

The Promises of God: He Nourishes Our Lives

John 6:24–35 March 9, 2025

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Earlier this week I led a Bible Study about God's grace while four people who played billiards. I don't think that's a bad thing. We spent about an hour discussing how in the midst of terrible things happening in our lives, when we are desperate and weak, God's grace makes us strong. It was the start of something.

Now, let's consider the promises of God. Jesus fulfills all of God's promises. Through our faith in Jesus those promises are all true for us.

Jesus used the phrase I AM numerous times. His disciple John recorded the ones that help us get a better understanding of Jesus. He is revealing to us God's character, God's nature in very human words and images.

When Jesus uses the phrase I AM He is identifying Himself with the name the Lord God declared about Himself. God said He was the I AM. The god who, in the simplest terms, is the only God.

John 6:25–35 (NLT) They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval." They replied, "We want to perform God's works, too. What should we do?" Jesus told them, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent." They answered, "Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, 'Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus said, ***"I tell you the truth, Moses didn't give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*** "Sir," they said, ***"give us that bread every day."*** Jesus replied, ***"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."***

Jesus is making it clear that He is the God who nourishes our souls. This has always been about more than food for the body. I'm a food for the body person. I like lots of foods. I especially like foods that are easy to eat and taste good. I eat foods that fill my belly. I eat when I'm hungry. I eat foods that make me feel good. I eat when I'm stressed. Somehow I think that food is going to make me a better person. It might if I ate the right foods. But, I don't always eat the right foods. If we were to take a survey I think the vast majority of people would eat for the reasons I eat, hunger and stress.

I shouldn't be talking about food, but Jesus brought it up. So, now we have to talk about it, am I eating because I'm stressed or because I'm hungry? This is bold, but when I'm eating because of stress then I might not be trusting Jesus. Just because you eat a cookie or a bag of popcorn doesn't mean you aren't trusting Jesus.

Jesus feed over 5,000 people with two loaves of bread and five fish. I don't ever get tired of this story. This was not about people sharing their food. This was about people eating food that Jesus multiplied

from very little. It's the miracle that needs to get our attention. It's Jesus doing something that other people can't do. It's Jesus demonstrating that He is the Son of Man.

Let me go sideways and tell you about the Son of Man. It's a phrase used in the Old Testament of the Bible. Sometimes it's used when God is talking to one of His prophets. God will call them a son of man. He is saying they are a person, a created individual.

Then there is this occasion in the book of Daniel. It is a prophecy about someone God will send who will do great things, lead His people, and redeem them from their enemies. This someone is called the Son of Man. Translators of scripture put that in capitals to signify to us that this is the Messiah. All of the scholars, teachers, and religious people before Jesus said it was the Messiah. Every scholar since Jesus has said this Son of Man in the book of Daniel is the Messiah.

Jesus, used this title Son of Man to describe Himself. This was intentional. He was identifying with the person described in Daniel. He was proclaiming that He was fulfilling the prophecy in Daniel. The Son of Man can take two loaves of bread and five fish to feed thousands of people. The Son of Man is more important than a baker and fry chef.

Soul nourishment is essential to life. We know that body nourishment is essential. So, we try to eat healthy. When the weather is warm I love to eat salads. They are refreshing and healthy. That may not stop me from eating cookies.

To nourish our souls we need to do three things: Eat the Word of God, drink the Living Water, and follow the Great Shepherd. We need to read God's Word as often as we can. We need to listen to what we are reading in God's word, drinking it in like a dog after a long walk. We need to live our lives following Jesus.

John 6:26 (NLT) Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs.

Is your relationship about living with Jesus? It's too easy to make Jesus into your personal vending machine. The people who had received bread and fish from Jesus thought of Him as their vending machine. That is put in a few coins and get something out. Ask Jesus and get you whatever you want: vending machine. There is no commitment to Jesus. There is no relationship with Jesus. There are no conversations with Jesus.

This is shallow and quick to dry up. When we don't get what we want, we go somewhere else. How many people do you know who are like this with Jesus? They try Jesus two or three times, but on the third time when they don't get what they want, they're out the door. They become hard hearted toward Jesus, saying He didn't help me. They don't want a relationship, they want a vending machine.

Now, when Jesus walked the earth the vast majority of people wanted a vending machine and not a relationship. They wanted to be healed, or someone they loved to be healed. They wanted to have a hero, but not a savior. They wanted a quick fix, but not a relationship. They wanted what they wanted, but not what Jesus wanted.

Jesus feeds the people then gets in a boat and goes to the other side of the lake. They chase Him around the lake, they want Him to prove He is the Son of Man. They never noticed that He had just

done that very thing. They're looking for Him to be their vending machine. They don't want to spend time with Him. They aren't willing to conform their lives to His. They want Jesus to conform His mission them.

They miss the point that the only thing they need to do is believe He is the Son of Man. It's a big leap. Not everyone is ready to make that leap at first. Many people say they're ready, but they aren't. Other people will say they're going to leap, but they don't. Still others will watch from afar talking about people who take a leap faith with Jesus.

Everyone needs to eat the Bread of Life. Jesus is this bread. Jesus is the only bread that will save our lives. Jesus is the exact thing we need to sustain our daily lives. Don't take the imagery too far, because then it becomes childish. Hear Jesus just as He said it, I am the Bread of Life.

Before I go any further let me share with you this piece of truth. When Jesus said I AM the Bread of Life He was identifying with another Old Testament truth. We know the story of Moses leading God's people through the wilderness. What was the name God used when told He Moses to lead the people? It was I AM.

The people called Him Yahweh Elohim, the Lord God. He said He was I AM. One characteristic of I AM is He rescues. Another characteristic of I AM is He sustains His people. Still another characteristic of I AM is He nourishes people. Every one of us needs to live with Jesus, the Bread of Life, who nourishes our souls.

John 6:27 (NLT) But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you. For God the Father has given me the seal of his approval."

When we seek Jesus we will have eternal life. The people came running after Jesus not as the Son of Man, or the Bread of Life, but the giver of food. They were seeking their next meal. Jesus let them know that they needed to stop worrying about food. It's just what we stick in our bellies – veggies or cookies the same thing happens.

Jesus wanted the people to seek something more than food. He wanted them to have eternal life. Do you see what He did? He took our simple desire to eat for the moment and turned it into a desire for eternity. Not merely an eternal desire that may not be satisfied. That's a cookie, one leads to another, it doesn't feel like an eternal desire.

Jesus is pointing us to eternal life in heaven with Him. That is completely different. That is absolutely different. One thing has nothing to do with the other. Which one, eternal life in heaven or a cookie? What do you think, being with Jesus forever or eating a salad?

Eternal life starts the moment we are born again. When we confess our sins, repent from our sins, and turn to Jesus we are given a new life. That new life is eternal. As people who are saved we begin to experience what it is like to be eternal. We are forgiven. We are at peace with God. We have hope. We are empowered.

When Jesus takes us home to heaven, for all those who have died and gone to heaven before us are experiencing eternal life fully. We are experiencing eternal life in a limited way right now. Right now we live in a world were things die. In heaven there is no death. Eternal life is life with Jesus.

Seeking Jesus is a day by day, hour by hour activity. Most of us eat everyday, right? We don't eat every hour, but we eat numerous times during the day. We would not think about going without eating. We plan for our meals: breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Don't let a day go by without Jesus. Throughout your day seek out Jesus. Remember that He is with you. When you are living the life of Jesus, He is with you. When your desire is to seek Jesus, He will be with you. When your hopes are placed upon Jesus, He will give you hope. While your day goes by He will make Himself known. Nothing satisfies like Jesus.

John 6:29 (NLT) Jesus told them, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent."

For your soul to be nourished believe Jesus has been sent by God. We have a hunger and a thirst that no cookie will satisfy. No beverage exists that will match what Jesus offers. This is not a hunger and thirst originating in your belly. It has always come from your soul. All the stuff, all the sin we put in our bodies won't satisfy our souls. We can eat cardboard cookies or the best pastries ever made. We can consume the most souped up salad or the thickest steak. We can chase after money, cars, houses, trinkets, hobbies, sports. We can marry one woman or we can marry ten. You can have five husbands or none. You won't be satisfied. You can be lazy as a dog or as busy as a bee. Your life can be in slow motion or racing by at the speed of light. You'll still want more. You can read or play video games, watch TV or play on your phone. Your world can be about making yourself happy. You can wallow in self-pity.

It's not the Bread of Life. Only the Bread of Life, Jesus, can take away the hunger in your soul. ***Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." John 6:35 (NLT)*** He is the Bread of Life that takes away our hunger and thirst. Jesus is food for your soul. Jesus fulfills what is the deepest longing within you. Jesus overcomes our most self-destructive desires.

Jesus, the Son of Man, who fulfilled all prophecy; the I AM, who gives life, sustains life, nourishes life, and redeems our lives came into the world He created. He lived His life without every being selfish or giving into to selfishness. If there is one thing that defines us it's selfish. I'm not just talking about one or two generations of people. We have been selfish from the beginning. We can't stop being selfish on our own. The people who chased Jesus around the lake were selfish. Don't fool yourself, you aren't any different, you would have done the same things they did.

Jesus took all of our selfishness, He calls it sin. He allowed Himself to become our sin. When He died on that cross He died as our sin. While Jesus was dead He made a visit to hell. He didn't stay in hell, He left our sin in the lake of burning fire, in the abyss, in the emptiness of being separated from God, in the burning pit of sulfur. All of these are Biblical descriptions of hell. That's where Jesus left our sins.

On the third day Jesus rose from the dead. For those who believe in Him He defeated the power of death to punish us for our sins. He gave to all those who believe in Him eternal life in heaven. Jesus told the people who ate the bread He gave the only thing they needed to do was believe in Him. He is sent by God to give us new life, eternal life. He is sent to take away our sins. He is sent to give us new life. Choose to believe Jesus.