



HAMBURG PIKE

Church of Christ

The Worker

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The Bread of Life

Eric Welch

When we read about Jesus as the Bread of Life in John 6, we come to appreciate more Jesus' answer to Satan's temptation to "command these stones to become loaves of bread." Mat 4:4 He answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Why do we not live on bread alone? Because life is more than the physical body and the means to sustain it. As Jesus said, "Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" (Matthew 6:25).

Jesus pointed out to the hostile Jewish audience that eating physical bread, like manna from heaven, will sustain life for a while, but it is temporary (John 6:49). Eventually, that bread will not keep them from dying physically. However, eating the bread that Jesus gives will "sustain" life forever. No wonder Jesus tells us not to put more emphasis on our necessities and, by implication, the means to obtain them (work) than on the spiritual things. We must "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" and then those necessities will be given as a bonus.

"Every word that comes from the mouth of God" is the "true bread from heaven." If you were to place John 6:35-47 and 6:48-58 side by side, you will see a paralleled pattern.

Below is what it looks like:

35-47

48-58

Claim: "I am the bread of life"

"I am the bread of life" 48

Procedure: "believe" 35, 36, 40, 47

"Eat" 50-54, 56

End: "everlasting life" 47

"Live forever" 58

This parallel helps us to understand Jesus' meaning when He says eat and drink of me. "Flesh and blood" is an ancient figure of speech that refers to a man (cf. Matthew 16:17). Jesus means to take in all of Him, to consume His teachings, to believe or to trust in Him. With this symbolism, which was offensive to some, Jesus weeded out those who were following Him only for the free meal.

Jesus is not talking about the Lord's Supper here, which will be established months later in privacy with believers. He says, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." It is as simple as that: to eat and drink of Jesus means to accept and obey His words. We will either consume the whole Man (flesh and blood) or none of Him. What are you hungering and thirsting for?

Hamburg Pike Happenings

The Tincher's group will meet Sunday March 1st after the morning service.

Would you like to help with VBS? There is a "Giving Tree" in the foyer with items that are needed for our upcoming Vacation Bible School. If you would like to give a donation towards the purchase of these items please see Ashley Smith or Stephanie Welch. Thank You!

Ladies' Bible Class is scheduled for Saturday morning, February 28th at 10 A.M. The lesson will be "Mary, the Mother of Jesus." All ladies of the congregation are invited and encouraged to attend. Please see Stephanie for further details.



"I Was Who I Said I Was"

Eric Welch

In the book The Reagan Diaries by Douglas Brinkley, President Reagan wrote on Sunday, September 2, 1984 that he called the Jerry Lewis' MD telethon to make a donation. He wrote, "Then when I called the number about my pledge—couldn't convince the operators I was who I said I was" (page 263). This problem happened on numerous occasions for our 40th President. I imagine that this difficulty is common among famous people.

In a similar way, on a grander scale, people refuse to recognize the President of the Universe, even though His voice and signature are clearly seen. Psalms 19:1-2 says ¹ *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.* ² *Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.* Paul says to the Lystrans that God has not left himself without witness (Acts 14:17). To the Roman Christians he wrote, *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made* (Romans 1:20).

Paul says that people worship the creature rather than the creator (Romans 1:25). These people include primitive cultures that worship nature and advanced cultures that worship nature too, but disguise it as environmentalism. These dangerous people are the ones who strip human dignity to the level of a cockroach. We are bombarded with these ideas on TV channels like Animal Planet. If you watch it sometimes, look for subtleties such as the way they refer to Earth. These people believe that the Earth is alive. They might call the Earth the pagan name "Gaia" or the more familiar "Mother Nature." With the loss of human dignity come such practices as abortion, euthanasia, cloning and so on.

The President of the Universe gave us His diaries. In this special revelation, He has revealed to us the greatest donation ever given to cure the worst "disease" ever known—sin, the cause of spiritual dystrophy (Romans 6:23). However, by giving His Son to die for us, He has shown how much we are worth to Him. His opinion of us is the only thing that matters. Only Christianity provides us with true human dignity. I love the passage in Psalm 8:4-9 that expresses our worth to God:

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? ⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶ You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, ⁷ all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, ⁸ the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. ⁹ O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

The Lord God was Who He said He was (Exodus 3:14) and Jesus proved Who He said He was by the resurrection. May we never fail to recognize the voice of our Lord for no one ever spoke like this man (John 7:46).