

Doctrine of Christ

I Am the Bread of Life

1. Different individuals have stated who they think Jesus is.
 - Demons. *Luke 4:41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.*
 - Pharisees. *Matthew 10:24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?*
 - Nicodemus. *John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*
 - Men. *Matthew 16:13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*
 - Peter. *Matthew 16:15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

2. More importantly is what Jesus called Himself.
 - Jesus is the Bread of Life. *John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*
 - Jesus is the Light of the World. *John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
 - Jesus is the Door. *John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.*
 - Jesus is the Good Shepherd. *John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*
 - Jesus is the Resurrection. *John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:*

- Jesus is the Way. *John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*
 - Jesus is the Vine. *John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.*
3. Each statement of Jesus reveals something of His own understanding.
 4. The context for the Bread of Life Discourse was the desire of the Jews to be given a sign by Jesus that He was authentic, that He was sent by God, and that a reason be provided as to why individuals should believe in Him.
 - *John 6:30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?*
 5. The Jews based their demand for a sign from Jesus on the historical fact that God gave to all the people of Israel a sign in the form of manna from heaven.
 6. Picking up on their historical appeal, Jesus interpreted the true meaning of that sign, and identified Himself with it.
 - *John 6:32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*
 7. Normally, in the Greek, when a person wanted to say, “I am”, they would say, “ego”, which is where the English word comes from. But the Greek language has another word, “eimi” which can be translated, “I am.” What is unique with Jesus is that He says, “Ego emi”, or, “I am the bread of life.”
 8. This form of speaking, “ego emi”, is very rare, but it can be found in the Septuagint. When the Greek translators of the Old Testament came to Exodus 3:14, they translated the response of God to Moses, “I AM THAT I AM” with “Ego eimi.”
 - *Exodus 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*

Exodus 3:14 καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Μωϋσῆν Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν· καὶ εἶπεν Οὕτως ἔρεῖς τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ Ὁ ὢν ἀπέσταλκέν με πρὸς ὑμᾶς.
 9. In the New Testament, Jesus took that unusual reference for Himself, thereby making Himself equal to God. Actually, in the Greek, Jesus said, “The bread of life, I am.”

10. The response of Jesus is significant, as the Lord made some critical points.

- It was the Father, not Moses, who gave the manna from heaven.
- The true manna from heaven, the most significant manna from heaven is not physical bread, but Himself, the Son of God, who can give eternal life to all who believe.
- Jesus saw Himself as coming, not from Judah, not from Bethlehem, but from heaven. *John 3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

Later, the church would declare the ascension of Christ, and thus His exaltation in heaven at the right hand of the Father. Jesus simply returned to the place from which He came.

11. The response of the Jews is recorded.

- *John 6:34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.*

12. When truth is spoken, and illuminated by God the Holy Spirit to a darkened heart, there is a positive reaction to the gospel. It is an exhilarating moment. The heart cries out for more. The heard cries out, "Lord, give us this bread."

13. As the Bread of Life Discourse continued, Jesus taught the Doctrine of Man's Inability to come to Christ on his own, and the Doctrine of Divine Election.

Special Note.

Simply stated, the Doctrine of Election teaches that, from the sea of humanity, before the foundation of the world, the Father gave certain individuals to Christ to become the heirs of His redemptive work and thus salvation. All that the Father has given to the Son will come to Him. There is a divine certainty.

- *John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. 36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. 37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Special Note.

Baptist history has traditionally embraced the Biblical teaching concerning man's total inability to save himself, and the need for God effectual and electing love to be manifested towards him.

The Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689. Chapter 3: Of God's Decree. Paragraph 7. The doctrine of the high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election; so shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.

The Baptist Faith and Message, June 14, 2000. Article 5: God's Purpose of Grace. Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

14. Picking up on the idea that Jesus said He came from heaven, the Jews began to murmur at Him, for they knew the Lord's father, Joseph, and his mother, Mary.

- *John 6:41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?*

15. Jesus immediately moved to silence the murmuring of the Jews by teaching the Doctrine of Election. There is a body of people whom the Father has given to the Son. These people will be drawn to Christ, they will be dragged to Christ, and will be raised up at the last day.

- *John 6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*
- *Isaiah 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

16. Jesus spoke of man's natural inability to come to Christ.

- *John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Special Note.

The word "except" means "unless" and refers to a necessary condition which must occur in order for something to take place. What must occur prior to a person coming to Christ is the drawing of the Father. As the leopard cannot change the spots on the skin, the natural man cannot come to Christ except the Father draws him.

The word for draw (ἐλκύω, helkuo, hel-koo'-o), to drag (literally or figuratively) means, "to compel." The Father does not "woe" the sinner, or try to entice him. The drawing of the Father is effective. When a person is drawn by the Father to Jesus, the person does come to

Christ, for the inner disposition of the person is changed by the Holy Spirit. Regeneration precedes salvation, so that upon gospel hearing the Bread of Life is desired.

- *John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. 47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

17. At the Last Supper, Jesus used similar language with His disciples.

- *Luke 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

18. When the Lord taught the Doctrine of Man's Inability to save himself, and the Doctrine of Divine Election, the Jews resisted, and murmured against Him. Many abandoned Jesus.

- *John 6:66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*