

SEEING IS BELIEVING - BREAD  
A SERMON BASED ON JOHN 6:25-51  
PREACHED AT CHIPPAWA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO  
SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2020  
10:00 a.m.

The density of seawater is about 1025 kg per cubic meter.

The density of pure ice is about 920 kg per cubic meter.

Thus ice is less dense than seawater.

This is the explanation of why ice floats.

This is why when ice breaks off of a glacier and lands in the ocean,  
we get icebergs.

Floating ice mountains.

The comparative densities of ice and seawater also explain

why only one tenth of an iceberg is above water.

90% of it is below the surface.

Here we find the meaning of our idiom 'the tip of the iceberg'.

What you see is what is the easily observed 10%.

But most of it, 90%, is unseen, below the surface.

We've titled this series, 'Seeing is Believing'.

There are parts of our faith,

that when you look, what you are seeing.

is just the tip of the iceberg.

There is so more underneath.

Today the 10% you can see, is bread.

What is it you are looking at?

A loaf of bread and some pieces of bread.

In today's Scripture lesson,

Jesus had just fed the 5000 on the north shore of the sea of Galilee.

He fed them bread.

Everyone had their fill and the crowd,

excited by this

saw their new Moses.

Moses brought manna from heaven

when the Israelites left the slavery of Egypt.

Jesus was bringing bread to Roman occupied Galilee.

Here was their,

he was their  
next meal ticket to freedom.

So they stayed in the bread line.

They stayed with Jesus.

They didn't want to miss the next shipment of bread.

They were the ones that you still see today,  
who crowd stadiums and football fields.

Waiting for the stage preacher to tell them,  
that their prosperity is coming,  
follow God and you will have your meal ticket,  
health, wealth and prosperity.

Jesus tried to have them see beyond the tip of the iceberg.

To see beyond the bread that had filled their stomachs.

Beyond a bread that will go stale.

Jesus took them under the surface.

Jesus took them deep.

John 6,

this chapter, you can think of it as

the 90% below the surface.

It is the deeper dive.

It's not that I bring you bread, Jesus said.

I am the bread.

It's not that I'm the one that brings you the manna in the wilderness.

I am the manna.

Jesus said, I am the bread of life

Whoever comes to me will never go hungry,

and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

I don't bring you bread.

I am the bread.

Jesus said, "Everyone who looks to the Son

and believes in him shall have eternal life

and I will raise them up on the last day."

The crowd were confused and upset.

First of all. It sounded like there wasn't going to be anymore bread  
to take home and eat.

Plus the stuff Jesus was saying about himself was odd.

There were probably quite a few in the crowd  
from his home town of Nazareth.

Um, we know his parents.

It's Jesus son of Joseph. He seemed like a regular kid.

Bread of life?

What is he going on about?

He came down from heaven?

He is the bread of heaven?

Does this mean we aren't getting more real bread?

Maybe Jesus thought they didn't understand.

They didn't understand life is about more than just bread and appetite.

So he tried to take them deeper.

“Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,

you have no life in you.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life,  
and I will raise them up at the last day.

For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me,  
and I in them.

Just as the living Father sent me

and I live because of the Father,

so the one who feeds on me will live

because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven.

Your ancestors ate manna and died,

but whoever feeds on this bread will live for ever.”

I am the bread of life.

The crowd was offended and upset.

It could be the cannibalistic tone of what Jesus said that offended them.

Eat my flesh, drink my blood,

But Jesus was pointing out a spiritual truth

by using the analogy of a biological truth.

If you want to live, our food, we eat things that are or were living.

If you eat meat or fish,

you are eating something that was was living.

if you eat seeds or eggs,

you are eating something that was growing toward a new life.

if you eat fruits or vegetables,

you are eating the flesh that feeds the seeds,

Ann Voskamp is an author who lives in southern Ontario.

Her husband is a farmer.

On a particularly difficult day,

when she thought everything was breaking down

and breaking apart,

and thought it would all break her,

this farmer shared with her, a farmer's wisdom.

“You know – everything all across this farm says the same thing,

you know that, right?”

He waits till I let him look me in the eye,  
let him look into me and all this fracturing.

“The seed breaks to give us the wheat.

The soil breaks to give us the crop.

The sky breaks to give us the rain.

The wheat breaks to give us the bread.

The bread breaks to give us the feast.”<sup>1</sup>

Jesus said, ‘I am the bread of life.’

Life is broken in order that we might live.

In fact it must, or we die.

What is true for the body is true for the soul.

Your soul needs to consume life to live.

Jesus said, I am the bread of life.

This is my body, broken for you.

I am the bread of heaven.

Feed on me, to live.

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<sup>1</sup> Ann Voskamp, *The Broken Way*



By implication, what this means,

is that everything else you are trying to feed your soul  
all the other stuff we try to cram into our lives  
in order to make us feel like we are living  
well, that's like trying to eat paper, or sand, or dirt,  
it can't bring you to life.

You have to receive Jesus, broken for you,

you have to take him in, let him digest,

let him move his spirit nutrition

into all the corners of your soul and being.

Jesus said whoever has the son has life.

It sounds like pure grace, pure love, pure gift, pure opportunity.

But the crowd grumbled.

Jesus asked them, 'Does this offend you?'

The crowd grumbled and then the vast majority of them left.

They stopped following Jesus.

Why?

Why the offence?

What line had been crossed?

What string had been pulled?

What button had been pushed?

Are you offended?

I am the bread of life.

Jesus said.

Does this offend you? Why?

What is it that is offensive in Jesus declaring himself the bread of life?

Are you offended that you weren't offered a tapas of faiths?

A little of this one, a little of that one,

take all the bits you like and leave the rest,

with the belief that you and you alone

are the best judge of what you should eat?

Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.'

Whoever eats this bread will live forever.

It offended the crowd. Why?

Does it sound like an insult to the bread you've tried to make yourself.

Does it diminish the ways you are trying to feed your life?

What about the ways you are choosing to feed yourself right now?

What about the bread you baked?

Is Jesus saying it isn't enough?

One of the differences between people

who are in church on a Sunday morning

and those who aren't,

is that the ones in church know they need a different kind of food.

They know that they are hungry.

They know that it's not just bread on the table.

That's just the tip of the iceberg.

They know that this is where to come for the bread of life,

for Jesus.

Or are at least exploring the possibility.

Jesus said,

I am the bread of life

The one who comes to me will never be hungry.

The one who believes in me will never be thirsty.

Whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

Jesus is the bread of life.

Only in him, will we be truly satisfied.

If you are searching, if you are restless, if you are hungry.

There is 90% more to the bread. It's 100% Jesus.

Seek Jesus.

Pursue Jesus.

Pray to Jesus.

Learn about Jesus.

Read Jesus' words.

Put your life in Jesus care.

Let Jesus lead.

Do the things Jesus says.

Let Jesus love you, forgive you, redeem you.

Let yourself love him.

It's more than just bread.

Feed on the other 90%.

This is the bread of life, broken for you.

It's 100% Jesus.

Feed on him, the bread of life.

And live.

Amen.