

John 6:22-29

The next day the crowd that had stayed on the far shore saw that the disciples had taken the only boat, and they realized Jesus had not gone with them. ²³ Several boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the Lord had blessed the bread and the people had eaten. ²⁴ So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went across to Capernaum to look for him. ²⁵ They found him on the other side of the lake and asked, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

²⁶ Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. ²⁷ 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.”

²⁸ They replied, “We want to perform God’s works, too. What should we do?”

²⁹ Jesus told them, “This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.”

Background

The day after feeding the 5,000 and walking on water, Jesus spoke to the crowd in Capernaum in what’s called “The Bread of Life Discourse.” Here He went into the deeper meaning behind the miracle and later He declared in verse 35, “*I am the Bread of Life.*”

Many people had stayed overnight in the area, probably hoping to see more miracles. When they found Jesus in Capernaum, they were curious as to how He had gotten there. Instead of revealing that He had walked on water, Jesus addressed their true motivation. They weren’t seeking Him because of the signs, but because they had gotten free food! They missed the deeper meaning that the miracle showed His deity and that He is the Messiah.

Teaching Points

1. Man shall not live by bread alone.

This passage echoes Deuteronomy 8, which Jesus quoted to Satan during His temptation (Matthew 4:4, Luke 4:4). In John 6:27, Jesus tells the crowd not to labor for perishable food but for the food that provides eternal life, with the spiritual sustenance only He can give. Jesus isn’t saying don’t get a job or work for your food (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Rather, He’s urging us to prioritize spiritual nourishment over material gain. Too often we focus on earthly things while neglecting the lasting “food” of God’s Word which truly sustains us.

2. Only one work is necessary for salvation.

We don't get to Heaven by doing good works (Ephesians 2:8-9), but verse 29 says there's one necessary "work" for salvation: **faith**. When asked what work God requires, Jesus says it's to believe in Him whom God sent. This "work" is simply trusting Jesus as Savior. Have you done this work of faith, or are you still relying on your own efforts?

Application

1. Do we thank the Lord for our daily bread?

In verse 23, "The Feeding of the 5,000" is called "*The place where the Lord had blessed the bread...*" This highlights the importance of Jesus giving thanks before the miracle. Do we regularly thank God for our daily bread? Not just food, but all His daily provisions we often take for granted? We tend to appreciate blessings like our sight and hearing only when they start to fade. Let's follow Jesus' example and genuinely thank the Lord for our daily provisions.

2. Do we seek the Lord for the wrong reasons?

Jesus said the people sought Him mostly because they wanted their material needs met (John 6:26). We might think we wouldn't do that, but how many of our prayers focus on our own requests and desires? This may call us to rethink our prayer lives, prioritizing more worship and praise. As believers, are we seeking the Lord for the wrong reasons?