

John Chapter 6 v 22 - 58

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Preacher: Joel Metcalfe

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Well, good morning, everybody. Just going to read a few lines from Psalm 62. This is right at the start of the psalm.

It says, Truly, my soul finds rest in God. My salvation comes from Him. Truly, He is my rock and my salvation.

He is my fortress. I shall never be shaken. And those verses remind us that what we're doing today is an exercise in the soul. It's not just going through the head.

We're not going through our ears. This is a soul's exercise. And we worship God this morning with our first hymn as we take up that theme of the Lord's protection.

[1 : 17] It's number 775. A great hymn, guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land. Let's make a few lines. what a great hymn that is well forgiven for the fact he's got two christian names but there you go let's come to the lord in prayer let's worship him together lord as we come into your presence this morning we we thank you for the great privilege it is to come before our lord and savior who is one who's above all others one who continually cares for us one who hears us one who has only good plan for us and we thank you as we come we can come on a wonderful day of your creation where we can enjoy just the blessings of being part of this world and realizing that all these things were done for us and so lord we come to thank you for the many gifts that you give us for the many ways in which we've had your presence with us in these last few days and as we come lord we pray that you will instruct us from your word that we'll be able to focus on the things that are important to you not the trivial things that sometimes we think are important so just be with us this morning lord help us this week worship you together we pray that our songs of praise our words of prayer and just the meditation of our hearts and minds might be continually looking to you and focused on you and lord we we ask that your name this morning might be glorified in this place as we seek to worship you so we ask that you'll be present with us lord the holy spirit will guide us in every aspect of our service this morning and we commit all these things into your hand now lord in jesus precious name amen let's just commit these gifts to the lord lord we do thank you and praise you that you allow us to give our gifts to you as a token of our love for you we pray that they might be used for the work of your gospel in this place and we commit them now into your hands in jesus name amen amen amen and we're going to our scripture reading now so if you turn to john's gospel and chapter six it's on page 1070 in your church bible if you're using the church bible and we're going to read from verse 25 up to verse 40 so verse 25 up to verse 40 of john chapter 6 chapter 6 in the story that we just heard we're thinking about jesus distributing the bread and this section is entitled jesus the bread of life from verse 25 when they found him on the other side of the lake they asked him rabbi when did you get here jesus answered very truly i tell you you are looking for me not because you saw the signs i performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill do not work for food that spoils but for food that endures to eternal life which the son of man will give you for on him god the father

has placed his seal of approval then they asked him what must we do to do the works god requires jesus answered the work of god is this to believe in the one he has sent so they asked him what sounding will you give that we may see it and believe you what will you do our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness as it is written he gave them bread from heaven to eat jesus said to them very truly i tell you it is not mooses who's giving you the bread from heaven but it is my father who gives you the true bread from heaven for the bread of god is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world so they said always give us this bread then jesus declared i am the bread of life whoever comes to me will never go hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty but as i told you you see me and still you do not believe all those the father gives me will

come to me and whoever comes to me i will never drive away for i have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me and this is the will of him who sent me that i shall lose none of all those he's given me but raise them up at the last day for my father's will is that everyone who looks to the son and believes in him shall have eternal life and i will raise them up at the last day amen may the lord bless his word to us i'll just open up in prayer father god um we want to draw near to you now as a deer pants for the water so our souls long for you they pant for you um and we know you're the only one who can satisfy you have the words of eternal life you have the words which we need to hear so i ask that as we draw near to you now you'd speak to us you'd speak through me you'd speak through your word um and you'd give us the food that we need you'd give us the things we need to hear um speak to us we pray now in jesus name amen so i want to start off with a question um what did you have for dinner last night um now i think if i was to go around the whole room and ask everyone we'd get a lot of different answers um you know i don't know pasta pizza um chicken i don't know um yeah um but if you went to many parts of the world um you'd actually get a very similar answer if you went to some places in asia um um most people would probably say rice um or there's some places in africa um and they have a staple of a root vegetable called nshima it's like a a sort of stodgy mash looking um meal and a lot of countries um their diets aren't as varied as ours they have a staple um they're very lucky where we live to have such a variety of food now two thousand years ago the israelites they had a staple and that was bread um and most days you know the majority of their meals they would consist of bread and it might not seem exciting to us

but that's that's how life was so when jesus says this statement i am the bread of life and he's saying i am the one who feeds you i am your food i am your daily food um i am the one that nourishes you so we start off this um this uh sort of this is an interaction between jesus um and his followers um but i'll give some background the day before it was the feeding of the five thousand which we heard about earlier and here jesus managed to feed twenty thousand people probably um with five loaves and two fishes and obviously for them this was incredible it would they'd think they'd cast their minds back to mooses um god once fed israel in the desert every day with bread from heaven with manna and that's what they would think of um and they it says at the end of the story they tried to make him king they said you are the prophet who is to come um they knew that he was special they they knew he was the messiah and between that time and where we're going to start today um he sends the disciples off across the lake in a boat uh the people they all stay they all stay where jesus is they don't see him leave um it says jesus withdraws to the mountain and he goes to pray so they don't know where jesus is they they're waiting around the next day and they're looking for jesus but jesus isn't there and we know if you read on um after this miracle jesus actually walks on the water um the disciples are in a storm and jesus walks to them on the water and he goes with them over to the other side but the the crowd they don't know what's happened to jesus they think he's still there so they end up looking for him the next day and they can't find him um and eventually they go over the lake and they look for jesus so verse 25 says this um john 6 25 when they found him on the other side so they were looking for jesus when they found him on the other side of the lake they asked him rabbi when did you get here and it's the obvious question how did you get here we never saw you leave they didn't know he he walked on the water but what does jesus answer them he doesn't answer what they ask um and jesus often you see him act like this throughout the gospels but he goes straight to what they need to hear and i think he speaks to us today like this as well he he knows exactly what we need and he gets straight to the point um and he he tells us what we need to hear and he says this to them jesus answered very truly i tell you you are looking for me not because you saw the signs i performed because because you ate the loaves and had your fill do not work for food that spoils but for food that endures to eternal life which the son of man will give you for on him god the father has placed his seal of approval so later on we'll read that um the these people this crowd they say give us this bread um give us this bread to eat um and they're they're coming to jesus and they're

they've seen this miracle but what does he say it's a sign um and what does a sign do it points to who he is it points to his messiahship but jesus is saying this look you didn't come to seek me you came because you ate bread um you came for what i can give you and you might not think bread why do they want bread so much but you know in those days eighty eighty seven percent apparently of daily wage was spent on food um food is is what most people worked for is what most people will um spend their time you know trying to get food for their families so if they see jesus and he can he can just give them bread like this you know god in the wilderness he gave them manna

every day you can provide for us you can give us food they say jesus but jesus says this you came because you had your fill of loaves you came for what i could give you but later on he'll say this i am the bread of life he says do not work for that which spoils but for food which endures to eternal life which the son of man will give you so the first point is this they were coming to jesus for what he could give them but jesus says this come to me not for what i can give you come to me for me i am the bread of life i am the one who will satisfy your hunger who will satisfy your cravings you know i think today we can be the same we can come to god not for himself not for god but for the things he can give us we want god to you know give us an easier life we want god to solve all our problems but he says this i am the bread of life i am the only one who will satisfy you we should be satisfied with god himself i am reading this story it reminded me of a friend who grew up with me and he became a christian when he was a teenager but a few years later he decided to leave it all i remember having a conversation with him and he said look i am much happier now i am not a christian it did not give me happiness i am much more happy now and i remember thinking well he's if you came to god for happiness you've missed the point god came to give you life now god does promise us to satisfy us he gives us joy um but if we come to god for the things he can give us then as soon as hardships come we'll be disappointed and we'll leave if you remember the parable of the sower um jesus tells of a sower who's sowing seed he says the seed is the word of god and it falls on different types of soil now one soil is the rocky ground and the the soil is shallow and it says the um straight away the seed springs up it doesn't have much root so it springs up but as soon as the sun comes out it scorches and it withers and he says this the shallow soil is like people who they hear the word of god and immediately they receive it with joy and but what happens when persecution comes when the sun comes and scorches them then they leave it all so immediately they seem excited they say i want this i want this they receive it with joy but as soon as hardships come they fall away now if we're not

rooted in god himself if we're coming to god just for the things he can give us just for blessings then as soon as hardships come we'll fall away but jesus says this i am the bread of life he who comes to me will never hunger we all hunger for something in life everyone's looking for something and we all want fulfillment we seek it some people seek it in their work some people seek it in their family life some people seek it in sport some people live for the weekend but jesus says this look all of these things they won't satisfy you i am the one who will fulfill your hunger i am the bread of life and i want to give the example of a marriage you know we look at we look at people who maybe they marry for money or they marry for looks and we see those marriages and we think oh that's shallow that's not it's not a good reason to marry someone you marry someone for the person for who they are but can we be like that with god do we come to god for the things he can give us for his blessings or do we come to god because we want him he says i am the bread of life so the first point is this jesus did not merely come to give us bread he came to be our bread he himself is the bread of life he's not a side dish he's the main course he's the one that will satisfy our needs he'll give us fulfillment in life jesus doesn't promise us an easy life he doesn't promise to take us away from hardships and persecution he actually says this if you will be my disciple you must pick up your cross daily and follow me but what does he promise he promises to give us a life of meaning a life of fulfillment jesus himself is the one who can fulfill our hunger verse 35 i am the bread of life whoever comes to me will never go hungry whoever believes in me will never be thirsty we'll still experience hardships we'll still experience all the trials of life but jesus says i will be with you in it i will fulfill you in it you will have meaning to your life so it's quite strong isn't it whoever comes to me will never hunger whoever gives drinks the drink i give him will never thirst but as christians i don't think i can say that i always i always experience this fulfillment in my daily life we often don't experience this as we should so why is this well i want to look at verse 31 to 33 and i think there's a clue so the jews they come to jesus and they say this our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness as it is written he gave them bread from heaven to eat jesus said to them very truly i tell you it is not mooses who has given you the bread from heaven but it is my father who gives you the true bread from heaven for the

[21 : 24] bread of god is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world so jesus says look it was actually my father who gave you the bread anyway he was the one that provided but i am this bread but what was the manner well when the israelites left egypt and they went out into the wilderness and god was bringing them to the promised land but they spent 40 years in the desert and it was a dry place it was a barren place and there wasn't much food so they cry out to god to give them some food and god every day he sends down this bread from heaven

said it came down every morning like a dew on the ground and they'd have to go every day and they'd have to gather it up for themselves on a friday there'd be a double portion so that they didn't have to gather on the sabbath but god provided the bread but every day they had to gather it they had to gather it daily so my second point is this if the first point is jesus is not does not merely give us bread but he is the bread my second point is this jesus is our daily bread we need to come to jesus daily in him he gives us everything we need for life he gives us all the food we need everything to fulfill our hunger in a sense but we must come to him so many of the promises in the bible have this preface come to me i want to read a few examples in isaiah 55 verses 1 to 3 it says this ho everyone who thirsts come to the waters and you who have no money come buy and eat yes come buy wine and milk without money and without price why do you spend money for what is not bread and your wages for what does not satisfy listen listen carefully to me and eat what is good and let your soul delight itself in abundance incline your ear and come to me here and your soul shall live and i will make an everlasting covenant with you matthew 11 verse 28 says this come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and i will give you rest take my yoke upon you and learn from me for i am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden light now of course for all of us there's an initial coming to jesus and that has eternal consequences but i think also there's a daily coming to jesus we need to feed on christ daily now if we didn't eat food for a full day we'd notice we'd get hungry but our spiritual food is much more important than our physical food so i wonder do we do we sometimes just do we come to church and think that's my food for the week well jesus wants us to come to him daily i wonder if a lot of our problems in life a lot of the our dissatisfaction the hunger we feel is because we're not eating properly are we coming to christ daily he gives us daily bread you know if you don't eat you won't grow and i can look back on my life as a christian and the times i've grown most as a christian i just went up set aside and been the most disciplined to spend time with god every day and it's obvious you don't eat you don't grow but if we want to grow as christians then our quiet time our personal time with god is the most important thing in our life you stop eating you'll stop growing it's as simple as that there's a saying you are what you eat and it's saying this whatever you put into your body is what your body becomes in a sense if you feed yourself on rubbish then you're not going to be healthy if you feed yourself and nourish yourself on good things you'll be healthy you'll have life in a sense i want to give this example of a kids party remember when you're back when you're a child or maybe you've got kids yourself and you often have this sort of buffet lunch now if you leave a kid and don't tell them what to eat and let them eat whatever they want what do you think will be left over at the end of the meal well you probably have the carrot sticks left probably have the celery sticks the chocolate fingers they'll all be gone the coke the biscuits anything with sugar in it basically and what will you get after that you'll have hyper kids for about 20 minutes and then you'll have this crash and you'll have all these complaints people will say oh i feel sick oh i feel ill but as kids we don't they don't make a connection between what they've just eaten and why they're feeling that way they don't make the connection and i wonder if we can be like that in life we might not be feeling the sense of the holy spirit we might not be feeling god experiencing god in our life we might not be satisfied in our life but do we connect that with are we spending time with him what are we feeding our minds on are we spending more time you know on tv music entertainment and are we ignoring the true food which god provides for us he wants to meet with us every day and i remember i once heard this in a sermon and it really helped me and he gave this he said this if you whenever you feel the spirit prompting in a sense to come and spend time with god you know whenever you feel this urge just sometimes to have quiet time to have a prayer time maybe he says that's when you should set everything else aside and just go for it because god wants to meet with you and you'll find you get nourishment in those times sometimes god wants to meet with us and he calls us and those are the times we should go we should want him more than anything we should want jesus himself in the chapter isaiah 55 that i read before later on it says this in verse 6 seek the lord while he may be found call upon him while he is near and there are times when god will who want to who want to speak to us he'll give us opportunity to spend time with him and we need to take those we need to take those opportunities he's god we're not god our time is his so the first few points are jesus not only gives us bread he's not merely the giver of bread he is our daily bread he is the bread of life he is our bread he is our sustenance the second point is jesus is our daily bread and the final point that i want to share is this jesus is our eternal bread so what does it say in verses 41 first of all verses 35 he says i am the bread of life whoever comes to me will

never go hungry and he's actually saying something more significant than we realise so there's seven i am statements in the book of john and the jews this would immediately cast their mind back to mooses and the burning bush so mooses in the old testament he's in the wilderness and he sees this bush burning and he goes to it because it's burning but it's not being burnt it's not being consumed it stays a bush so he goes to see what this is and god speaks to him out of the bush and he commissions him and he tells him to go back to the israelites and you know he's going to set them free and he says this to god who shall i say sent me and god doesn't he's basically he's asking god what is your name and god says this tell them i am sent you and it's a strange thing to say but what he's saying is i am i simply am i have always been i always will be i am i'm the self-existent one i'm the eternal one and the personal name for god in the old testament was yahweh and that was a derivative of this this phrase i am and the literal greek is ego am i that's i am the bread of life and there was a greek version of the of the old testament called the septuagint and this burning bush instance this i am it was these words it was ego am i and it was actually an awkward thing for jesus to say i am the bread of life it's not the normal sort of way you talk so it was in a sense it was obvious he was making a bigger statement he was saying i am the eternal one he says i am the bread come down from heaven i am god um on verse 41 to 42 we see they take it that way says at this the jews there began to grumble about him because he said i am the bread that came down from heaven and they'd seen him grow up they knew his parents and they say they said is this not jesus the son of joseph whose father and mother we know how can he say i came down from heaven there's another time where jesus says before abraham was i am and the jews immediately they pick up stones and they're about to stone him they think it's blasphemous so jesus clearly he's making a huge statement he's saying that he is god in the flesh i am the bread of life your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and are dead this is the bread which comes down from heaven that one may eat of it and not die i am the living bread which came down from heaven if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever and the bread that i shall give him give is my flesh which i shall give for the life of the world that's verses 45 48

sorry to 51 so what he's saying is this has eternal significance if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever and this bread is my flesh what's he speaking of well he's actually speaking of the ultimate reason why he came and that's his death because he's eternal he's the i am he was the one he's the only one that could die for us you see our sin separated us from god it caused the barrier god is perfect he can only allow perfection in his presence and this sin needed a punishment it deserves death but jesus god in the flesh came down and he he came to die to take the sins of the world and why could he why was he allowed to be the sacrifice well he was the eternal one and therefore he is worth infinite lives he was the perfect one he was god himself and therefore he was the only one that could be the sacrifice for our sins now there are three passovers in the book of john the first one is the the miracle of the water into wine last time i came here i spoke on that and actually it was speaking of jesus's death jesus's blood which cleanses us the second passover is the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand and it speaks of the bread and here jesus commenting on that he says i am the bread of life and the final passover was just before his death and he says this is this is my bread this is my flesh as often as you eat it eat it in remembrance of me and he gives them wine and he says this is the blood of this is the new covenant of my blood drink it as often as you do in remembrance of me so the ultimate reason he came the ultimate meaning of the bread of life is that he came to die that his body was broken for us and if you read later in his passage they didn't know about his death many were confused by these sayings because later on he'd say unless you eat of my flesh unless you drink of my blood you won't have life and they didn't understand and many left but they should have known it was a confusing statement and they didn't and Jesus doesn't actually explain it all later they would see in his death so why does he allow them to leave well they should have known he was the messiah they just seen him feed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes it says at the end they're about to make him king they knew he was the messiah and some of us can be like this we know that Jesus is God he's given us enough but if we don't have all of our answers questions all of our questions answered we won't come to him but God doesn't answer all of our questions but he gives us enough that we know who he is that we can believe in him some people have said to me this look if I saw God perform a miracle then I'd believe but in a sense this this proves that wrong in a sense they'd just seen an amazing miracle but they didn't as soon as they hear something hard they don't understand they leave

him but Jesus is the only one who will satisfy and he gives us enough doesn't answer all our questions but he gives us enough that we can trust him and we need to trust him with the rest the ultimate promise is this he who comes to me I will never cast out so the question I have is will you come if you don't know him will you come to him for life if you do know him will you come to him daily for your daily bread John chapter 5 verse 39 says this you search the scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life and these are they which testify of me but you are not willing to come to me that you may have life it's only when in coming to Jesus that we get bread that we get sustenance that we get life itself

[38 : 31] I just want to finish by reading verses 35 to 40 Jesus declared I am the bread of life whoever comes to me will never go hungry whoever believes in me will never be thirsty but as I told you you have seen me and still you do not believe all those the father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never drive away that's the promise if you come to him he'll never drive you away for I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all those he has given me but raise them up at the last day for my father's will is that everyone who looks to the son and last day shall we finish with the grace the grace of God and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all ever more Amen