

Meditation
“Jesus Is The Bread Of Life.”
John 6:24-35

There is a story about a man that goes into a diner every day for lunch. He always orders the same thing: the soup of the day. One day the manager asks him how he likes his meal. The man replies, *“It was good, but could you give me a little more bread? Two slices of bread is not enough.”* So the next day the manager tells the waitress to give him four slices of bread. *“How was your meal, sir?”* the manager asks. *“It was good, but could you give me a little more bread?”* comes the reply.

So the next day the manager tells the waitress to give him eight slices of bread. *“How was your meal today, sir?”* the manager asks. *“It was good, but could you give me a little more bread”* comes the reply.

So the next day the manager tells the waitress to give him a whole loaf, that’s 16 slices, with his soup. *“How was your meal today, sir?”* the manager asks him. *“It was good, but could you give me just a little more bread”* comes the reply once again.

The manager is now obsessed with seeing this customer satisfied with his meal, so he goes to the bakery and orders a six-foot-long loaf of bread. When the man comes in as usual the next day, the waitress and the manager cut the loaf in half, butter the entire the length of each half, and lay it out along the counter, right next to his bowl of soup.

The man sits down, and he devours both his bowl of soup and both halves of the six-foot-long loaf of bread.

The manager now thinks he will get the answer he is looking for, and when the man comes up to pay for his meal, the manager asks in the usual way: *“How was your meal TODAY, sir?”* The man replies, *“It was good as usual, but I see you are back to serving only two slices of bread!”*

Well, sometime this week you will make a trip to the grocery store to get a loaf of bread. It will be readily available on the shelf. There will be several kinds to choose from. For you, it will be a routine trip.

It is quite difficult for us as Americans, to understand the importance of bread unless we pay attention to what is happening in the world around us. For us, buying a loaf of bread is a simple thing. But for many others around the world, it really isn’t. Yes, we have our economic woes to contend with, but Kiel is still not Somalia or Darfur.

The Bible is loaded with language about bread. Bread is in fact, one of

the dominant themes throughout the Bible. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt because they ran out of bread in Israel, and therefore they had to move into the land of Pharaoh. At least there was plenty of bread of in Egypt! Then when slavery became unbearable, God sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt and into the promised land. When they became hungry along the way, how did God feed them? Bread from heaven -- manna.

When Jesus began His ministry, He went into the wilderness where He was tempted. He was hungry and the devil told Him: *“If you are the Son of God, then command these stones to be turned to bread.”* And Jesus answered the devil, saying: *“It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*

Then, when Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He taught them a prayer that contains these words: *“Give us this day our daily bread.”*

And, our Bible text for today comes on the tail end of the story about Jesus feeding the 5,000....when He multiplied the loaves and fishes.

And....in just a moment we are going to do together what we do every month here at St. Peter’s -- the same thing that millions of believers from all around the world do: We will remember the night that Jesus was gathered with His disciples in that upper room for the Last Supper; when Jesus took a loaf of bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to His disciples saying: *“Take and eat. This is my body, that is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”*

We already know that bread is important for our physical bodies. Most of us wouldn’t think of having sausage gravy without biscuits, or peanut butter and jelly without the bread to spread it on. There is no Egg McMuffin without the muffin, and most of us prefer to eat hamburgers and hotdogs in the appropriate bun.

But even more important is the bread that can feed our spiritual bodies, and that kind of bread is not the kind that is baked in an oven.

Jesus refers to Himself as the “Bread of Life” the Bread that came down from heaven. It is Jesus Christ whom we need to nourish our souls.

Physical bread has power, but in the end that power will fail. Bread can buy you land, but it can’t buy you love. It can buy you bonds, but not brotherhood. It can buy you gold, but not gladness. It can buy you silver, but not sincerity. Bread can buy hospitals, but not health. Karats, but not character. Houses, but not homes. It can buy real estate, but not righteousness. Hotels, but not heaven.

To satisfy your deepest hunger -- that hunger that you feel deep down in your soul -- you cannot eat the bread of earth. You must eat the bread of

God. That bread that is Jesus who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

Let us now prepare to partake of that food which does not perish. Let us place our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and let us come to His table. Jesus is the Bread of Life this day and forever.

AMEN.