

Theme: Jesus – the Bread of Life

Object: Sign – Will Work for Food

Scripture: **SLIDE** “I am the bread of life.” “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.” (John 6:35 & 41 NASB)

I see them everyday as I drive to and from work. **SLIDE** People in ragged clothes standing on the on and off ramps of I40 and I25 and they are holding signs – signs like **SLIDE** “Will Work for Food.” Have you ever seen these people by the road holding signs asking for food and money? What do you think when you see them? I think are they really willing to work for food or are they just wanting a hand out. I wonder if I give them money – will they buy food or use it for something they shouldn't?

What do you think Jesus would want us to do? Should we buy them a hamburger? Jesus was always concerned about the physical needs of people. He spent a good deal of His time healing the sick, giving sight to the blind and feeding the hungry. Don't you think Jesus wants us to do the same? This is something you should talk to your dad and mom about.

Jesus was not just concerned about people empty stomachs – He was even more concerned about empty hearts. After Jesus fed the 5000 and filled their stomachs He told them **SLIDE** “I am the bread of life.” Jesus was telling them that if they believed in Him as God their hearts and souls would be filled spiritually and they would live forever. Spiritually they would not longer thirst and hunger, but they had to trust and believe in Him to live forever.

Jesus wants you and me to be concerned with people's empty stomachs and to help people with their needs – He also wants us to be concerned with people's empty hearts. Jesus wants us to tell people about Him and how He will fill their hearts with love, grace and mercy. We are to share bread with the hungry and we are to share Jesus who is the Bread of Life with people to fill their hearts and souls. You should ask your dad and mom how you could help do both.

Dear Father, we thank you for sending Jesus down from heaven for Jesus is the Bread of Life. When we trust in Jesus and believe in Him as our Lord and Savior we are spiritually fed and our souls will be filled and not hunger. We will live forever. Dear Father in heaven help us share the wonderful good news of Jesus with all the people we see. Amen



Slide Grumbling in Unbelief

There is a difference in response between the world and Christians when the doctrine of man's total depravity and the necessity for God's electing grace in salvation is preached. There will be those who resent what they hear. This was true at the time Christ walked this earth and it is true today. Jesus taught about the necessity for God's grace in salvation in John 6:35-40 and it was received by some and rejected by most, just as it is today when the gospel is preached. The teaching of election and grace by Jesus is immediately followed by protest and resentment by the religious leaders of Israel. Paul writes of their reaction to Jesus, look with me at the beginning of our study this morning - John 6, verse 41, "Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, 'I am the bread that came down out of heaven.'" The Jewish leaders are not buying any of what Jesus is teaching and their grumbling continues with "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?" Nothing had really changed – their ancestors or forefathers had grumbled against God. In the exodus God was in their midst as a cloud during the day and pillar of fire at night and yet, **Slide** "The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness." (Exodus 16:2 NASB) Also, remember how the Jews grumbled against God and complained about having to eat manna and wined about wanting meat in Numbers chapter 11. Grumbling is just a natural part of people's fallen nature. **Blank**

As Jesus is addressing their grumbling and it appears that He is now teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum as suggested by verse 59 and He restates His teaching from

verses 35 to 40 and the Jewish leaders are grumbling. **Slide** “Grumbling” or depending on your translation “murmuring” are unique words in that they sound like what they describe. Grumbling or murmuring is the confused sound that runs through a crowd when people are angry and in opposition to what there are hearing. This is exactly what the Jewish leaders and people in the synagogue were doing in response to Jesus’ teaching. **Slide** Grumbling against God is sin and it is a sin that all of us have done at some time, but as we grow in spiritual maturity we grumble against God less. God does not tell us we have to like everything that He inspired to be written in the Bible, but the scriptures tell us we are to accept it and live it. **Blank**

Now back to the Jewish leaders grumbling against Jesus. I find it interesting that their grumbling or criticism is against Christ’s person rather than His teachings. They did not say, that they opposed Jesus’ teachings based on conflicts with the scriptures and therefore they considered His teaching in error. Since Jesus’ teachings were completely consistent with the scriptures and His teaching, life and miracles were self-authenticating they could not oppose Him on these grounds. It was because they feared for their positions and their power that they were left with no choice but to attack Him personally. In essence they were saying, He cannot be the Messiah or even a prophet because we know His parents and He comes from Galilee and we know no one of any stature comes from there – it is a backwater province. Don’t listen to Him – His dad was a lowly carpenter, not a Pharisee or man of education. This shows the Jewish leaders pride, self-centeredness and their ignorance of the scriptures. Is it not the same today? Those who are against Christianity - attack everything but the validity of the Word of God or they distort the Word trying to grasp at straws to make a case where there is none. Look at all the other religions – you are not to question or challenge, but just accept. Only Christianity allows criticism because it stands up to the attacks - it is the only truth that never changes.

For Christians the Bible stands on its own merit. The only authority a preacher has and the only power and authority his preaching has is what is received from the Word of God – the only source of eternal truth. For prophecy to be valid, it must be in complete harmony with the Bible, which is truth and authority. We use commentaries to help understand language, culture and history, but they are not authoritative. The Book of Mormon has had over 4000 changes made to it since 1832 and it is still a mess, the Quran has had many changes and still has serious problems. Religions that have had to have volumes of books written to explain away the problems within their “holy” books is proof that they are both not holy or of God. The scriptures of the Bible have withstood the attacks of the world’s most brilliant and intellectual people over the millennium of time and have been proven over and over to be true and unchanging. Paul makes clear the state-of-mind of the unbelieving in his second letter to the Thessalonians explaining what will happen in the end times and I believe we are now living in the end times, Paul wrote, **Slide** “... one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,¹⁰ and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.¹¹ **Slide** For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 NASB) Does this not speak of what happened in the world at the time of Christ and is happening in the world this very day? Does this not speak of God’s election? Now that I have made my stance and understanding of the scriptures clear we can go back to Jesus and the grumbling Jews. **Blank**

Even though the leaders attacked Jesus personally, Jesus responds not by defending Himself personally, but instead Jesus returns to His teaching and restates it, for

obviously they did not get it the first time. Jesus now restates His teaching giving two proofs. He challenges those listening at the synagogue to investigate His teaching for themselves and to see if it is true. This is our approach today – challenge the scriptures and see if they are not true, an approach different from so many other religions. Jesus restates His teaching and His proofs and ends by stating His doctrine of election and grace for the final time. Let's examine these steps in Jesus' teaching.

In our study passage Jesus repeats what He had earlier said, but with even clearer and sharper language. Jesus had said in verse 36, **Slide** “you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.” The people had heard His teaching and seen His miracles that only God could do and yet, they did not believe. This fact of their unbelief is understandable because in verse 37 Jesus says, **Slide** “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me.” No one can come to Jesus if the God the Father has not called them, and by His act gives them to Christ. This is a positive statement, but now Jesus says it again in a stronger way from a negative position, **Slide** “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.” This statement by Jesus is clear and straightforward concerning the doctrine of election and it is a verse that those, who on humanistic grounds or self-centeredness, want to claim that the doctrine of election is not true and that people choose on their own volition to believe in Jesus. This verse was the battleground for Augustine and Pelagius, and Calvin and Arminius, and Luther and Erasmus, and it is a battleground in our time. It is our human nature to believe that God originates salvation and man cooperates in his own salvation. But this is not what the scriptures teach. Let me ask you what better “drawing” to God could there have been than Jesus personally teaching and performing miracles, yet most of the people did not come to Jesus, in fact they killed Him. Here is how Martin Luther said it, **Slide** “The ungodly does not ‘come’ even when he hears the

word, unless the Father draws and teaches him inwardly; which he does by shedding abroad his Spirit. When this happens, there follows a 'drawing' other than that which is outward; Christ is then displayed by the enlightening of the Spirit, and by it man is rapt (meaning to become enraptured and enthralled with Jesus to the point you MUST come to Him) to Christ with the sweetest rapture, he being passive while God speaks, teaches and draws, rather than seeking or running himself." In Luther's statement I just read to you he says God "draws" a person and Jesus in the scriptures says the Father "draws" a person. The Greek word used here is **Slide** (ἐλκύω) *helkyō* meaning to pull in, haul in or lead by force. Jesus and Luther are saying, man is passive, but he is perverse and obstinate – the drawing of men and women to Christ always implies resistance to the power of God who draws. This is seen in John chapter 21 where the same word is used to show how hard it was to draw in or haul in the net filled to the breaking point with fish and in Acts when Paul cast the demon out of the woman and her owners **Slide** "seized Paul and Silas and dragged (*helkyō*) them into the market place before the authorities." (Acts 16:19_{NASB}) In the same sense men and women resist God and it is because God is all-powerful that His drawing overcomes the resistance of people and He brings them to Christ. **Blank** There is not one example in the New Testament where this verb *helkyō* is used where the resistance is successful. Mankind resists and it is in this resisting that their depravity is seen, but God's power always overcomes the resistance – for He has determined that they will come to Christ before the foundation of the world. It is clear salvation comes by God's grace as defined in the doctrine of election.

At this juncture Jesus gives two points of evidence to support His teaching. Jesus quotes the Old Testament prophets and specifically the prophet Isaiah in verse 45, **Slide** "AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD." The truths Jesus was teaching were consistent with the scriptures, His teachings were powerful – He touched the hearts

and souls of people and combined with His miracles Jesus was doing what only God Himself could do. This verse is another battlefield of God's election and man's freewill. Some would argue that the word "ALL" applies to all mankind – that God illuminates all mankind and some choose to come to Christ and some choose to deny Christ by their own freewill. To examine if this could be true, we need to go back to Isaiah, whom Jesus is quoting. **Slide** "All your sons will be taught of the LORD." (Isaiah 54:13 NASB) In context of this last paragraph of Isaiah chapter 54 it is clear that Isaiah is talking about the children of God, His chosen people, Isaiah is not writing of all mankind. So, in the proper context we come to understand that a person must first be a child of God through the new birth before one can understand who Christ is and come to Him. Jesus continues and makes His point clearer by the history of the Old Testament and by the experience of the new covenant found in Him, the Messiah or Christ. Verse 45 continues with Jesus' second point, **Slide** "Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me." If you have spiritual wisdom from the Old Testament, and now the New, if you know who God is and have a relationship with God then it is because the Father has drawn you, given you new life and brought you to Jesus. As a missionary and as a preacher I have presented the Gospel of Christ to a number of people and some people are completely clueless and do not see the truth of the Gospel even though their circumstances would indicate that everything is favorable for them to receive the gospel. On the other hand, there are times when either I have done a poor job of presenting the gospel or the person would be the last person you would guess would be interested in the gospel and God does a work in their soul and they embrace and believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This demonstrates that election is completely by the grace of God. What we are called to be is obedient to the scriptures and Christ, and to share the gospel with the lost, but understand salvation it is all a work of God's grace when someone

believes. **Blank**

Finally, Jesus repeats His teaching about the necessity of God's grace in election for a final time saying, **Slide** "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life." I know that many great and learned theologians disagree with all I have taught this morning and argue that we freely choose Christ, but this would mean taking this passage of scripture and understanding it in a way that opposes the breathe of Jesus' teachings and the New Testament writings. This passage of scripture in truth is a summation of all that Jesus has been teaching in John chapter six and what is taught in the other gospel accounts concerning predestination or election. When we studied Ephesians it was made clear by Paul that unregenerate people are dead, they are spiritually dead because of their sin. For it is written in Ephesians, **Slide** "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:1-2 NASB) The following, in brief, is a quick overview of what the New Testament has to say about man's depraved and unregenerate condition; **Slide** man is dead in his sin (Eph. 2:1 and Col. 2:13), **Slide** alienated from God (Col. 1:13), **Slide** hostile to God (Rms. 5:10 and 8:7), **Slide** mankind is spiritually blind (2 Cor. 4:4), **Slide** captives of Satan (2 Tim. 2:26), **Slide** trapped in Satan's kingdom (Col. 1:13), **Slide** powerless to change their sinful nature (Jer. 13:23 and Rms. 5:6), **Slide** unable to please God (Rms. 8:8), and **Slide** incapable to understand spiritual truth (1 Cor. 2:14 and Jn. 14:17). How then can one argue that man is responsible for changing from sin and corruption to loving Jesus - it has to be an act of God's grace! The human will is involved in coming to Christ, since Jesus Himself said in the Gospel According to Mark, **Slide** "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15 NASB) However, this cannot happen until God has regenerated a person's soul and when

God regenerates a person's soul and thus making them spiritually alive the natural outcome is for the person is to seek and love Christ. Verse 37 makes it clear that the redeemed are **Slide** "All that the Father gives Me" and "All that the Father gives Me **Slide** will come to Me." So God the Father irresistibly and effectually draws people, overcoming their resistance, He has chosen them before the foundation of the world to give to Jesus Christ and only those He has chosen come to Christ. This process of God's election and salvation by His grace is made clear in Ephesians chapter one, **Slide** "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, **Slide** to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." (Ephesians 1:4-6 NASB) God the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the scriptures and they speak with authority about God and about God's plan for salvation of mankind because the Holy Spirit who inspired the writers is God and therefore they know God the Father because of the Holy Spirit. Likewise Jesus could speak with authority because He came from God to earth, He was both fully God and man and returned to heaven to be again with God the Father making the God of the Bible, the One God, but with three personalities. We work to understand this concept of One God with three personalities with the title and definition of the Triune God – called the Trinity. Jesus is the revelation of God to mankind and He is the "true bread" of heaven, He is the Bread of Eternal Life, Jesus is the great I AM. My beloved, you may feast upon Jesus, the Bread of Life, He is the living Word of God – through Jesus experience spiritual life and never die. If you do not know God – I say, listen – is He calling you – wait no longer – give yourself to Jesus and let Him bring you into communion with God. In closing I ask you to prepare your hearts, minds and souls to feed upon the Living Word of God – Jesus Christ. Lets take a moment to pray.