War 2 and on one of the islands off the coast of Japan. Most of us have always had enough to eat, with an occasional time of hunger due to the economy or natural disasters such as no rain on a farm for an extended period of time.

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." As all of you know, the Jews that were complaining about what Jesus was saying were very familiar with the Manna that was given to their people in the desert for 40 years. Now there appears this person that they have heard rumors about becoming the Messiah of the world saying that he himself is this bread. This does not set well with the Jews and their traditions.

How can someone be the bread of life? Why today we know the total carbs, the amount of sugar, and all the other ingredients in a loaf of bread, and Jesus is saying he is the bread of life. As usual, we humans have a tendency to hear what we want to hear, so we should not be so surprised at the reaction of the Jews not paying enough attention as to hear the next sentence which ties all this together. Hear the second speaks next; "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." You must COME to Jesus, and BELIEVE in Jesus to receive this bread of eternal life. You don't receive eternal life by just coming to this altar rail and receiving the wafer. You have only done one half of what Jesus wants you to do. You have come to the altar rail just as Jesus asked you to come to him, but you must take the other step and believe that Jesus is the Messiah of this world.

So, how do you come to this belief?

By giving of yourself to the will of God, just as Jesus gave himself for our sins. You are commanded to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind and to love your neighbor as yourself. Only when you are doing these things

are you truly able to receive eternal life. Now to help you sustain your belief and to continue to carry out God's wishes for your life, you give of yourself by helping others, such as being part of Loaves and Fishes, cooking at the shelters and giving of your resources to make this world a better place.

The other thing that I feel is important to understand is that in the wilderness, the Jews that were able to escape from slavery and Egypt, were wandering in the desert for 40 years complaining that they had been abandoned by God. They had a lack of faith and understanding of God and how many blessings they had received from God. They complained to Moses that they had no bread to eat and they received Manna (a form of bread), so that they had more to eat. Remember the most important thing is that God sent them the Manna, not Moses. Moses asked God to help him as the people were complaining so about not having enough to eat, and God sent the bread to be gathered each day for the people to eat well.

As Christians we ask God for help to get us through this life, and God sent Jesus, the bread of life from heaven, for us to have a Savior of this world. We need to always give thanks to God for allowing Jesus to be part of our lives, and when we come to this altar rail this morning, we need to give thanks that we are able to receive this bread, giving us eternal life and forgiveness of our sins.

Let us pray.

Gracious and loving God, we give you thanks that you sent to us Jesus, to be the bread of life that sustains us and gives us eternal life. Be with each one of us this morning as we come to this altar rail to receive the understanding of your plan for our lives and help us to accept your great love for us. May we always have the strength and courage to love and serve you. All this we ask in your holy name. Amen