



# THE GOOD BREAD

Spend some time together sharing evidences of God's grace from this past week, which means, identify and share the ways that you've observed God graciously at work in your lives. If anyone in your group has not shared their story of faith, invite 1-2 individuals to do that tonight. A helpful approach to sharing a testimony is to focus on life before Jesus, meeting Jesus, and life since coming to saving faith in Jesus.

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## OPENING COMMENT

In order to understand Jesus' statement; "I am the Bread of life" we need to rewind and look back at two significant historical events that Jesus mentions to create context for his listeners. In Exodus God miraculously provided bread from heaven, called manna; and in the feeding of the 5000, loaves and fish were multiplied - Jesus took a small portion of food, and miraculously provided enough for everyone. Every miracle that Jesus did is a tangible experience to help us in understanding the spiritual reality we live in. Jesus uses tangible imagery to help us "get it" and within this passage there are points that God is communicating with us. We understand hunger, we understand thirst, we understand bread. It is harder to understand total depravity in a world where everything seems OK.

What was the truth or lesson that was impressed on your heart the most from Sunday's sermon?

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## OPEN YOUR BIBLE AND READ: Matthew 21:1-11 (esv)

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. <sup>36</sup>But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. <sup>37</sup>All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. <sup>38</sup>For I have come down from heaven, not to do my



own will but the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup>And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. <sup>40</sup>For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." <sup>41</sup>So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." <sup>42</sup>They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he say, "I have come down from heaven?" ... continue reading to verse 51

## **A. WE ARE HUNGRY, THIRSTY, IN A DIRE STATE OF LIFE AND DEATH**

1. What are some of the stories in the Bible that deal with food? In what ways does our need for food and our delight in food lead us to consider our need for God and our delight in God?
2. What are some common things in which people seek satisfaction? What are examples in your life of "bread" that perishes? Why is it that we do not see our dire state, why are we spiritually clueless, why do we ignore the greater reality that there will be a point when we will stand before God and account for our lives?
3. As a follower of Jesus, what has God put on your heart, that you hunger and thirst for more than anything the world can offer?

## **B. IT IS EASY TO BE BLIND OF OUR CONDITION WHEN WE ARE RICH**

1. What are some of the reasons people might "follow" Jesus for *what* He can give them but not for *who* He is? How does this view of following Jesus distort our biblical perspective?
2. Discuss the following statement: "The physical reality is that you can live a completely happy life without God. You can be generous, compassionate, a nice person, be completely comfortable and surrounded by family and friends and feel like you are right with the world around you, and yet be a spiritually starved, decaying, waste of a person who is condemned to death." Does this statement make you pause for a moment and think about your life and faith? Why or why not?



## C. JESUS PROVIDES HIMSELF AS A MEANS TO OUR SURVIVAL AND AN END TO OUR HUNGER, AND ALLOWS US TO SEE THE TRUTH

1. How did the Father's sending of the Son impact Jesus' view of ministry? How should the Son's sending of us to share the message of the Gospel impact our view of life?
2. According to the text, what promises do we have as believers in Jesus? Why is this hope important to remember each and every day?
3. You were hungry, starving and to the point of death and Jesus provided himself as bread to nourish and save you. Now you can walk in peace and have satisfaction in your life. You know people who are in the same place you once were. Does the promise of eternal life and spiritual healing for those close to you, who do not know Jesus, motivate you to share the Gospel message of hope? Why or why not?

## CONCLUSION

Check your desires. The things you really want in life. They will tell you something about the condition of your heart. Do you long after peace and satisfaction in temporary things, or do you seek after it in Jesus? Is Jesus precious to you? Do you care about the things that he cares about? Do you hate what Jesus hates?

## SHARE AND PRAY

- Pray over those circumstances in each other's lives that tend to have you walking in fear and can shake your faith. Pray for a spiritual hunger and praise God for those times when you hunger more for Jesus than other things. Pray that you will grow in your understanding of the Gospel message and that it will guide you in your Christian walk.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, with the understanding that Jesus' greatest desire is to see us saved when we put our trust in Him. Pray for those in your life that are in need of a relationship with Jesus.

