

Sunday, August 11, 2024

Year B

Proper 14

John 6

Sermon Outline

Focus: God gives us Jesus as the Bread of Life and invites us to come and eat.

Function: Because Jesus is the Bread of Life given for us, let us come and eat in faith, and share this Bread in love.

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." In the name...

Word Count Goal: 1500 Max

1. Introduction

a. Good morning

- i. It's great to be back here with you all
- ii. For those who don't know me, my name is BJ Buracker, and I'm one of the priests at All Saints Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase
- iii. I think this is my third time with you, and given how kind and welcoming you've been in the past, I'm delighted to be here with you today

b. Especially as I get to talk to you about one of my favorite subjects today: FOOD!

c. I absolutely love food, and in my life, I've had some truly wonderful meals, haven't you?

- i. Maybe it was for Thanksgiving, Easter, a birthday, or Mother's Day Brunch
- ii. For me, one of the best meals I've ever had was on my Honeymoon
 1. My parents splurged to have my wife, Kimberly, and I stay at a fancy hotel in NC
 2. The accommodations were nice, but not worth the money
 3. I sleep just as well at a Marriot

4. The food, on the other, was worth every single penny
 5. The appetizer, a single crab ravioli, was the most delicious thing I've ever eaten
- d. But the food Jesus offers is even better than that!
 - i. The people here are following Jesus around because they want Him to feed the 5,000 again
 - ii. They're hungry and want more food: these are my people!
 - iii. Some even want Jesus to be like Moses and rain down manna from the sky
 - iv. But He tells them that He's doing either of those things
 - v. Instead, He's going to give them the Bread of Life
 - e. And this Bread is far better than anything these people or we could ever ask for or imagine
 - f. Why? Because this Bread...
 - i. Is prepared by God Himself
 - ii. Leads to Eternal Life
 - iii. And is Jesus Himself
2. First, the Bread is prepared by God
 - a. "No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me"
 - b. God is drawing people to Jesus
 - c. And inviting them to a heavenly meal that HE has prepared
 - i. As great as the crab ravioli was, my favorite memories over a meal are ALWAYS at someone's house
 - ii. Back in NC, I had friends with 4 kids who invited me over a handful of times
 1. The house was always a disaster; the table was covered in crayon markings; the kids were crazy; and the food certainly wasn't Michelin Star worthy
 2. But it was special and wonderful

3. Because the hosts, including their kids, were hospitable
 4. And because the food was made by their hands and with love
 5. It was an honor to be invited
- d. And that is what God does here
 - i. God the Father, the Creator and Sustainer of all Creation, the King of Heaven and Earth, has Himself prepared a perfect, Heavenly meal
 - ii. And you are invited
 - iii. Despite your sin, shortcomings, and mistakes, He invites you to come, sit, and dine at His table
 - iv. You know you're not worthy to be there, but out of His love and compassion, He sends you an invitation and saves you a seat anyway
 - v. That's what we call Amazing Grace, isn't it?
 - e. And that's why this meal is awesome
 - f. Because it's prepared by our gracious Heavenly Father
3. Then, second, this Bread leads to eternal life
 - a. "Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life." And "This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die."
 - b. The Manna in the desert is one of the greatest stories in the OT
 - i. The people of Israel, had recently been delivered out of slavery and miraculously saved from armies of Egypt by walking across the Red Sea on dry land
 - ii. But then they whine, grumble, and complain about their accommodations: it's too hot, and there's not enough of food
 - iii. I can relate to these people, can't you?
 - iv. But despite their ingratitude, God feeds them anyway!
 - v. He rains down Bread from Heaven that tasted like honey

- vi. The people didn't have to plant, plow, reap, harvest, bake, or cook
 - vii. They just had to eat what God had provided
 - viii. And yet, they all eventually died
 - c. But the Bread God offers today leads to eternal life
 - i. Although our bodies will one day pass away and be laid in the ground...
 - ii. Jesus tells us that everyone God invited to the Feast will be raised up on the last day
 - iii. Just as Jesus rose again from the grave, so too will we who eat of this Bread
 - d. My old pastor says he wants his tombstone to read, "Ken Cross, now enjoying the rest of his life"
 - i. That's beautiful, but it's not sentimental
 - ii. It's reality
 - iii. The grave is not the end, life with our resurrected Jesus is
 - iv. In His heavenly home where there is no more sin, pain, or sadness, but joy, hope, love, and peace forever and forevermore
 - e. And if we eat of this Bread through our faith in Christ, we are assured of that eternal life, and that too is awesome!
 - f. So, the Bread of Life is the best meal because it is prepared by God and leads to eternal life
4. But most of all, because this Bread is Jesus HIMSELF
- a. "The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."
 - b. Jesus doesn't offer them more bread and fish; manna; or even crab ravioli
 - c. He offers them something better: Himself
 - a. Kimberly and I have been married for almost 18 years
 - i. And there are LOTS of wonderful things I get from being married to her
 - 1. Great food

2. Five wonderful children
3. A Happy Home
4. And someone to play board games with
- ii. But do you know what the best part is? Getting Kimberly!
 1. I get her day in and day out
 2. She is mine, and I am hers
 3. Even if she hated games or couldn't cook, I'd still have her, and that's awesome
 4. All the stuff she does and provides is just icing on the cake
- b. Likewise, Jesus gives us grace, love, hope, peace, forgiveness, justice, healing, and even joy to those who know Him
 - i. But the best part of knowing Jesus is... Jesus Himself
 - ii. The Bread of Life, the Good Shepherd, and the Resurrected Lord is ours and we are His
 1. In His Incarnation, in His teaching and miracles, in His death and resurrection, in His Spirit, and in the Eucharist
 2. Jesus gives HIMSELF to us
 - iii. That is awesome in and of itself
 - iv. The grace, healing, and forgiveness are just icing on an already amazing cake
- d. In short, this meal is amazing because it is prepared by God, leads to eternal life, and Jesus Himself is the main course
- e. There really is nothing is better than that

5. What Do We Do?

- a. But what do we do?
- b. Simple: come, taste, and see that the Lord is good
- c. But all your faith in Jesus
 - i. Placing your trust, your desires, and your very life in His hands

- ii. Dedicating yourselves to Him and following wherever He leads you
- d. And then practically...
 - i. Start by doing what you're doing today: come, worship, and feed on Him here at this sacred altar, where Jesus gives Himself to you today
 - ii. And then, feed on Him in Scripture and Prayer
 - 1. Eat up who He is, what He does, and what He says in the Bible
 - 2. And listen to His voice as you lay your cares, concerns, and worries before Him in prayer
 - iii. Fast from all other lesser meals
 - 1. Fasting from pizza, chicken, chocolate, coffee, and even crab raviolis reminds us that we need Jesus far more than literal food
 - 2. And fasting from entertainment, devices, hobbies, sex, sports, shopping, and so on
 - 3. Frees up our minds and our schedules to come to His Table
 - iv. Then finally, share this meal with others
 - 1. By giving generously of your time, energy, and even money, specially to the poor, needy, and struggling in your community
 - 2. And by loving the people around you through acts of patience, kindness, hospitality, forgiveness, justice, and compassion
 - 3. So that they too might come and join the Feast

6. Conclusion

- a. My dear friends, Jesus is the Bread of Life, sent from God, who gives eternal life to the world
- b. Come, taste, and see that the Lord, this Bread, is good
- c. Grow in faith in Him and in love towards others
- d. Because there really is no better meal than this, and there are plenty of seats at the Table. Amen? Amen.