

The Lord's Message: Feeding on Jesus: I Am the Bread of Life

Date: August 15, 2021

Where: Tilghman UMC

Scripture Reference: John 6:24-35

How many of you like to eat? I love to eat. I can not wait to dive in to those crab cakes which were made up yesterday. People eat for a variety of reasons. We eat because we like the looks and taste of the food. The cooking shows on TV are all about teaching us to prepare food that looks and taste good. Eating is a social occasion. Most of our major holidays revolve around eating. Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving are examples. We like to gather with family and friends to eat at home or at a restaurant. In some jobs, much of the business is conducted and deals made during a lunch or dinner. There is also a healthy reason for eating well balanced diets.

Doctors have identified ten reasons for good nutrition and healthy eating. 1. Healthy eating increases a sense of well-being. 2. It is more expensive to be unhealthy. A US Department of Agriculture survey concluded a healthier diet could prevent at least \$71 billion per year in medical costs and lives lost. 3. Eating a well-balanced diet manages one's weight. 4. Eating healthy foods maintains one's immune system. 5. Good nutrition delays the effects of aging. 6. A healthy diet gives you energy. 7. Eating well-balanced meals reduces the risks of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes. Just because you are eating healthy does not mean you will not get these diseases, but you will lessen your risks. 8. Eating healthy positively affects your mood. 9. Good nutrition is important to maintain focus. 10. Your life may be lengthened by eating a well-balanced diet. The result of eating is you are what you eat. So good nutrition is important to our health and well-being.

Sadly, there are people in this country and around the world do not have access to healthy foods and we should try to do all we can to see that they are able to get healthy foods.

Just as our bodies can be healthier by good nutrition and healthy eating, our soul can grow healthy by what we feed it. We are beginning today with a new sermon series: Feeding on Jesus: I Am the Bread of Life.

Let us pray.

Let us turn in our Bibles, **John 6:24**. The crowd of people quickly discover Jesus and His disciples are not in the place where Jesus had fed them a boy's Happy Meal. At the start of John chapter 6, there was a huge crowd of people (five thousand) who had been drawn to hear the teachings of Jesus. Jesus realized the people were physically hungry, but there was no place to buy enough food for all the people. The disciples discovered a small boy had five barley loaves and two fish for his lunch. The disciples thought this would be nowhere near enough to feed all these people. Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit on the ground. Jesus took the food gave thanks to God for providing the food and then the disciples distributed the food to the people. The people ate until they were full. The disciples collected the left overs and found to their amazement there were twelve baskets of food left over. Jesus had performed a miracle.

This crowd of people are not looking for Jesus because they want to have a relationship with Jesus, but want their bellies filled again. Jesus understood their wrong thinking and quickly points this out. Look at **John 6:26-27**. Their concern is about feeding their bellies, but not their soul. Sadly, I run across people all the time that wants God to meet their physical needs, but do not want to have a relationship with God. Just this past Wednesday, I am sitting in a doctor's waiting room and I strike up a conversation with a lady that I have had past acquaintances with. She tells me she had lost her faith in God. She goes all to tell me that her sister passed away several years ago, caused by a stroke that led several day later to a heart attack. She told me that she had prayed to God to heal her sister, but God did not. I asked her how she knew that God did not answer her prayer. My sister died was her reply. Continuing the conversation, she tells me that she has not been to church since she was a teenager. She has not opened a Bible in years. She has not spent time listening to God. Now, she does not have faith in God. I tried to be as gentle as possible, but I said that God loves you and wants a relationship with you. God did not cause your sister to die, but maybe God is using this to draw you back into relationship with Him. She just remained silent and then it was her turn to see the doctor.

The crowds wanted to see Jesus because their bellies are hungry, not their souls. Sadly, there are many people in the world today, who want God to cure all their problems, but do not want a relationship with Him.

In verse 28, the crowd then ask Jesus what work do we need to do to obtain this “food that endures for eternal life?” Jesus replies in verse 29, just “believe in him whom he has sent.” Jesus is saying just believe in me as the Son of God. Paul gives us the formula for salvation in **Romans 10:9-13**. Salvation is a gift from God, **Ephesians 2:8-9**. We accept the gift by believing in our hearts, not our heads, that Jesus died on the cross for my sins. The crowd and even people today still feel that there needs to be a list of works for them to achieve salvation. They do not realize that they can not do enough good works to save themselves. If they were able to, then Jesus death on the cross would be in vain.

There is a difference between must do and wanting to do. JoAnn and I celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary this past Tuesday. Still today, I do things because I want to please her. She does things, because she wants to please me. We have a wonderful relationship, but I do not tell her that she must cook dinner for me. She does not tell me that I must clean the house. She cooks dinner because she wants to. Sometimes, I cook dinner because I want to.

The same goes with my relationship with God. I want to go to church to worship God. I want to read my Bible to learn more about God. I want to pray to God, because I hear from God. I want to do things for others, because I want them to know that God loves them. None of this is going to get me to heaven. My ticket is bought and paid for by the blood of Jesus.

Still people are looking for signs from God. Look at verses 30-31. The greatest signs that show that God loves us is a blood stained cross and an empty tomb. In verse 32, Jesus points out to them the error of their thinking that Moses gave them bread or manna in the desert. God sent down the bread or manna from heaven. God has also sent down the bread to give “life to the world,” in verse 33.

Again, the crowd does not understand. In verse 34, they are still concerned about their physical needs. They do not know what they are asking for, but Jesus is going to tell them. In verse 35, Jesus says that “I am the Bread of Life.” Jesus is using God’s own language to give proof to the crowd that Jesus is God. This is the same statement God told Moses when Moses asked in **Exodus 3:13-14**, who should I say is sending me to the Israelites. Jesus is saying to the crowd, I Am God. If you will believe in me then you will be saved from your sins. If you feed on me daily, I will be with you always.

No one else can back up this statement. All other relationships pale in comparison to Jesus. There is no other bread for us to feed on, but to feed on Jesus. Earlier, I gave you 10 reasons for eating healthy, now I will close with 10 reasons to feed on Jesus. I got this list from the internet. 1. Source of blessing, **2 Corinthians 9:8**. 2. Contentment, **Philippians 4:11-13**. 3. Hope, **Romans 15:13**. 4. Friendship, **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**. 5. Perseverance, **Galatians 6:9-10**. 6. Life with Purpose, **Matthew 5:16**. 7. Humility, **1 Peter 5:5-7**. 8. Lessen Anxiety, **1 Peter 5:8**. 9. To Build Faith, **Philippians 3:13-15**. 10. Jesus will be with us always, **Matthew 28:20**.

So, let us feed on Jesus every day, the Bread of Life. Amen.