

Jesus, the Bread You Need

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[0:00] Well, good morning, everyone. Welcome to Highland Park Baptist. Good to see you all today. Let's all stand. We're going to sing a song called A Thousand Tongues. You've heard this hymn before. Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise.

Let's sing together. Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise, the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of His grace.

Amen. Jesus, the name that calms our fears. Jesus, the name that calms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease.

Tis music in the sinner's ears. Tis life and health and peace. Jesus, you're the name above all names.

Jesus, Lamb of God. Jesus, you're the King of salvation, who was and is to come.

[1:22] Amen. Let's continue singing. Breaks the power. He breaks the power of canceled sin. He sets the prisoner free. His blood can make the foulest clean.

His blood availed for me. Amen. Jesus, you're the name above all names.

Amen. Jesus, you're the name above all names.

Jesus, Lamb of God. Jesus, you're the King of salvation, who was and is to come.

Who was and is to come. Let's sing that one more time. Who was and is to come.

[2:52] Amen. Please be seated. Good to see you all this morning. Would you please bow your heads with me? And let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you so much for this day that we have, for this opportunity right now before us to be gathered in this place and to worship you.

Lord, we pray that you would use this time to, again, remind us of the hope that we have in Christ, of the promises that you've made to us in your word that are true and that are sure.

God, we pray that you would use this time to also convict our hearts of sin, that you would show us the right way, the way that we should walk in, that you would reveal to us why that is important for us and that in doing so we would be more like Christ.

Lord, we love you and we thank you and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, some of you heard, found out last week that I had been exposed to somebody who had COVID and so when I heard that news on Tuesday, I went home and I worked from home and I wasn't here on Wednesday for Bible study.

I could tell you that I don't have any symptoms at all. I'm feeling great, but I want to be extra precautionous because that's why, you know, I haven't been wandering around the building this morning.

[4:10] After church, I'll probably just stay up here. Like I said, I feel great, so if you want to come and say hello to me, you don't have to shake my hand if you don't want to, but if you do, you know, we can do that as well.

But just so you know, that's kind of what's going on. I'll hang out up here and I'm feeling wonderful and I'm glad to be here. If you have your bulletin, go ahead and look at that. There are a couple things that I want to draw your attention to.

First of all, tonight we will elect some deacons. We have a couple coming off and a couple of spots that we need to fill, and so we will have that election tonight at 6.30.

And you see that Johnny Sawyer and Dave Crawford, who have both served as deacons in the past, have been nominated, and we have two spots to fill, so you can do the math, I think, right?

On the back, you see an announcement about Awana online registration, and there's some information there if you would like to go ahead and take care of that now.

[5:07] We will start Awana and Youth Group September 9th, and we have some policies in place. We're going to do it a little bit differently so that we can encourage social distancing, again, and

make sure that everybody is safe when they are here.

And if you need more information about that, you can talk to me, you can talk to Paula Crawford. We'd love to share that with you. And then resuming in September, September 14th, we will begin our Monday night groups again.

The Ladies Bible Book Club, excuse me, will be meeting as well as men's, for their Bible study, men's night. That will begin September 14th, and we'll kick that off with a time of, we'll share a meal and fellowship in the fellowship hall.

And then finally, Betty and Joe, would you please stand? If you're willing not to put you on the spot. Joe and Betty Daniel are going to be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

Thank you. Congratulations. Congratulations. That is awesome. Something that's going to become, unfortunately, I think, rarer and rarer in the days ahead to see people married for so long.

[6:22] And so we're so happy to be able to honor that time with you as well, September 5th from 2 to 4 o'clock. That will be in the Legacy Hall. Would you please all stand and wave to those on your right, wave to those on your left, and smile.

Good to see you at church this morning. Let's all sing together.

Hosanna, praise is rising. Eyes are turning to you. Let's all sing together. Praise the Lord. Praise is rising.

Eyes are turning to you. We turn to you. Amen.

Hope is stirring. Hearts are yearning for you. We long for you.

[7:36] When we see you, we find strength to face the day. In your presence, all our fears are washed away.

Washed away. Hosanna, Hosanna. You are the God who saves us.

Worthy of all our praises. Hosanna, Hosanna.

Come down your way among us. We welcome you here, Lord Jesus. Amen. Hear the sound of hearts returning to you.

We turn to you. Amen. In your kingdom, broken lives are made new.

[8:49] Hosanna, Hosanna. You make us new. You make us new. You make us new. You make us new. Because when we see you, we find strength to face the day.

In your presence, all our fears are washed away. Washed away. Washed away. Hosanna, Hosanna.

Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. You are the God who saves us. Worthy of all our praises. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. Come down your way among us. We welcome you here, Lord Jesus.

Sing it again. Sing it again. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. You are the God who saves us.

[9:52] Worthy of all our praises. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna. Come down your way among us.

We welcome you here, Lord Jesus. Hosanna. Hosanna.

Amen. Let's sing this together, a great hymn of faith for the 400 years old. A mighty fortress is our God. Let's sing together. Amen. A mighty fortress is our God.

A full worth never fading. Our helper, he amid the blood of mortal hills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe. Doth seek to work us low. His craft and power are great.

[11:09] And armed with true and hate. On earth is not his equal. Amen. Amen. Amen.

And did we our own strength. Did we in our own strength. The Lord our shining would be? The Lord our shining would be losing.

The Lord our shining would be losing. We're not the right man on our side. The man of God's own choosing. Christ Jesus. The Lord our shining would be. The Lord our shining would be.

Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus. It is he. The Lord our hosts. His name. Christ Jesus. From age to age to age.

And he must win the battle. Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus.

[12:08] Christ Jesus. And though this world with devils filled. Should threaten to unnue us. We will not fear.

For God has with his crew to triumph through us. The prince of darkness grim.

We tremble not for him. His rage we can endure. For though his doom is true.

One little word shall bear him. Amen. That word. That word above all earthly powers.

There's no thanks to them abiding. The spirit and the gifts are ours. Through him who with us sided.
[13:10] Let goods and kindred go. This mortal life also. The body they may kill.

God's truth abides still. This kingdom is forever. Amen. Amen. As we continue to read from God's word from the book of Psalms.

In Psalm 118. We're going to finish that this morning. As we start in verse 39. Go to the end of this psalm.

For you equipped me with strength for the battle. You made those who rise against me sink under me. You made my enemies turn their backs to me.

And those who hated me I destroyed. They cried for help but there was none to save. They cried to the Lord but he did not answer them.

[14:20] I beat them fine as dust before the wind. I cast them out like the mire of the streets. You delivered me from strife with the people. You made me the head of the nations.

People whom I had not known served me. As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me.

Foreigners came cringing to me. Foreigners lost heart.

And came trembling out of their fortresses. The Lord lives and blessed be my rock. And exalted be the God of my salvation.

The God who gave me vengeance. And subdued peoples under me. Who rescued me from my enemies. Yes you exalted me above those who rose against me.

You delivered me from the man of violence. For this I will praise you O Lord among the nations and sing your name. Great salvation he brings to this king.

[15:19] And shows steadfast love to his anointed. To David and to his offspring forever. May the Lord be honored with the reading of his word.

We'll continue in singing. We're going to sing a well known song. Amazing grace how sweet the sound. My chains are gone. I've been set free. Let's sing together. Amazing grace how sweet the sound.

That saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found.

Was blind but now I see. It was grace.

It was grace that taught my heart to fear. And grace my fears freely.

[16:28] How precious did that grace appear. The hour I first believed.

My chains are gone. I've been set free. My God my Savior has ransomed me.

And like a flood his mercy reigns. Unending love.

Amazing grace. Amen. Amen. The Lord has promised good to me. The Lord has promised good to me.

His word. My hope. Take care. My God, my Savior, has ransomed me.

[18:02] And like a flood, His mercy rains. Unending love, amazing grace.

My chains are gone, I've been set free. My God, my Savior, has ransomed me.

And like a flood, His mercy rains. Unending love, amazing grace.

Amen. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow.

The sun forbear to shine. But God who called me here below will be forever mine.

[19:19] Will be forever mine. You are forever mine.

Let's sing together. It's about the Great Commission. What we're supposed to be doing as followers of Christ. Telling the world about Jesus. Go to the world for the sake of His name.

To every nation His glory proclaim. Pray that the Spirit wise will open darkened eyes.

Granting new life to display Jesus' fame. Amen. In Jesus' power. In Jesus' power.

Preach Christ to the lost. For Jesus' glory. Count all else but lost.

[20:31] Gather from every place. Trophies of sovereign grace. Lest life be wasted.

And exalt Jesus Christ. Amen. Rescue the lost.

Rescue the lost. For the sake of His name. As Christ commands, snatch them out of the flame.

Tell them that when Jesus died, God's wrath was satisfied. Urge them to flee to the Lamb who was slain.

In Jesus' power. In Jesus' power. Preach Christ to the lost. For Jesus' glory.

[21:33] Count all else but lost. Gather from every place. Trophies of sovereign grace.

Lest life be wasted. Exalt Jesus Christ. Amen.

Look to the throne. Look to the throne. For the sake of His name. Think of the throne.

Who will share in His reign? Some for whose souls we pray Will share our joy that day Joining our song for the sake of His name.

In Jesus' power. Praise Christ to the lost. For Jesus' glory.

[22 : 39] Count all else but lost. Gather from every place. Trophies of sovereign grace.

Lest life be wasted. Exalt Jesus Christ. Say amen. Gather from ever. Gather from every place.

Trophies of sovereign grace. Lest life be wasted. Exalt Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Father in heaven. Thank you for this day. A day that you knew in time that would come.

And Father we pray for the service. We pray for our brother Mike as he comes and proclaims your word. That it will fall on ears that would take it and part in their heart.

[23 : 39] That would change and be conformed to your son Jesus Christ. And Father let us exalt the cross of Christ in our everyday walk. Let us preach it. Let us teach it.

Let us think it. And let us proclaim it. And Father we pray it's in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. If you have your Bible turn to John chapter 6.

If you don't own a Bible there are Bibles in the pews. You can take that home with you today as our gift from our congregation to you. That you would hopefully continue to be reading the word of God. John chapter 6 verses 48 through 51 will be the text for this morning's message. Would you please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

John 6 verse 48 through 51. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died.

[25 : 07] This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever.

And the bread that I will give for the life of this world is my flesh. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle lived from 1859 to 1930 and he was a prolific writer.

His most notable creation is one of the most well-known and well-beloved characters in English literature. That is the great detective Sherlock Holmes.

During Conan Doyle's life he was often though haunted by Sherlock Holmes. By his own creation. People loved Sherlock Holmes so much that when Conan Doyle would write other books about other things they would criticize him.

[26 : 16] Basically saying stop wasting your time. We don't want to read that. Write more books. Write more stories about Sherlock Holmes.

They were so infatuated with that character that many of them acted as if Sherlock Holmes was a real living person.

Conan Doyle's creation of Sherlock Holmes made him a successful writer but he was increasingly dismayed by the great paradox of his success.

The more real Holmes became in the minds of his reader the less the author seemed to exist to them.

Finally Conan Doyle felt like he had no other choice and so he killed Sherlock Holmes. In 1893, six years after his mind first created and gave birth to this character, he published what he hoped would be his last piece of work on Sherlock Holmes entitled The Final Problem.

[27 : 27] Sherlock Holmes spectacularly plunged to his death. After finishing writing that story, Conan Doyle recorded in his diary two words, killed Holmes.

Seemed like he was finally excited and to be relieved that he didn't have to write any more stories about this beloved character. But he soon realized that this was not a creation that he could escape.

In England, after that story came out, men would walk around with a black armband on because they were mourning the loss of Sherlock Holmes. In America, groups were formed with the purpose of putting pressure on Conan Doyle to revive and to resuscitate Sherlock Holmes.

In fact, many people accused him of being a murderer. Seriously. And they demanded that he resuscitate their hero, which in 1901, under intense pressure and distress, that's exactly what Conan Doyle did.

See, to his audience, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was useful so long as he gave them what they wanted. Holmes was his creation, but they did not seem to value his creator.

[28 : 53] They could care little for him. He was useful as long as he gave them what they wanted. Many people see Christ in the same way. They see him as useful.

Someone to be sought in order to acquire the treasures of this world. Health and wealth and prosperity, but failing to realize that he is the treasure.

He is the treasure. Christ didn't come so that our earthly desires would be met, but he came to change our desires. He's not a genie for us to command, but a Savior who is worthy of our worship. In John 6, the people see Jesus as being useful to them so long as he will give them what they want.

They pursue him as someone who's capable of meeting their physical needs. They've already sought, remember, to make him their king.

[29 : 59] A king, a king whom they hoped that they could control. After they witnessed and experienced his miracle of feeding the 5,000, which was more like 20,000 with two fish and five barley loaves, they fixated on that miracle, not on the person of the miracle.

He was useful to them, they thought. Look again at verse 15 in John 6. There it says that Jesus, perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Again, you see, they didn't see him as precious. They didn't see him as the treasure. They saw his gifts as precious.

They thought, oh, what a useful king Jesus will be for us. Let's have Jesus be our king. He will keep our bellies full.

But Jesus didn't want and doesn't want disciples like that. When they found Jesus the next day, confused about his whereabouts and questioning him as to why he left and how he got where he got to, Jesus said to them in verse 26, Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fills of the loaves.

[31 : 34] And I think here Jesus is perturbed by them because they are seeking him for all the wrong reasons. They see him as being useful to satisfy their earthly appetites.

They thought they could use him to get stuff. But they failed to see that the true treasure wasn't in what he could materially provide to them, but in who he truly was.

Jesus didn't come to create heaven on earth, but to make a way and prepare us for his kingdom that is not of this world. So that leads us into our main idea for this morning's sermon.

Jesus doesn't want to be seen as useful, but as precious to you. Jesus didn't come to give bread, but to be bread.

And he, as he'll tell us here, is the bread that we need. In John 6, 48 through 51, Jesus explains the significance of his being our bread, and he provides us with three truths about it.

[32 : 48] But before we continue on, I want to ask you some questions that I want you to begin thinking about and continue to have in your mind as we go through these verses. First of all, do you see Jesus as useful or precious?

Is he useful to you or is he precious to you? Is he someone whom you pursue for who he is or because you think that you can get something from him that you desire?

Do you seek to use him or are you seeking to be used by him? Are you living to establish his kingdom or are you trying to use him to establish your own?

Jesus wants you to see him for the treasure that he is. He is the pearl of great price. He is the treasure worth pursuing that makes all other treasures, by comparison, worthless.

And he doesn't want you to waste your life thinking that you can use him. No, he wants to use your life in a way that is impactful for his kingdom.

[34 : 07] He doesn't want you to waste your life. Jesus didn't come to give us bread but to be bread. And in understanding that, I hope that you'll see that a life wasted is a life where you try to use God to achieve heaven on earth for yourself.

The life that is worth living is the life that is sold out in commitment to God that you would be used by him to establish his kingdom that is not of this world.

So the first truth about Jesus being bread that he presents us with comes in verses 48 and 49. That Jesus is the bread of life. Jesus is the bread of life.

Again, he says, I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. The truth that Jesus claims here is quite simple.

He says it very clearly. I am the bread of life. This is the second time that he has used that imagery to describe himself. And it constitutes the first of the I am statements recorded in John's gospel.

[35 : 22] He'll go on to say throughout this gospel that I am the light of the world. And he'll say, I am the gate. I am the good shepherd. I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way, the truth, and the life.

And then he'll say, I am the true vine. And by these statements and using this imagery, Jesus reveals that he is the sole way to the Father.

That in him is all that anyone could ever truly need. Truly need. This is what Jesus means when he claims to be the bread of life.

Jesus means that he is the source of eternal life. Here Jesus begins to explain this to his primarily Jewish audience, that he's the bread of life, that he's the new manna by which the people of God are fed.

The manna that was provided by God during the wilderness wandering in the Exodus was not able to sustain people spiritually. Yes, it fed them physically, but even this physical life did not go on forever.

[36 : 31] Eventually, those who ate it, he said, died. But then he contrasts that old manna to this new manna himself, a new bread, a better bread, a bread that imparts and sustains a kind of life that goes on forever.

He can satisfy the deepest needs and longings of our souls. However, we often confuse the difference between a need and a want, don't we?

We often disguise something that we want as if it is truly a need. I remember when I graduated from college, I needed a new car.

I needed a new car. The car I had was a good car. It had been a dependable car, but it was time for a new car. I needed a new car, but I wanted a Mustang, right? You've been there too.

And so I spent all my time throughout that thinking process, you know, and talking to my parents. I was going to buy the car and talking to Danny, who I was engaged to, and explaining why I need a new car and why that new car needs to be a Mustang, right?

[37 : 45] I convinced myself that my want was truly a need. I eventually totaled it in seminary, so there you go. But, you know, we do that, and we see it constantly in kids, don't we?

A kid will say that they are hungry, and so they'll determine that the best way to satisfy their hunger is to eat what?

Candy. I'm hungry. Candy is food. Bring on the candy, right? How many kids ever have you said they said they're hungry, and you gave them the option of, well, here's candy, and here's vegetables, and I'll let you determine what you want to eat, right?

They'll always pick the candy, most of the time, unless they're a really special kid, I suppose. But you know what I'm saying. They often confuse the difference between needs and wants.

They feel hungry. They like candy. Well, that must be a need that I need to meet. Now, think about it. If parents gave in to whatever it was that their child thought that they needed, what would the result be?

[38 : 59] I think we're kind of seeing it a little bit in our culture right now, aren't we? What would happen is that that kid would be obnoxious, and as that kid grew into older age, into adulthood, they would have the attitude that they can use and abuse whoever they want to get whatever they want.

They'll probably go about that in reckless ways that may result with them ending up serving time in jail. It's not good. Truthfully, what the child thinks they need is not always what they actually need. And what they really need is something that they seldom express a desire for. But once they receive it, I think that they are glad that they have received it. And I'm talking primarily here about discipline.

Discipline establishes boundaries. It protects the child. It's a way of showing the child love, right? Because we protect the things that we love.

We offer guidance and direction to the people whom we care about. A drug addict might think that they need drugs, but somebody who truly loves that person and cares about that person is not going to say, well, here's some more drugs for you.

[40 : 14] They're going to instead try to get that person the help that they need. Why? Because they actually love that person and care about that person. They might think they need drugs, but that's not truly what they need.

In a similar way, our real needs often differ from our imagined ones. And it's our real needs for which Jesus is the answer. We find salvation in Him.

In Him, we have eternal life. In Him, we know that we are loved. We know that we are guided. We know that we are encouraged. We know that we are going to be eternally rewarded.

All because Jesus, who is the bread of life. That's the first truth. The second is this. Jesus is the bread that provides eternal sustenance.

Jesus is the bread that provides eternal sustenance. Going to verse 50. He says, This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die.

[41:22] In these verses, not only does Jesus claim to be the bread of life, but He also makes a requirement. That requirement being that we must feast upon Him as such.

Well, what does that mean? Well, I think it entails our commitment. Our commitment to taking Him into ourselves and committing ourselves totally to Him.

Look back chapter 6 in verses 27 and 28. In fact, I have them on the slide for you if you want to look up here. There He says, 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.

Then they said to Him, What must we do to be doing the works of God? Jesus answered, Then this is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He has sent. So He's begun to talk about this different kind of food, this food that endures to eternal life.

Now jump down to verses 32 through 33. He's going to explain more about it, reveal more about it. Then Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread.

[42:33] The true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

So the food is bread from heaven in the form of a person. That's what Jesus has said to this point. Now who is that person? Well by the time we get to where we're at today, verses 48 and 51, we see that what Jesus is doing here is something called progressive revelation.

He is progressively revealing what it means that He is the bread of life. It's as though that mystery was in His hand, Him being the bread of life.

And He has slowly opened up His hand, finger by finger, until we get to verse 51, where His hand is fully opened. And He says, straightforward, and the bread that I will give for the life of this world is me.

It's my flesh. In this, Jesus was referencing the cross. And His atoning sacrifice that He would make upon it for our sins.

[43:42] This is how He would be bread for us. And the cross would be essential for that.

Speaking of the essentialness of the cross, James Montgomery Boyce said, Christ without the cross is of little use to us.

We can look to His example, to the way He led His life. We can admire it. But the life alone does not help. We can admire the life, but we cannot live it.

Besides, we are condemned by that life, for it is the standard of what God would require of us all, His creatures. A Christ without the cross is of no use to us. He condemns us.

Fortunately, there is more. For Jesus went on to speak of the cross and eventually to die upon it and rise again. Now there is hope. He died for our sins.

The chastisement of our peace is upon Him, and with His wounds we are healed. In His resurrection life, we now have life. In His righteousness through death, we now are reckoned righteous in the sight of a holy and loving God.

[44:48] Receiving this bread means letting go of anything that you might present to God for your salvation. Any kind of good works that you are depending upon and understanding that Jesus has achieved for you what He's achieved for you through the cross and how that atoning work sustains you forever.

The Apostle Paul understood this well. He knew what it meant for Jesus to be the bread of life.

Galatians 2.20, he says, I have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Being crucified with Christ means that we are no longer under the penalty of the law. The penalty was paid by Christ on our behalf. When Christ was crucified, it was as if we were crucified with Him. The penalty was fully paid, just as surely as if we had been crucified for our own sins. When Christ rose from the dead, we rose too.

[46:07] Now the risen Christ empowers us to live for Him in a way that pleases God. At one time, we may have sought eternal life through our own works, but now we know that we have received Christ as the bread of life and we live our lives by faith in Christ alone.

He is our eternal sustenance. He is our eternal sustainer. Those who have received Christ as the bread of life, who have been crucified with Christ, know that it was His body that was broken. It was His blood that was shed there to atone for our sins, which sealed our pardon, that we will not perish, but have everlasting life.

Third truth that Jesus presents to us about His being the bread is that Jesus is the bread that we, that must be, excuse me, consumed.

Jesus is the bread that must be consumed. Verse 51. Again, He says, I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever.

[47:20] And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. Again, I've already touched on what it means regarding our salvation, Jesus being the bread of life.

We've covered how Scripture states that once you are saved, you are saved forever. But here I want to take a moment to stress the importance of consuming Jesus Christ as the bread of life, as the Word who became flesh, by talking about the necessity of His, of your, excuse me, consuming His Word.

In Matthew 4, our Lord has gone out to the wilderness. And there, if you remember, He's fasted for 40 days and 40 nights.

It's hard for me to imagine fasting for four days and four nights. But obviously, He is fully God. He is also fully man. And you'd be very hungry after that duration without any food.

And if you remember, it was during that time that Satan, the tempter, came to Him. And He begins to tempt Him. And all of the things that Satan tempts Him with are worldly appetites that He says that He can satisfy.

[48:49] Really, if you look at it, I think what Satan tempts Jesus with is the prosperity gospel. But Jesus will have none of it. And how does He refute the temptations of Satan and well He does so by quoting Scripture.

In Deuteronomy 8, 3 is one He quotes in Matthew 4, 4. It says therein, The tempter came and said to Him, If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.

But He answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. The implication to me is clear here that the bread we must treasure is also the Word of God.

We treasure Christ, the Word who became flesh, and we treasure the Word of God that we have received from Him.

The Word of God is also the bread of life. The eternal sustenance we have in Christ is the gospel. The truth that Christ has come, that Christ has lived, that Christ has died, that Christ has risen again, that He's coming back.

[50:03] That redeemed sinners have a hope that is eternal and forever. And we need to remind ourselves of this truth every day.

Every day as Christians, we should remind ourselves of the gospel. In fact, Charles Spurgeon said, The most important daily habit, and he had many, the most important daily habit we can possess is to remind ourselves of the gospel.

So important that we feast upon the gospel, the Word of God, daily. And so to drive this truth home, let's consider what is necessary for eating.

First of all, or what eating involves. And first of all, that eating is necessary. Eating is necessary.

Other things are necessary besides eating, but not to the same degree.

Exercise is good. Exercise will keep you fit and in a good shape, right? But, if you don't eat, then it doesn't matter what you're doing to exercise.

[51:24] As a matter of fact, if you don't eat, you'll get to a point where you aren't capable of exercising because you are so weak. You have to eat in order to live.

You need God's Word. It must become as necessary for you as the food that you eat daily.

You must feast upon His Word. You need His Word. That's why He's given it to you. He's given it to us to consume it, not to let it sit on a shelf collecting dust because there's no substitute for His Word.

And so I'm convinced that the best thing that I can do for you as your pastor is preach God's Word to you book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse because God's Word keeps us in touch with the truth.

And we need to hear it regularly. It is a lamp to our feet. It is a light that guides our path. It dispels the darkness of this present age.

[52:41] And so Bible study should be as essential to the Christian as eating food is. Second, eating is a response to a need that is felt.

Eating is a response to a need that is felt. In physical terms, the feeling of the need for nourishment is called hunger. In the same way, spiritually, when does a person come to the Lord for salvation? When do they come to Him daily for bread that they have believed in Him after trusting in Him initially? It is when they recognize that they have a need. If you consider yourself to be all-sufficient spiritually, then it is not likely that you will come to the Lord.

Many people acknowledge that they have this hunger within themselves. However, they seek to satisfy it in so many wrong and harmful ways.

Have you noticed how the rates of depression and suicide have been increasing and drastically more so, even especially during this time of pandemic?

[53:46] And it is happening a lot within young people. And, you know, we should wonder, well, why is that?

And I think it has to do with the message that our world tells young people. What do they say about how to find happiness? Material possessions.

Basically, it all comes down to you do whatever you feel like doing. You do whatever you want to do. And they convince them that you'll be happy when you have money.

You'll be happy when you are engaged in all different kinds of relationships. relationships. You'll be happy when you have fame, right, fortune. But unfortunately, what we see is that they turn to those things and what they're finding is that there isn't permanent, lasting happiness to be found in those things.

And if this is what the world tells me I need in order to be happy and it doesn't satisfy me, then what is there in this world for me anymore? Gosh, we can look at those who have it in our world, can't we?

[54:53] We can turn our eyes to Hollywood and we see people who have all the earthly possessions and treasures that many of the rest of us desire. They don't seem that happy to me.

They don't have marriages that last for very long. They have big, expensive houses and fancy cars, but those aren't enough. They need another in another location or this or that.

They don't seem to me to be the types of people who are content with their station in life. We need the Word of God.

It's a response to a felt need that we have. Mark 8, 35 through 38.

Leah, I think I've messed you up. Okay, you're good. You're with me. Sorry. Sorry. Jesus says here, For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospels will save it.

[56:05] For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

So what's Jesus saying here? Saying you will waste your life if you seek to have the pleasures of this world.

and you could have them all and it would profit you nothing because when your time comes you can take none of it with you and it will not give you eternal life.

Jesus is saying that he is the only one who truly satisfies and he satisfies by taking worldly longings away from us. He gives us spiritual nourishment that makes us healthy mind, body, and soul.

You know, I love Big Macs. They're delicious but no doctor would recommend that I eat one at every meal because if I did, well, I'd be a different shape, right?

[57:24] And I'd be lethargic. I would be unhealthy. They would make me sick. Same thing, in feasting on the things of the world, they will leave you sick and lethargic in your spirit.

Real joy comes from knowing God and glorifying Him with your life. Not seeking to use Him but being used by Him. Being a part of His church. Being a part of His mission.

Next, eating involves appropriation. Knowledge is not enough. It is possible to sit down at a fancy banquet and know how to pronounce all the fancy names of the dishes as they're presented. Filet mignon, crepe zuzette, right? But if you don't eat them, then what good does any of that knowledge do to you? In the same way, you can know about Christian doctrine so well that you can tell where everyone else is wrong, where Carl Barth is wrong, where Mike Scrivani is wrong. I hope that you wouldn't lump us two together, but I acknowledge that, you know, I am a fallen human being and I'll make mistakes. But you can be so eager to point out where everybody else is wrong, but not truly know Christ because you haven't appropriated Christ personally to yourself. [58:44] Satan knows Jesus. Satan knows Scripture. In fact, he used it when he tempted Jesus. He twisted it. But that won't spare him from the eternity that awaits him. And so the question is, do you know about Jesus or do you know Jesus?

Do you know about him or do you know him personally as your Lord and Savior? Have you tasted and seen that the Lord is good? And then when we think about what does eating involve, well, eating must be personal.

It must be personal. You must eat. Right? No one else can do it for you. You can spoon feed a child, but it still must eat the food on its own.

And so if the only time you're eating or feasting upon God's Word is on Sunday morning, then your soul is severely malnourished. If you spend most of your time here griping or grumbling or criticizing others, that sounds to me like a hungry person.

I know that whenever I am prone to gripe or grumble or to be critical, one of the first questions that Danny will ask me is, are you hungry?

[60:01] And usually that's the case. When we're hungry, we're prone to gripe and grumble and criticize in the household of God.

Instead of having faith, instead of trusting, instead of being patient, instead of thinking of others, our needs become our biggest concern. But daily study of God's Word has a way of putting things into perspective.

perspective. So that's why I know for me, I need my daily time of study. Otherwise, I lose sight of the big picture. You must eat. Do you want to hear God speak to you?

Then feast upon His Word. Crack it open and read it. Turn off the TV. Power down your cell phone. Amen, Monty? Monty, talk to us pastors about this. It's hard, man, but I'm trying. Pick up the Word of God. Put all those other things down. Pick up God's Word.

[61:06] I think and I hope that all of us here would say that, you know, we started this year with the vision of the best Highland Park Baptist Church in 2020.

And then 2020 happened, right? But I would say that for all of us here, we want the best church that we can be, don't we?

I do. I want us to be the best church that we can be, not in competition with anybody else, but here in our church that we would be the most committed followers of Jesus Christ that we can be.

And I believe that the only way that that can truly happen is when each of us feasts daily and greatly upon the Word of God.

That's the way that it's going to happen. We can do engaged outreach events and they can go well and we can meet people, but if we do not have the Word of God abiding in us and if we're not abiding in the Word of God, then we won't be the best church that we can be.

[62:20] And so, again, that's my greatest hope and prayer for you as a church is that whatever I can say or do here behind this pulpit would encourage you to put your face in the Word of God on a regular consistent basis.

And I want you to know that I've been praying for you about that and I will continue to be praying about that for you. And I hope that you would join me in that prayer for our church. Because listen, this is God's desire for us.

This is God's desire for you. I want us to look at a couple of verses here, passages, Hebrews 12, Hebrews 5, excuse me, 12 through 14 first.

There Paul says, for though by this time, speaking to believers, you ought to be teachers. You need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God.

You need milk, not solid food. For everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the Word of righteousness since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have the power of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

[63 : 30] And so my question is, having read that, which are you? Which more, which one of those most characterizes you?

An infant in need of milk or a mature disciple who feasts upon the deep truths contained in God's Word? And then, which one do you want to be?

Which one do you want to be? Because I'll tell you, malnourished Christians do not represent Christ well. They see him more as useful than as precious, using him again to recreate heaven on earth instead of being used by him to build his kingdom that is not of this world.

And a church filled with malnourished believers loses its witness. 1 Corinthians 3, 1-3. Corinthian church was a difficult church to pastor.

Paul is writing to them and he says, But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

[64 : 42] I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving only in a human way.

Malnourished Christians act like the world. Malnourished Christians act like what we're seeing in the political landscape today.

Jealousy, strife, division, hatred, anger. And right now, what our church, or what our world, excuse me, needs, what our nation needs is for the church to be the church.

church, they ought to be able to look at us and not see something that looks exactly like what they see everywhere else. They see a group of people, different ages, different races, different backgrounds, completely different, yet they hold one thing in common, and that is they know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

And these people love one another, and these people encourage one another, and these people work together. These people are going on mission, and they should ask why, and then we can say it's because of Christ, and you don't have him, and that's why you're so divided.

[66 : 05] What an opportunity for us to share the gospel. Three application questions as we close. And again, my hope for you is that you tuck this in your Bible because you've been convicted, and you're going to put your face in your Bible this week, right?

And so you know it's going to be there, and I know you're going to see these, but something for us to consider right now, but to put in your Bible to come back to later. In looking at Hebrews 5, 12-14, and 1 Corinthians 3, 1-13, what effects does the spiritually malnourished have on the rest of the church?

So think about this. If people in our church are spiritually malnourished, what are the consequences of that? Then a follow-up question would be what can you do to help them be more nourished, or encourage them in that way?

Second, does the way that you live indicate that you view Christ as useful or precious? Does the way that you live indicate that you view Christ as useful or precious?

are you thinking about what you can do to impress him with your good works so that he'll bless you with fill-in-the-blank? Are you waking up each day saying, Lord, I am yours to command, use me however you want because you're precious?

[67 : 34] third, what changes will you make so that you give more of your time to feasting upon the word of God? What changes will you make so that you give more of your time to feasting upon the word of God?

Now, I've told you before that every week when I sit down to begin studying for the sermon, my first prayer is, God first convict me. And I'll tell you, that boy did he answer that prayer this week.

And, well, I'm just going to leave it at that. Just know that I have been convicted and that I'm going to give more of my time and more of myself to the word of God.

And I'll be praying that you do the same. Let's pray. Lord, we're thankful for you, the bread of life, the bread from heaven who came, who lived the sinless life that we could not live, who died willingly on the cross for the sins that we've committed and who rose again on the third day as proof that our salvation in you is secure, that your sacrifice was sufficient, that those of us whom you've called to faith in you have been clothed with your righteousness.

And we know, Lord, that our lives have great meaning and purpose. Lord, I pray that you would forgive me. I pray that you would forgive us for how often we have filled our schedules with activities, with hobbies that may not be bad things, but we allow them to pull us away from your

word.

[69:33] And when that happens, it is bad. It has bad results for us, has bad results for our churches. So many people are malnourished, having neglected your word.

So, God, I pray that you would do for our church, as I'm thankful that you've done for me, to convict us all. Convict us and to show us that it's so much better.

There's so much more pleasure in sitting down with your word and having you speak to us and teach us and love us and guide us through it.

That we would be a people marked by your word and that God, as a result of that, we would be a blessing to you. We would be a blessing to Bartlesville, to our state, to our nation, and beyond, that you would be glorified by all that results.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Let's all stand as we sing the invitation song, I Know Whom Have Believed. I know not why God's wondrous grace to me hath made known, nor why worthy Christ in love redeemed before his own.

[71:00] But I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day.

I know not how this saving faith to thee he did impart, nor how believing in his word brought peace within my heart.

But I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day.

God bless you all. I hope that you have a great day and a great week. I'll be praying for you, and I encourage you to be in the word of God, and I promise you that if you do, you'll be thankful and glad for all that time you spent with him.

I'm going to hang out up here again. Just as a reminder, if you want to come say hello, I'll be glad to say hello to you. If not, I won't take offense. I hope that you have a great day again. I love you. God bless you. Have a great day.

[72:35] Well, let's sing our way home. Let's sing, My Chains Are Gone, I've Been Set Free. My chains are gone, I've been set free.

My God, my Savior, has ransomed me. And like a flood, His mercy rains.

Unending love, amazing grace. God bless you all. See you this evening. you