

DIFFERENT KINDS OF BREAD (JN 6:24-35)

Sermon by the Rev. Corinne Hodges, Sun., Aug. 2, 2009, SJOC

- I. VBS Exodus story
 - A. Relay race—pack bags w/ things they need: clothing, food. Bread—artificial piece of Wonder Bread (white with crust, bread as we know it, yet probably not at all like bread Israelites packed
 - B. Passover scene—unleavened bread when people had to leave quickly; bread did not have time to rise—Matzo, what Jewish people still eat today at Passover meal. Watched faces of children as sampled—not kind of bread used to. One girl, “Not bad, but would be better with peanut butter & salt.”
- II. Bread—All diff types in this world, see as we look at Bible readings today:
 - A. OT scene: Israelites freed from Egypt, in wilderness, complaining to Moses & Aaron—rather die comfortably in bondage, than from starvation in desert. Thirsty, hungry, tired and grumble. Things get tough freedom, even slavery looks good
 1. Mysterious bread: Manna “Man-hu? “What is it?” Comes from heaven, found in fields, flaky, fine as frost, can be baked or boiled, white like coriander seed & tastes like wafers made w/ honey. Receive a.m. & must be eaten before next day, otherwise worms & foul. Natural substance still found in small amounts on Sinai peninsula
 2. Actual tangible, edible bread as we know it, yet in form & taste, like nothing we’ve seen; purpose is nourishment & essential to Israelites survival
 - B. NT scene: after feeding of 5,000 few loaves, Jesus talks about new kind of bread—food endures for eternal life, given by Son of Man, true bread, bread of God, gives life to world, people want it desperately
 - C. Man-hu? What is it? Not bread in the literal sense, kind we can bake, varieties. Most sustaining, wonderful bread we can find: Jesus. “I am the bread of life.” True bread of God, comes from heaven, gives life to world. How can we understand Jesus as bread--simple, everyday staple
- III. HE--In NT, JN, bread metaphor for HE
 - A. Eucharistic bread—bread of body of Christ, broken for us, feed on in our hearts by faith w/ thanksgiving—rest of JN 6
 1. When we come to him and believe in him, never be hungry or thirst. For JN, Eucharist is more than a memorial meal. Meal of J’s presence that when consumed offers us new life
 2. Bread of New Covenant—similar to bread of OT: provided by God, necessary for survival, mysterious. Yet NT bread (Christ) does not disappear, get old or stale, is always fresh, gives energy, hope, sustenance, renewal
 3. Couple months ago @ Eucharist, distributing broken pieces homemade wheat bread, child asked, “Do you have any white?” Surprised me, took literally, “No, we only have wheat.” After service, child may have wanted host—a diff. kind of nourishment than what I was thinking—Jesus as bread—feeds diff kind of hunger, spir.
- IV. Of all sorts of bread in world, which do you need most right now? Do you crave the living bread of God? In our daily life & work, may we feed on Christ & from him gather strength for the journey. Let us trust in God’s everlasting bread of life, taste it & see, savor it & know that it is very good indeed.