

Word One Bible Study

The Bread of Life

by Kevin Bueltmann

Text: John 6:35-51 for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

OBJECTIVE

Participants will discover that Jesus is the One they need for this life and eternal life.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Before anyone comes into the room have some freshly baked rolls or bread in the room or baking in a nearby room to be eaten later. It would also be nice to find someone who bakes bread from scratch or someone who has a bread maker to demonstrate the process of baking bread to the group.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

1. Have everyone think of their favorite food and then incorporate their first name and that food into the name of a make-believe restaurant (e.g. Garfield's Lasagna Cafe). Have everyone share. You might want to exclude some popular choices (like pizza) to encourage more creativity and variety.
2. Have everyone think of ten things they could not live without. Have a few share their list.
3. Tell everyone to cross five things off their list. Ask a few to share some of the things they crossed off and why.
4. Finally, tell everyone to cross off four more items and have everyone share the one thing left they could not live without. Have the participants discuss their choice and why they chose what they did.

LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

Have volunteers read the entire section (John 6:35-51) to get an overview of the story. Then re-read each verse prior to reading the corresponding question.

1. Verse 41. Why do you suppose the Jews were hostile toward Jesus?
2. Verse 42. Have you ever had anyone judge you based on what they know about your brother, sister or parent? How does that make you feel?
3. Verses 43-44. Who remembers Luther's words from confirmation class that apply to this verse? Encourage the class to say the explanation of the third article of the creed together. Discuss the meaning. Focus on the beginning and ending reprinted here. "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord or come to Him/ but the Holy Ghost has called me by the gospel,... and will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true."
4. Verses 45-47. What is the promised result in verses 44, 47, 51 and 54 of being "drawn" by the Father, believing, "eating of this bread" and His "flesh and blood?" Underline those promises in each verse.
5. Verses 48-51. In many cultures, bread is a common staple; a food eaten with most meals. We often talk about feeding prisoners "bread and water." In the Bible, bread is often used figuratively to mean food in general. Remembering that Jesus often used earthly things to convey a spiritual message. Why do you suppose Jesus compares Himself to bread? (Bread and water are enough to sustain a person's life. Jesus is the sustenance of our spiritual lives. Jesus gives up his flesh at Calvary for the life of the world. Jesus is the source of eternal life.)

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

1. Have each person share one of the following with the group:
 - a. Something new I learned in this lesson was ...
 - b. Something I re-learned in this lesson was ...
2. Then have them share one of the following:
 - a. As a result of this study I will. . .
 - b. One way I can respond in thankfulness to God for giving His life for my eternal life is...
 - c. Someone I want to share the gospel with is...

CLOSING

Pass out the warm rolls or bread that they have been smelling and their mouths have been watering for the whole lime. You may want to serve them plain or with a little butter so they can really taste the bread. After their mouths are free, close with the song "I am the Bread of Life" and a prayer, thanking God for providing eternal life for us. (This song is by S. Suzanne Toolan and is found in *Lift Up Your Hearts*, a songbook published by Concordia Publishing House.)

Originally published in Discovery Bible Studies 19, 1996.

Updated for youthESource in August 2015

youthESource is published on the Web by the LCMS Office of National Mission—Youth Ministry, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; 1-800-248-1930; www.youthesource.com. Editor: Sherrah Holobaugh Behrens. VOL. 12 NO. 8. August 2015.