

A Lifetime Supply

John 6:22-59

Introduction

- One year for Christmas my wife gifted a friend with a year's supply of cheesecake
 - Each month a special delivery of cake would arrive at her doorstep
 - It was the gift that kept giving
- In this second week of Advent we are reminded not only of Jesus' birth, but of his death
 - Celebrating communion might seem unusual for Christmas, however remembering Jesus' last supper puts into perspective why Jesus came
 - Jesus was sent as a Special Delivery of God's grace on our behalf
 - Each month, like my wife's gift of cheesecake, we take time to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us on the cross
 - **Luke 2:19 (ESV), "But Mary treasured up all these things in her heart."**
 - Song, "Mary Did You Know"
 - As we ponder the story of Jesus' birth, we must also keep the cross in mind.
 - Without the cross, Jesus is just another baby; Just another teacher; Just another prophet
- Our message today is entitled: "A Lifetime Supply"
 - **John 6:22-59**
 - Jesus introduces himself as "The Bread of Life"
 - The backdrop of our passage is Jesus feeding the 5,000
 - Jesus had been teaching
 - Came time for dinner
 - Disciples were ready to send everyone home, but Jesus asks his disciples to feed the audience
 - They have no supplies and yet Jesus takes 5 loaves and 2 fish and provides a meal that abundantly feeds the audience of 5,000
 - While this is an amazing miracle, Jesus uses it to serve as an illustration of something much greater
 - **John 6:33-35a (ESV), "For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.'"**
 - There is so much for us to grasp in the Christmas story
 - If it seems overwhelming, it should be
 - In this sermon series: *Special Delivery* we want to focus on why Jesus was sent
 - Here in John 6, Jesus delivers to us yet another example of why he was sent: like bread that is a staple food necessary to sustain life; Jesus was sent to provide us a lifetime supply of grace to sustain us.
 - Two Questions

- What will you see this Christmas?
- What will others see in you?
- Suggestion/Point: *When Jesus becomes our Life Supply then what we see and what we reflect is the sustaining power of God in our lives.*

What Will You See This Christmas?

- **John 6:24 (ESV), “So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.”**
 - What will you see this Christmas?
 - People came from all over to see Jesus when he was born
 - Some came to worship
 - Others, like Herod were interested in getting rid of Jesus because rumor had spread that Jesus was the King of kings
 - Things that we look forward to during Christmas
 - Christmas Tree Lightings- NYC without crowds
 - Hallmark Movies or other channels who have the 25 Days of Christmas movies- our kids have wanted to watch a Christmas movie each evening as a family
 - Christmas is full of traditions
 - Maybe this year you aren’t looking forward to any of this, because you find it too difficult to celebrate
 - When the crowd finally located Jesus they asked him three questions
 - When did you come here? (vs. 25)
 - What must we be doing to do the works of God? (vs. 28)
 - What sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? (vs 30)
 - Jesus identifies a problem the crowd has as they seek him out.
 - **John 6:26 (ESV), “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.”**
 - Every miracle that Jesus preformed was intended for more than to meet the immediate need. The purpose was to give evidence that Jesus truly was the Son of God.
 - So instead of seeking Jesus for the miracles, if the crowds would seek Jesus because he is God- then everything would make sense.
 - Their real hunger would be satisfied.
 - Our world has a lot of needs this Christmas
 - A vaccine in hopes that it will be the miracle cure to COVID-19
 - Healing from social and political unrest
 - Financial stability and security
 - A sense of normalcy
 - In some way each of us has been touched by at least one of these needs
 - If Christmas can provide us anything, it should remind us that God specially delivered his Son into the world to offer peace, hope, love and joy

- These may not seem like tangible gifts to meet our immediate need, however they remind us that in God’s timing, God will provide- because that is who God is as we see through Jesus.
- So the crowd return to something they know and can relate to
 - John 6:30-31 (ESV), “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe in you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”
 - Something like the feeding of the 5,000 had occurred before when the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness (Exodus 16)
 - Enslaved in Egypt
 - Special Revelation- God acted on their behalf
 - Freed them slavery
 - There in the wilderness, without the provisions of Egypt, the Israelites became hungry
 - Each day God provided food that fell from heaven that satisfied their hunger.
 - Jesus is trying to get the crowd to see the bigger picture
 - the crowds didn’t need the food; they could have gone home to eat- the point was to see that God is the one who satisfies our true hunger in life.
 - John 6:33 (ESV), “For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”
 - There is no doubt that we are all experiencing and have been exposed to the unrest in our world. While we may focus on these issues, the real issue that all of these problems have something in common: human depravity
 - Illness
 - Racism/Hate
 - Insecurity
 - Sin
 - Human depravity is not related to not having enough- most of us have plenty of things and options, but we lack what is most important- the Bread of Life
 - What will we see this Christmas?
 - Jesus challenges the crowds to come and believe
 - Will you see the bigger picture of why God sent his Son?
 - Will you believe and fill your hunger with the Bread from Heaven?
 - John 6:34, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

Jesus, the Great I AM-Special Revelation in God’s Timing

- The Big Reveal
 - Home-Remodeling shows
 - Love the creativity and the idea of something new

- As the viewer, you get to watch the process unfold, while the homeowners are usually sent off until the project is complete
- Toward the end of the show there is this moment of suspense
 - What will the final product look like?
 - How will the homeowners react?
- I've never seen a show where the homeowners complained, or were not satisfied
 - In fact, if they did it would kind of spoil the show
 - As a viewer it would feel kind of awkward-like you got in the middle of something you didn't intend to
- **John 6:35-36 (ESV), "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger; and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe."**
- So imagine the crowds
 - They have witnessed this great miracle by Jesus
 - They come seeking Jesus because of what they have seen him do
 - Then, as Jesus reveals who He is- it's as if they are let down or disappointed
- What did they see when they looked at Jesus?
 - **John 6:41-42 (ESV), "So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They said, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"**
 - I'm sure to some degree it was difficult to think of the Son of God, being both human and divine- but this is the beautiful part of God's Redemptive Plan!
 - As it is revealed to the crowds, the Jews grumble
- What will you see this Christmas?
 - Will we look around at all the struggles and hardships and grumble?
 - Will we get lost in filling our desires?
 - OR, will we see God's Special Delivery?
- **John 6:35a (ESV), "I am the bread of life."**
 - Significant revelation- Special Revelation- Special Delivery
 - To appreciate what Jesus says, we need to go back to Exodus
 - **Exodus 3:13-14 (ESV), "Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?' And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.'" And he said to him, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"**
 - I AM is a powerful statement
 - God would reveal himself through the way in which he would deliver the Israelites out of Egypt, but what does that have to do with what Jesus says in John 6?
 - God's Revelation of himself through Jesus: "I AM the Bread of Life"
 - This is the first of 7 "I AM" statements made in John's Gospel

- I am the light of the world
- I am the door of the sheep
- I am the good shepherd
- I am the resurrection and the life
- I am the way, the truth, and the life
- I am the true vine
- These are all powerful statements that reveal to us just who Jesus is- He is God, the one who spoke to Moses and spoke to the crowds and now speaks to us
- What will we see this Christmas?
 - Jesus was sent by God at the appointed time to reveal God's sustaining power for our lives (as the Bread of Life) which is our Salvation.
 - If we walk away from Christmas with anything less than awe and wonder and gratitude for what God has done- then we have missed what Christmas is all about!

What Will Others See In You?

- The Jews Grumbled
 - John 6:41-44 (ESV), "So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." [42] They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" [43] Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. [44] No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.
 - John 6:52-53 (ESV), "The Jews disputed among themselves saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.'"
 - Despite witnessing this incredible miracle, the Jews still grumbled over who Jesus said he was. It's like showing up for the big reveal and being disappointed!
 - Jesus had already pointed out that they were seeking Jesus for the wrong reasons and in the end it showed- Jesus just didn't meet their expectations.
- What we see this Christmas will be what others see in us.
 - John 1:14 (ESV), "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."
 - If we can really see who Jesus is this Christmas- God's Special Delivery of himself, come to dwell among us so that we can experience the gifts of peace, hope, love and joy- what a difference it would make!
 - When we can see Jesus not just as a baby lying in a manger, but we can see Jesus on the cross- then we can begin to grasp the depth of God's love and grace which is where our hope and peace come from.

- When we come to this table to partake in *remembering* the Last Supper- the elements remind us not only of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, but that we need to remain hungry for His truth.
- When Jesus becomes our life supply then what we see and what we reflect is the sustaining power of God in our lives!

Conclusion

- I began this message with telling you about my wife gifting a friend a year's supply of cheesecake
 - Each month, a cake would be delivered to her friend's doorstep
 - A reminder of a gift that kept giving
- Revelation 3:20 (ESV), "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."
 - What will you see this Christmas?
 - What will others see in you?
- When Jesus becomes our life supply then what we see and what we reflect is the sustaining power of God in our lives.
- Pray!