

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE | RED LETTER TALKS PART 2

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Traders Point, how are we doing? Hey, so good to be with you, everyone at the campuses, watching online—welcome.

Go ahead and grab your Bibles and get to John, chapter 6. That's where we are going to be today as we continue in our series Red Letter Talks.

And here's what this series is. Maybe you've noticed this in your Bible, most of the text is in black but there are a few chapters there that have red letters. What this signifies is that these aren't just words about Jesus, these are the very words of Jesus.

And so, in these weeks leading up to Easter, we just want to marinate in His words—get to know Him a little bit better as we prepare to celebrate like crazy this Easter. Am I right?

Yeah, we've got two. I'm sure at the campuses they are losing their minds.

No, but John, chapter 6. I'm excited to dive in, but we have some pre-work to do before we get to our text today. Okay? We have to make sense of a statement. It's the main text that Jesus is going to be getting to, but if we don't understand what it means, how big of a claim it is, we're going to miss what Jesus came to bring. Alright?

Here's the main text for today. It's John, chapter 6, verse 35 where Jesus says, "I am the bread of life."

Now, this is why context is crucial. When we read the Bible, the Bible was written for us, but it wasn't written to us. Right? There is an original audience that these words would have been penned to. They would have heard something different when they heard a phrase like, "I am the bread of life."

For us I am is just a phrase that we use all of the time. I am, for them though, meant one thing specifically. It was only used... It wasn't a phrase it was a name, and it was reserved for God. When you used this, you knew exactly who you were talking about. That's different.

For us, we have some names that have flooded the market. Right? When I say the name Michael who could I be talking about? I could be talking Michael Jordan, Mike Tyson, or Michael Jackson. I could be talking about our Plainfield campus pastor, Michael Johnson. You don't know when I say Michael who I am talking about.



But I am was more like Voldemort for those who know. It was only used for one person and no one else dared to use it. No one was naming their kids Voldemort like, "Hey, little Voldies over here." Some of you little weirdos are going to start naming your kids Voldemort.

But when Jesus said, "I am," they knew exactly what He was talking about. This was for one moment in their history where God spoke to a guy named Moses. Maybe you know the story.

Moses is going about his business one day and then he notices a bush that is on fire but it's not being consumed. Being the curious man that he is, he takes a step over, tries to figure out what's going on. And then the very voice of God begins to speak to him.

And God tells him that He is going to use him to go to Egypt and set His people free from Egyptian slavery. And Moses is... I mean, not very often does this happen. So, he seems like, "Okay, I should do this but before I do go, who do I tell them sent me? Because they are going to ask. Right? I'm just one guy showing up to rescue people from slavery. Who do I tell them sent me?"

And look at what God tells Moses:

"God replied to Moses, 'I Am Who I Am.'" (NLT)

Great, is that like a first last name situation?

"Say this to the people of Israel: I Am has sent me to you." (NLT)

Now, there is some mystery around this when God says, "I Am." What a lot of people agree on is that God is saying, "I Am the only one who is like Me. I Am eternal. I have always been, and I will always be. I Am all powerful. I have no rival. I have no equal. I Am with you and if I Am is with you it doesn't matter who stands against you. We are going to be victorious."

That is the same God that we serve today. Can we celebrate the great I Am?

So, there is a lot more happening than Jesus just saying, "I am the bread of life." He's being intentional. Let's break it down. The first part:

I Am.

Jesus said, "I Am God."

And then that second part he says:

"I am the bread of life."

"I am the bread of life."

So, what Jesus is doing here is actually speaking the first of seven I Am statements that He's going to make. And what He is doing throughout this gospel is He is saying, "I am God."

And who can know God unless God reveals Himself to us? So, He uses things that we know, that we come across every single day to help us understand who He is and the relationship He came to provide for us. When He says:

"I am the bread of life."

There is something here. He'll go on to say, "I am the Good Shepherd." "I am the light of the world." And each one tells us a little bit about who God is and what it means for us. That's what we're going to be diving into in chapter 6.

You all ready for this? Alright. We'll get there, I trust. We're going to start in John, chapter 6, starting in verse 5. It's story time. And it is a great story. It is a miraculous story. Look at this starting in verse 5:

"Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, 'Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?' He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do." (NLT)

Philip is trying to think through something, he replied:

"Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!' Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. 'There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?'" (NLT)

And Jesus says:

"Tell everyone to sit down'... So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, 'Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.'" (NLT)

This is a miracle. The best five for five you will ever see come across your table—five loaves to feed 5,000 with leftovers. And 5,000 was just the men. That is not accounting for the women and children. You are probably looking at closer to 15 to 20,000 people were fed with just a few loaves of bread.

This is enough for the people. They had seen they all they need to see, and they are ready to make Jesus their king. Jesus knows it and He runs. He dips out. Like they are talking among themselves, "Let's grab Him. Let's make Him our king. We'll force Him to be king." And Jesus was like, "I don't think so."

And He slips away into another miracle where just that night He's doing a little water walking.—just walking across the water to the other side of the shore. The crowd looks for Him everywhere. They finally find Him the next day chasing Him down. They are out of breath, and they are like, "Okay, man. We found You and we don't think You realize what we're trying to offer You. We're trying to make You king. But it seems like You are dodging us."

And He was like, "Yeah, I'm already the King of the universe. I don't need your self-appointed title. What do you think I came to bring?"

And this was the problem. They were settling. They were lowering the bar, not making it higher. They wanted Jesus for this one thing. He came to provide something so much more. Look at how He responds to the crowd:

"Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. 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.'" (NLT)

So, what's happening here is that the people have gotten lost in the sauce. They see the miracle and then somehow they've turned it around to making it about, "How can I get more of what I need?"

But the miracle wasn't about the bread. The miracle was a seed, it was a sign. See, a lot of times back then a king would write a letter and then roll it up and seal it closed. And when they passed long the message it was very clear, "Oh, this came from the king."

In the same way, Jesus is saying, "I did this miracle but not just to feed you for the day. I came to show you that I came from above. I came to show you that I am the great I Am, and I've come and wrapped Myself in flesh and bones to give you more than fish and bread. I've come to bring you eternal life. And this is just a sign that is pointing to greater things to come."

But they are getting lost. You see, sometimes, even if we go to the right place we can ask for the wrong thing.

I was thinking about this time that I was telling my buddy about a place that I grew up on. I'm from the west side, it's a staple, it's the pride of the west side. It is called Mug-n-Bun. Yes. Yes. It is delicious. Right? And you are like, "What is it? What is it?"

Everything you need to know about it, if you've never been, is in the title. Get something in a mug. Get something on a bun. Right? That is all that you need. Go and get a tenderloin sandwich, get a cheeseburger, get a hot dog, a chilly cheese dog—they are doing a lot with hot dogs. Newer things still to come.

And if you're really feeling frisky get some onion rings and a peanut butter milkshake. It's unbelievable. Now, don't get me wrong. You will love it in the moment. You will hate yourself later that day. But in the moment it is so good.

My buddy grew up on the east side. So, I'm telling him about this place. He has to try it out. He agrees—can't wait to catch up with him. The next week I see him and I'm excited to hear how Mug-n-Bun changed his life. I come up to him, but I notice he's not smiling. I'm like, "Did you not get a chance to go to Mug-n-Bun?" He's like, "I did. But I'll be honest. I didn't really care for it."

I almost passed out. I was disrespected, offended, and confused all at the same time. It's like, "How did you... Did you go to the right place?" There's only one. "What did you order?"

He didn't order anything in a mug. He didn't order anything on a bun. This man made it all of the way to Mug-n-Bun and with a straight face ordered shrimp tacos.

I said, "You were so close."

Listen. I grew up on Mug-n-Bun. My mom used to wash the shampoo out of my hair with an old Mug-n-Bun cup. I'm familiar with the menu. I had no idea that they even offered shrimp tacos.

He got there and he asked for the wrong thing. Why? Because he didn't know what Mug-n-Bun came to bring the world: mugs and buns. Mugs and buns, not shrimp tacos.

But that's where the crowd is in John, chapter 6. Jesus is trying to offer them eternal life. He's trying to offer them living bread, but they are like, "Can we just get a few more fish tacos?" And Jesus is like, "I've come to bring you so much more than that."

You see, sometimes I think that we believe this lie that God is trying to hold out on us, that God is trying to humble us or keep us from the things that we really want. But in reality, He's trying to give us more not less.

You see, as the crowds were coming to Jesus, He wanted to give them more. They were right there. They wanted to be fed physically. God wanted to feed them spiritually. They wanted to be fed for the day. God wanted to feed them eternally. They wanted to make Jesus king so that they could be free from Roman oppression. Jesus said, "No, I want to free you from sin and death all together."

Jesus came to offer so much more. And I think sometimes we settle for far less. We get all the way there and we ask for the wrong things.

And the crowd still doesn't get it. They are like, "Hey, can we get some more of this bread? What do we need to do?" Because then they start to realize, "I don't think He's going to come off with more of this bread and fish. So, if You're not going to do it, tell us how we can do it. What do we need to do so that we can get some of this bread?"

And look at Jesus' response. He's like, "You still don't get it."

"Jesus told them, 'This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent.'" (NLT)

You can't earn this kind of bread. But everything in their life, especially the relationship with God was all about, "What do I have to do? How do I earn it? How much do I have to sacrifice? What do I need to do? Just tell me."

And Jesus says, "There is nothing you can do to afford this bread that I am offering. You couldn't even afford the bread from yesterday. It was just regular bread. You have no idea what I'm going to pay to be able to offer you this bread. It's going to take My very life, My flesh, My bones, My blood will be broken for you."

They don't get it. They're still lost. They're still trying to understand exactly what it is that Jesus is trying to bring. I can tell you they don't understand how good a gift it is because they are not satisfied. They are like, "Okay. That sounds good. Just believe. But not so fast, we're going to need to see just a little bit more before we agree to believe in you Jesus." Look at their response. They are the worst, and we are the worst:

"They answered, 'Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, 'Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" (NLT)

They are like, "Hey. Yeah, yesterday was cool. It was great. I'm going to be honest with you. I loved it. But, at the same time, Moses fed his people for 40 years—manna—bread that literally fell from heaven." If you thought Uber Eats was great, you should have been back then. All they did was just walk out the house and the ground was covered in manna—bread. And they had just enough for the day, and it spoiled by the next.

So, they say, "Hey. Yesterday was great. But you're about 39 years 364 days short of what Moses did. We're going to need just to see a little bit more."

And isn't that our nature? We make these big prayers to God, "God, if You would just show up. If You would just get me through this season," "If you would get me through this night," "If you would allow me to pass this test," "I promise you I'm done with my old ways. I'm going to follow You whatever You say."

And how quickly we forget when we actually experience the miraculous, when God does save us, God does answer our prayers. We're like, "Okay. I didn't know You were serious. What about one more? What if You just give me one more." And we go on and on with this cycle.

And Jesus can see straight through it. He's not buying it—not for a second. And He actually corrects some of their theology about how it really went down with the manna from heaven. Look at this. Look at what He says in verse 32:

“Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth, Moses didn’t give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.’ ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘Give us that bread every day.’” (NLT)

“You have better bread? We’ve been telling stories for years and years about the bread that Moses gave us. You saying that You have better bread than that?”

And Jesus said, “That is exactly what I am saying. What I’m telling you is that Moses didn’t do it. It was My Father in heaven. He brought the bread down in the same way He brought Me down to be the bread of life.”

And they said, “Please, please just give us this bread. Give us this better bread.

And where Jesus leads them, how He answers this is exactly where we started today. Look at what Jesus says in verse 35:

“Jesus replied, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again.’” (NLT)

What a statement. To look at people who have only known hunger their whole lives and to say, “I have bread that I can offer you and if you eat it, you will never be hungry again.” Jesus is comparing and contrasting the bread of this world and the bread of life which He came to bring.

And He tells us a little bit about how they are different and how we should focus on one and not the other in verse 27. Did you catch it? Look at what He says in verse 27:

He says:

“But don’t be so concerned about perishable things like food.” (NLT)

He’s saying, “No, lift your eyes up. I came to bring better bread, living bread. Don’t get so concerned.” And it’s really in that phrase so concerned . We need to be a little bit concerned about bread. There are some basic needs that we need to be responsible for. I mean we just spent 21 days in The Lord’s Prayer, praying, “God, give us today our daily bread.”

But what Jesus is saying is, “Don’t be so concerned with perishable things. Don’t be so concerned with the things of this world. Don’t believe for a second that the perishable things will ever be able to satisfy your soul.”

That’s what John is talking about right here. And he talks about it in even more detail in 1 John, chapter 2, verse 16. Look at what he says. It says:

“For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure. A craving for everything we see. And pride and our achievements and possessions.” (NLT)

He says, "You're thinking that this is going to satisfy you. You think if I just gave you more bread tomorrow, you would be satisfied. The truth is you're going to be hungry again because all that this world offers is a craving, a desire." The Greek is *epithumia*. It is an over desire. It becomes, "This will be the thing." It becomes so ultimate that everything else gets pushed back, "If I could just have this. Then this craving will be gone with, and I can finally be satisfied."

Jesus says, "That's the problem. The world offers only a craving." Oh, I felt that. You know what I mean? You ever been there when you crave something? You can already taste it, even before it's ever in your mouth.

Some of you right now are trying to be locked in. You are trying to be focused on me but all you are doing is craving the leftovers from the other night. And the truth is you can't wait to get home. You're going to slip into your comfy clothes. You're going to go into the kitchen. You're going to open up that fridge. You're going to grab that beautiful little white box and you're going to get your chicken carbonara. You can already taste it. And you know it's going to be even better than the first time.

But, I have some bad news for you. You're going to go home today. You're going to be craving it all the way there. You're going to go home. You're going to slip into your comfy clothes. You're going to get to that fridge. You're going to open up that door but a little white box you will not see. Your roommate ate your chicken carbonara.

That's what he says it's like. It's to crave something, it's to taste it, to almost be there but then as soon as you get there it is gone, and it doesn't satisfy. It's that feeling to live with a constant craving that you can never satisfy. That's what Jesus said it's like to look for the world to satisfy your soul. You will be hungry again.

I know those hunger pains well. I grew up without Jesus. I grew up outside of the church. And I remember growing up hearing all of these messages of what I needed to do and how I needed to do them and if I did it just right I would be satisfied, but over and over again—hungry again.

I would get the thing, and it wouldn't satisfy—hungry again. I would do the thing that they said would bring me complete fulfillment and satisfaction. And I would get there—hungry again.

And then you almost learn to live with regret, this hangover of regret attached to the thing that you thought you wanted, getting the things you thought would satisfy you only to realize they took way more than they gave.

And Jesus is trying to make the point for all of us today that there is a reason that we never remain satisfied. There is a reason why we are hungry again. It's because we were made for more. This world cannot provide anything big enough or good enough to satisfy the appetite of your soul.

God is saying, "I am the One and only One who can satisfy you." But we spend our lives trying to satisfy a spiritual hunger with a physical feast because we can't tell the difference. We just know that we are hungry. We just know that we're starving. So, we just reach out and grab as much as we can thinking that this would be the thing that would satisfy us. We just have a signal of hunger.

That's true physically. When you get hungry you're not like, "Oh my gosh, I'm so starving. What do I need? I need thirty graham's of protein. I need some vegetables." No, you're just like, "I want to eat right now." This is why Taco Bell is still in existence. You are like, "I need something quick. I need something fast. I need something to deal with the hunger pangs that I'm experiencing right now." And that's when we begin to settle for lesser bread.

I'll tell you what I've seen in ministry over the last 11 years. I've seen people come to Jesus at rock bottom when they had nothing, and God met them right there and saved them. It's a beautiful thing. But I'll tell you what I'm seeing more and more of today. Don't hear me wrong. I'm not saying that the worst that the world has to offer can't satisfy you, I'm saying the best the world has can't satisfy you.

I meet with people all of the time who did the thing. They bought the bread. They went to school. They got the degree. They got the job. They made the money. They got the spouse. They have the house. They did it all and they are at the top of the mountain and they're still empty.

And I get the greatest job in the world to sit down with them and ask them, "Can I tell you about the bread of life? He and He alone is the only One who can satisfy."

To put it simply, we spend our lives getting full on the wrong things and we miss what Jesus came to bring.

Have you ever been to a restaurant and got full on the bread before your meal comes? I don't know if you've ever been to the garden of olives, or Olive Garden, however you say it. And you place your order, and you're excited for your order. But then they stop by like, "Oh, really quickly, as you wait, here's this basket of bread. Enjoy." Nine times out of ten you are full before your food gets there.

Or have you ever been to a Mexican restaurant and you sit down, and they just drop off baskets of chips? Guys, I don't know what you thought about those chips, but they are actually tortillas.

And there was this thing that went around a couple of weeks ago. They were talking about the math on this. One tortilla is four tortilla chips. So, if you're doing the math, I just ate 23 tortillas before my meal came. That's when we're saying, "I'm going to need a box." Right? Don't worry. My roommate will eat it later. We miss the meal. We miss why we came. We can't even enjoy it because we're already full.



And this is where context matters so much because our view of bread is very different than what an ancient Israelite would have thought about when they thought of bread. It's very different.

For them, bread wasn't just a part of the meal. It was the meal. Meat was scarce. This was their livelihood. This is what they woke up looking for. This is what they were depending upon.

We have a very different relationship when it comes to bread. Don't we? For a lot of us bread is the appetizer. Bread is what holds our sandwich together. Bread is on the side. Bread is what we use to sop up the rest of our meal that is still on the plate.

But for the Jew it was a metaphor for life itself. They thought about it every day. It was the first thing on top of their mind because they knew this was what was going to sustain them. This was what was going to keep them alive. This is what Jesus came to bring. When He talks about bread it is like that, not the way we view bread.

So, I just want to ask you in your life is Jesus the main course or just a side dish? Are you getting full on other things and then finally when you get to Jesus you give Him what you have but you don't really have an appetite for anything more because you've already given all of your energy and time to these lesser things.

Jesus wants to be the main dish. He wants to be the thing that you are dependent upon. Jesus wants to be the One who we live for, live on, and can't live without—that is the type of relationship. And that is why He used bread to say, "This is what it is going to be like between Me and you." He is the bread of life.

You don't have to hunger for Him. You don't have to earn it. All you have to do is believe. Believe and you get it. You get more than this world could ever offer you in 1,000 lifetimes. You get it in a moment. This is what Jesus came to bring. This is what He says in verse 47. Look at this:

"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes has eternal life." (NLT)

How refreshing is that? You have it. You don't have to crave it. You don't have to search for it. You don't have to give your life chasing after it and maybe one day you'll stumble into it. He says, "No, if you believe you have it." Done. Signed, sealed, delivered. He's yours.

This is what Jesus came to bring. It is a relationship built around belief, trust, and faith. Not in what you provide. Not in what you do. You couldn't afford it anyway. He says, "No. Let Me pay the cost. Let Me provide you with life. Let me satisfy your soul because I'm the only One who can."



And what He's going to do now is He is going to tie it all together here in verse 53. And it's going to be pretty extreme. I just want to say that before we read it. This is what it looks like to believe in Jesus. Okay? Take a look at this:

"So Jesus said again, 'I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you. But anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person at the last day.'" (NLT)

A lot here. This is why rumors got started during the early church that Christians were cannibals. Seriously. Imagine being neighbors with a Christian and you hear about them talking, reading their Bibles, like, "Yeah. Um. So today we're going to eat the flesh, and we are going to drink the blood." And the neighbors are like, "Call the moving company. We're selling the house. We're getting out of here. These people are nuts.

But, once again, this is a metaphor. Jesus is saying that so often in life we try to ingest, we try to take in so many things that we think will satisfy those hunger pangs and they all come up short for one reason. We were made for only one fuel source. There is only one bread that satisfies.

And as always C.S. Lewis says it beautifully—look at what he says.

God made us: invented us as a man invents a machine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human race to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food that our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other.

That is why it is no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us happiness and peace apart from Himself because it's not there. There is no such thing.

So, when Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." What He is saying is, "I am the food your spirits were designed to feed on."

And many of us are so close but we're asking for the wrong things. Many of us are so close and we believe but we never really digest it, we never trust in Him to be our sustenance.

We haven't taken Him in. We hold Him. We know Him. But He's still in the plastic. There is still a little bit of separation. You've memorized the ingredients. You know all the words, but you don't know His voice. He came to bring so much more.

Think about it like this. If I asked you, "Is this good bread?" You believe that this is good bread. You can look at the title and it says, "Private Selection, from Kroger. They usually make a good product." But do you know that this is good bread? If I told you this bread will satisfy your hunger, how would you know that that is true? Is it by reading more

about it and by knowing more about this bread? Is it by talking to other people about this bread?

No. There is only one way to know if this bread will satisfy. There is only one way that you can know that this is the bread that I was meant to live on. It's if we get it out of the wrapper,

We understand why Jesus came. He said, "I came that My body may be broken so that you can have eternal life. A full life. A flourishing life. Not just one day, but right now. A body, bread, that will truly satisfy those hunger pangs.

But the only way that you can know is if you taste and see. You have to digest Him. You have to take Him in. That's what it means to believe. [Ryan takes a bite of a loaf of bread that he is holding] That's good bread. (I tried to do better by taking a smaller bite. Usually, I get super excited and take a bigger bite.)

Jesus is saying, "This is the relationship I want with you. I want you to wake up and to trust that just like they looked for bread to be the thing that sustained them and got them through the day, I want to be that for you."

And it's the most loving thing that He can do because He knows that everything else has a shelf life. Everything that you've placed your focus on, your love on, everything that you believe in is just one more away. Every pleasure, every possession—it will eventually spoil. It may have an expiration date that is way out there, but eventually it will crumble.

Jesus is saying, "I am the bread of life. And I'm the One and only One who can satisfy those hunger pangs. This is who I am. This is what it means to be the bread of life."

Maybe you're asking, "How do I know that that is the bread I'm eating? How do I know that I'm not just settling for the world's bread? What does that look like?"

Well, Jesus gives us a hint back in verse 27. One more time take a look at this verse:

"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." (NLT)

You see, this bread is fuel it is fuel for seeking eternal life. When you eat it you only want to do one thing. Because when you eat it, you're comparing it and contrasting it to everything else. And you realize, "This is so much better than anything else. I finally found something that satisfies. All I want is more time with this bread. All I want to do is take in more of this bread. All I want to do is tell the world about this bread."

You know how we are with restaurants we like. Today I've told 10,000 people about Mug-n-Bun and how that gave me a good night—a good afternoon, the night wasn't so great. You know what I mean?

Like, we found the bread that is eternal life. We found the bread that doesn't just end our hunger pangs for today but for all of eternity. When you begin to taste and see how good this bread is, you spend your life telling other people about it, "You won't believe what I've found. Taste and see."

That's how you know that you're eating this bread. It's the only thing you want to talk about. It's the only thing you want to eat. And when you begin to eat, you begin to see how spoiled everything else is. You begin to see how quickly it is just destroyed right in front of you. That's what we get when we get to taste and to see how good the bread is.

And when you do this, here's one way that you'll begin to notice. Things are shifting in your life. The things that you once thought were ultimate, that you had an over desire for begin to grow strangely dim.

And those things used to get your first and your best, but now you are in this space where you are saying, "I just want to give Jesus my first and my best." That's when you know that you're eating the bread of life, when you give Jesus your first and your best.

Right now, something is getting your first and your best. There is something on your mind when you go to bed at night. There is something that is still there when you wake up. There is something that your life is built around, saying, "If I could just get that, then I think I can deal with this ache and this hole that is inside me." But in just a moment of clarity, if it was that easy, if it was possible even, don't you think you would have it by now?

Trust the words of Jesus when He says, "No, no. I am the only One who satisfies your soul. I am the only One who can fill that gap. I am the only One who can satisfy that ache." That is what Jesus came to be.

When Jesus is first, everything will be put back in its proper place. It's not that pleasure and possessions are bad, they just stop becoming ultimate. When you get Jesus at the top and He becomes the bread of life, and He becomes the main dish and my focus in life, then people, and possessions, and pleasure get put back in their rightful place.

But we have to put Jesus first. We have to give Him our best. That looks like giving Him the best parts of our day, not the leftovers. It looks like giving Him the first part of our check, not the leftovers. It looks like giving Him the best parts of our time not if it works out this week or if my weekend isn't too busy or depending on what the other things are doing.

He's saying, "No, no, no. I want you to treat Me like you can't live without Me because you can't." He allows us to do it. But there will come a day when it will show. God says there will come a day when everything else spoils and there is only one that remains, and it's God and His people.



The only way that you get to stay is if you believe in Jesus. And when you begin to see that truth, when you begin to see that your life is not about this moment but about eternity, everything gets put back in its place.

And something that the world needs to see is what we and we alone can bring to it, that we become generous with the world's most prized possession. Do you understand that?

This world goes so much into thinking that this is the thing that satisfies. And maybe you're experiencing that as well. You're just bringing the thing in closer and closer, holding it, "Maybe if I can get one more or one more."

That's why it is so hard for the world to be generous with money and time, "This is the thing. This is the thing that is going to bring me security. This is the thing that I'm just one away from."

But when we realize that Jesus is the bread of life, we have open hands because, "I don't want anything to stop me from being able to receive more and more of His bread."

So, we are able to be generous with our time. We are able to be generous with our money. We are able to be generous with our lives as we live as a living sacrifice to those around us.

Do you have that? That's true freedom. That's what comes on the other side of this bread. We think freedom comes from getting a little bit more, a little bit more of these possessions, a little bit more pleasure. But they just chain us down, more and more and more.

True freedom is being able to say, "I don't need it. It's a gift I enjoy. I appreciate it. But at the end of the day, it's not the thing that satisfies my soul. So, I'm willing to be generous with it if it means that it can go toward things in eternity. If it doesn't matter for eternity, then it just doesn't matter." And when that happens, we begin to change the way we think. We begin to make decisions that look a lot wiser.

Because, if we're just being honest, the reason that we are living the way that we are is because we're hungry. And you make decisions you wouldn't normally make when you are hungry. That's why Taco Bell exists.

It's easy to say no when you're already satisfied. It's easy to say no when you've already been fulfilled. It's easy to come to that place when you know you already have what the world could never give you. And that's when we begin to be laser focused on the life that God has for us. And we see that this is the only thing that can satisfy our soul.

That's where I want to bring us to in this place right now. I know that there are so many people at this campus, at all of our campuses, watching online and you are at this space, and you are saying, "I want that bread. I want to believe. I'm tired of being hungry and hungry again. What do I need to do?"



I just want to repeat the words of Jesus. All you have to do is believe. This is what the gospel points to. This is what the whole Bible points to. It is God and God alone who will satisfy.

And Jesus, the living bread, came down to offer a message, the gospel, these words and these words alone will be what satisfies you. When you realize what the great I Am did. God was generous with heaven's most prized possession.

This is the gospel. This is what you need to believe. God emptied heaven for you and me and this whole world. God sent His one and only Son to live the life we couldn't live. God sent His Son and Jesus went willingly to a cross where He died for me and you, nailing everything there that kept us from Him.

Jesus paid the penalty, the one that we couldn't afford, and He paid it with His life. So, when He says you can't afford it He means it. This only comes through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. What you need to believe is that Jesus is who He said He is.

When God said, "I Am," He meant it. And God did all of this to go to that cross to prove that He has power over life and death. Because He didn't remain dead. Our God rose three days later. That is what you are placing your faith in. It is a person and a relationship.

So, what I want to do right now at all of our campuses, is to just lead us in a time of prayer where you can make that prayer your own, where you can place your faith in Jesus and your soul can be satisfied. Right where you are, would you just bow your head and close your eyes? And follow this prayer with me.

Father, I believe. I believe that I am loved by the great I Am.

I believe God sent His one and only Son to save the world. I believe Jesus is His Son. I believe Jesus lived the perfect life and paid the penalty for my sin. I believe. I believe He died on the cross and rose three days later defeating sin and death once and for all. I believe in the name of Jesus. And the church said: Amen.

Can we celebrate everyone who prayed that prayer for the first time? That is a beautiful prayer and if you prayed that for the first time at any of our campuses, I just want to know... Don't leave here without talking to someone. At the end of our service we're going to have people at the front of the stage who would love to meet with you, celebrate you, and talk about what it looks like to live on the bread of life.

As we were thinking about this we were thinking about what better way is there than for people who are moving from death to life, who are finally experiencing the bread of life, than for their first meal to be communion.

So, at all of our campuses, would you stand to your feet as we take communion together. There are communion cups around the room. If you didn't grab one on the way



in just take a moment, grab one, especially if you had no plan to take it today. Take a moment, get you some communion.

This is the bread and the juice. Now, don't be weird. This is a metaphor once again. We don't really think this is Jesus' blood and body. I know where they make this. It's right down the street. Okay?

What it is is a symbol, it's a reminder, a time for us to commune with God and to remember that He and He alone can satisfy. It is His bread that satisfies. It is His body, His blood. So, as we take it I just want you to remember that.

We take the bread which represents Jesus' body that was broken on our behalf, and we remember. And we take the juice which represents the blood of Jesus which was poured out on our behalf, and we remember.

Right now, as we are standing, we're in this position of receiving, I just want to go to prayer. And I want to pray that things begin to shift, and we begin to live for one and one thing only, the bread of life. So, right where you are would you just open your hands in a posture to receive as I pray over all of us?

Father, we come to You. We thank You for the Good News. God, we thank You that You came down from heaven, You emptied heaven. You became the bread of life. You allowed Yourself to be broken. You allowed Your blood to be spilled. It was poured out for all of us so that we would never be hungry again.

God, we want to be close to You. We don't just want to know about You, we want to know You. We want to have a relationship with You. God, we don't want to just know Your word, we want to know Your voice. God, we want to make You first and best. We want to give You our first and our best.

God, I just pray that You would slow us down. I pray that You would allow us to see this world for what it is. That if we trust in it we will be hungry and hungry again. But, God, in the name of Jesus we can know what it means to be satisfied. And it is You and You alone.

God, I pray for our church. God, I pray that we live for the living bread. I pray that we live for eternal things. I pray that we live like the gospel is true. I pray that we bring this living bread to every single person and one by one the world will be relieved of its hunger pangs. That it would know and feel the weight of its soul and they will come to know the name of Jesus and Jesus alone.

God, it is in Your perfect and holy name. And the church said: Amen. Amen, one more time.

Hey, we love you. Enjoy the rest of your day. Live like this truth is true and we can't wait to see you back here next Sunday. Love you guys.

