

BREAD
— OF —
LIFE

GET RID OF THE “SIDE-DISH” MENTALITY

Sometimes our greatest cravings miss the mark and fail to satisfy our true hunger. Have you ever intensely craved something to eat, like a juicy steak, a loaded hamburger or a delicious dessert? Once you finally got your hands on whatever you were craving, have you ever taken those first few bites and been disappointed that it didn't taste like you hoped it would?

want to you to know that God never disappoints. The psalmist wrote, "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8 NIV). He is the Living Water and the Bread of Life. He fills those who hunger for Him to overflowing.

Bread was a key factor in the lifestyle of ancient Israel. Throughout the Old Testament we see evidence of the importance of bread as a main sustenance. That's why the following words of Jesus were so shocking and pivotal even for some of His most faithful followers

Me, without bread, you will perish."

I can do without a lot of things, but I cannot do anything without Jesus. He's not a side salad. He's not something at the end of the table in a basket that I can take or leave. He is the source of life.

The problem is, the Body of Christ has developed a Drive-Thru brand of Christianity of late, where we simply "take it or leave it" at will. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that The Bread of Life is merely a side dish! How often do we act as though we can pinch off a little

THEN JESUS SAID TO THEM, "MOST ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, MOSES DID NOT GIVE YOU THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN, BUT MY FATHER GIVES YOU THE TRUE BREAD FROM HEAVEN. FOR THE BREAD OF GOD IS HE WHO COMES DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND GIVES LIFE TO THE WORLD."

THEN THEY SAID TO HIM, "LORD, GIVE US THIS BREAD ALWAYS."

AND JESUS SAID TO THEM, "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE. HE WHO COMES TO ME SHALL NEVER HUNGER, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME SHALL NEVER THIRST."

— JOHN 6:32-35

What a statement! Remember, bread was not merely an after thought or a side dish to the people who heard His words. Bread was the main part of their diet. When Jesus said, "I am The Bread of Life," in that culture, it got their attention. He was trying to get them to understand, "You need Me every day. You need Me not just on Sunday. You need Me every hour. You need Me every minute. You can't make it without Me. I Am The Bread of Life. I'm the central issue of your life. Without

nibble of God here and there, fold the napkin back over the dish and do our own thing the rest of the week? Have our lives become so full that we only have room for a taste of God on Sunday and maybe another taste on Wednesday? Do we come into church so full of the world that we have no room for The Bread of Life, then hustle out to what we consider to be the main course in our lives?

We need to cultivate a genuine hunger and thirst for the Lord. We cannot focus on



fasting and prayer and expect to get far when we have the wrong understanding of Jesus in the first place. Jesus continued to explain to the arguing crowd,

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 is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

— John 6:48-51

Whenever you hunger and thirst after Jesus you will be filled. The Bread of Life is the most important thing in your home, in your

family, in your marriage, in your life. I believe we are to diligently pursue the dreams God gives us, but we must never allow that pursuit to eclipse Jesus at the center.

Fasting makes you hungry for what really matters in life. You realize that nothing else will satisfy. I want The Bread of Life more than anything else because everything else leaves me hungry. If that is not true in your life then it is time to fast and pray until that hunger arises. One of the biggest problems in the church today is that we are so full of everything that the world has to offer that we have nothing to offer a spiritually starving world.

PORTIONS EXCERPTED FROM *THE FASTING EDGE*,
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