

Weaving the Word

The Bread of Life

September 8, 2019

Welcome to where we're learning to invest ourselves in Christ!

How much of your faith is grounded in God's Word?



And how much is based on preachers, teachers, friends, and family?

We won't feel connected till we're directly invested.

Instead of thinking, "I need to figure out for *myself* what Jesus Christ has done for *me*," believers tend to think: "Jesus did it; and I trust the guy who told me about it."



Do not put your **[blind]** trust in *princes*, **[let alone]** in *mortal men*, who cannot save **[by their own power]**. – Psalm 146:3 NIV

It's expected that our faith will *begin* with blind trust – it's a *leap* of faith, after all - but that's just the beginning of our journey.

[Jesus said] If you *continue* in My word, then you are *truly disciples* of Mine; and you will know the truth ... – John 8:31b-32a NAS

[So, Paul urges us to] ... continue to **work out** **[not "work for"]** your salvation with **fear** **[as an electrician has for high voltage]** and **trembling**, **[“Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry”, (Ps 2:11) “Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at His word” (Is 66:5)]** for it is God who **works in you** **[as you work it out]** to *will* and to *act* according to his good purpose. **[It's how He causes us to know and grow]** – Philippians 2:12b-13 NIV

For by one sacrifice he **has made perfect** forever those who are **being made holy**. **[By continuing to work it out with fear and trembling]** – Hebrews 10:14 NIV



Jesus breaks bread for 5,000 men with a little boy's Lunchable. Five wafers. Two sardines. We picture *that*. We should picture *this*.



After this *incredible*, breaking-bread miracle, the crowd licks its chops and things turn dark. This mob suddenly sees Jesus as a free lunch.



Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, **[lit. seize by seizing; take by taking; grab by grabbing]** withdrew again to a mountain **[You see, He only reigns on His throne, not our terms. And He]** made his disciples get into the boat and **[head toward Capernaum, but actually]** go on ahead of him **[to Gennesaret]**. – Mk 6:45; Jn 6:15 NIV



Just before dawn, He “ghosts” the mob of grabbers, and ghost-walks on the water, out to the boys. Peter asks to join Him on the sea, and quickly realizes he’s out of his depth.¹

[Now, it's] The next day [early in the morning; and] When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. [It'd be like the Beatles unexpectedly landing at Skagit Airport; the stunned folks on the tarmac would be like, “You’re the Beatles.” They’d look around. No crowd. Just them AND THEM! John, Phil, James, and Rock’o!] And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to *all* the surrounding country. [Which would’ve included the city of Tiberias. Now, just the night before] the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake [plotting to seize Jesus, had] realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. [So, “Ah-ha!” They wake up thinking He’s sleeping on the hillside. But] Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. [On the hillside where He seems to be sleeping in a bit late. Well] Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. [But, this isn’t the kind of seeking He’s seeking. “He was gesturing toward Capernaum and Bethsaida.” It says He directed them. It’s to fool the mob. They would’ve got suspicious if yelled it: “GO BY YOURSELVES THAT WAY; I’M STAYING HERE ALL ALONE!”] [Back at Gennesaret, as Jesus and the boys make a five mile trek to their base of operations in Capernaum] They ran throughout that whole region [to fetch their dying, diseased, and injured family members and friends] and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was [And, word travels fast as the Word makes His way]. And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside— People brought all their sick to him and they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let the sick just touch even the edge of his cloak [which is unique to this situation because He is passing through. Normally Jesus teaches, touches, and heals in one location. And, word seems to have spread about the woman who was healed when she snuck up and touched the fringe of His garment; and He felt the power go out of Him], and all who touched him were healed. [“Power went out. Power went out. Power went out.”]

You will seek Me and find Me, when you search [enquire; investigate] for Me with all your heart. [And until you will, you won’t] – Jeremiah 29:13 NKJ

And Jesus clarifies the all-your-heart requirement even further.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ – Mark 12:30 NIV

Is that humanly possible?! Yes. How? What’s that even look like?

¹ Today’s story weaves together Matthew 14:34-36, Mark 6:53-56, and John 6:21-35 NIV



Ever see kids enamored with a video game? Captivated. Consumed. And having the time of their life? Their one singular, driving, desire: to advance and conquer. It looks like *that*. Or, any other passionate obsession of life. “But, that’s *totally different!* Those are ... *fun*. And exciting. Exhilarating. Rewarding. Relational. Relaxing. And, fulfilling.” Yep.

That’s a very clear picture of someone loving something with all their **heart (devotion)**, **soul (emotions)**, **mind (thoughts)**, and **strength (time, talent, treasure, and tenacity)**. So, how’s your heart, soul, mind, and strength rate with *the Lord*? “*But, I don’t need to shore up my faith. I’m not a skeptic.*” True. You’re a disobedient child. 1) **That’s not your decision to make.** 2) Yes you do; because, **you don’t know what you don’t know.** 3) **There’s a lot you’re currently completely wrong about.** And 4) **You don’t get credit for accidentally believing the truth.**

For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. – Hebrews 5:12-13 NKJ

Do not be children in *understanding* ... be *mature*. – 1 Corinthians 14:20 NKJ

Believing without working out your own faith is powerless. Whatever trial, hurdle, test, or disaster you’re facing; **the truest, deepest, answer lies in knowing God’s Word for yourself.**

When they [the mob] found him on the other side of the lake, [*“teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum” (Jn 6:59)*] they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” [Translation: *“How did you get away; and, why did you leave us?”*] Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, [not in the Scriptural sense] not because you saw miraculous signs [pointing you to seek something hidden] but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. [You received the miracle and totally missed the message. **Learn the difference between the gift and the Giver!** You’re putting your efforts into settling for something woefully, dimly, insufficient. When it comes to the Lord] Do not work for food that spoils, [set your sights higher than just what you’ll eat or drink or wear; it’s okay to ask for daily bread – but, come on; no less and no more. **Time’s a wasting, and you’ve been given a mission, an assignment, a treasure to seek! So don’t waste your prayers on the temporary**] but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” [Well, at least they’re asking the *right* question] Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” [Also known as: working out your faith with fear and trembling. *“Faith apart from (these) works (of God) is dead” (James 2:26)*] So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? [*“You mean besides that Book I wrote?”*] Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.” [Goodness. They’re *so grabby*. **They’re right back to “telling” for help instead of asking.** “I can’t give it – only offer it. **You must come to Me, on My terms, and believe it and seek it to receive it**] Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

[So, “do not put your blind trust in mortal men”; instead] Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him! – Psalm 34:8 NKJ

[Hebrews talks about those who] ... have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God ... – Hebrews 6:4-6 NKJ

As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. – 1 Peter 2:2-3 NKJ

For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food. – Job 34:3 NKJ

How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey [Manna tasted like honey-bread] – Psalm 119:103 NKJ

Come, everyone who thirsts, come ... come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; – Isaiah 55:1-3 ESV

“I will sate the soul ... and My people shall be satisfied with My goodness,” says the Lord. – Jeremiah 31:14 NKJ

What kind of “rich food” are we talking about, here? *Well ...*

God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. – Ephesians 2:4-7 NKJ

... till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine ... [but] may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Ephesians 4:11-15 NKJ

And, trust me; we’re nowhere near the fullness of the measure. I only say, “trust me,” because the more I continue to load His Word into my heart, the more I see the assumptions I’ve made. And, we all know what assume does; but, how about its *opposite*?

But a stupid person will get understanding, when a wild ass is born human. [So, stop assuming and start seeking; because] If you direct your heart rightly, you will stretch out your hands toward him. – Job 11:12-13 NRS

How much have you invested in the Lord?

How much of God’s Word do you think you’ve yet to work out? **Those who invest, investigate.**

He who has ears to hear ... let him eat!