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A MONERGISM BIBLE STUDY

MEDITATIONS
ON JOHN 6

A DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARY

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Meditations on John 6:

A Devotional Commentary

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Background and Context

The Gospel According to John, a deeply spiritual and profoundly theological work, provides a unique perspective on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Chapter six, a pivotal passage within the Gospel, is replete with profound implications for the believer's understanding of Christ's person and work.

The immediate historical context of the events described in John 6 takes place during Jesus' earthly ministry in the first century AD, around 27-30 AD. The Gospel of John, written by the Apostle John, presents a chronological account of Jesus' public ministry, miracles, and teachings, leading up to His crucifixion and resurrection.

John 6 unfolds in the region of Galilee, where Jesus had been traveling and teaching. The chapter begins with the miraculous feeding of the 5,000, an event that demonstrates Jesus' divine power and compassion for the people. This miracle takes place near the time of the Jewish Passover, which is mentioned in John 6:4. The Passover was an annual celebration commemorating the Israelites' liberation from Egyptian slavery and the sparing of their firstborn sons during the tenth plague (Exodus 12). This historical context is significant because the themes of deliverance, provision, and God's care for His people are intricately woven throughout John 6.

Following the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus retreats to a mountainside to pray while His disciples travel by boat across the Sea of Galilee. Later that night, Jesus walks on water and meets His disciples in the midst of a storm, further demonstrating His divine authority and control over nature.

The discourse on the Bread of Life, which takes up the latter part of John 6, occurs the day after the miraculous feeding. The crowd, having witnessed the miracle, seeks Jesus out, hoping for more signs and miracles. In response to their questions and demands, Jesus delivers His profound teaching on the Bread of Life, in which He identifies Himself as the source of eternal spiritual nourishment and emphasizes the role of faith and divine grace in the salvation process.

The literary context of John's Gospel is characterized by its unique structure, thematic emphasis, and recurring motifs. While the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) share significant commonalities in content and structure, John diverges considerably, focusing on Jesus' ministry in and around Jerusalem and highlighting His extended discourses rather than His parabolic teachings. John 6, situated at the heart of the Gospel, comprises a series of interconnected narratives and discourses that build upon one another, including the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus walking on water, and the Bread of Life discourse. These episodes serve to underscore John's overarching emphasis on Jesus as the divine Logos, the source of eternal life and spiritual sustenance.

The events in John 6 have several connections to Jewish history and events that take place in the Old Testament, including typological parallels:

1. Feeding of the five thousand: This miracle, in which Jesus feeds a multitude with only five loaves and two fish, has strong ties to the Old Testament story of God providing manna to the Israelites during their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness (Exodus 16). Both events demonstrate God's miraculous provision for His people and His care for their physical needs. The manna in the wilderness can be seen as a type or foreshadowing of Jesus, who identifies Himself as the true bread from heaven in the Bread of Life discourse.

2. Jesus walking on water: While not a direct typological connection, this event can be seen as a demonstration of Jesus' divine authority and control over nature, similar to God's power displayed in the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14). In both cases, God's power over the natural world is revealed, and His people are delivered from danger or difficulty.
3. Bread of Life discourse: Jesus' declaration that He is the Bread of Life has strong connections to Old Testament typology. As previously mentioned, the manna provided to the Israelites in the wilderness serves as a type or foreshadowing of Jesus, who is the true bread from heaven. Additionally, Jesus' reference to the Passover and the manna provided to the Israelites establishes a link between Himself and the sacrificial lamb of the Passover (Exodus 12), foreshadowing His own sacrificial death for the sins of the world.
4. Theological themes: The themes of divine provision, God's care for His people, and the necessity of faith in God can be traced throughout the Old Testament. John 6 echoes these themes, emphasizing Jesus as the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to Israel and highlighting the role of faith and divine grace in the salvation process.

In terms of theological context, John's Gospel is replete with rich doctrinal insights and distinctive theological themes. Central to John's Christology is the concept of Jesus as the incarnate Word (Logos) of God, a theme introduced in the prologue and woven throughout the entire Gospel narrative. Additionally, the Gospel employs a series of "I am" statements by Jesus, which serve to assert His divinity and intimate connection with God the Father. In John 6, Jesus proclaims, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35), drawing upon Old Testament imagery of manna in the wilderness to reveal His identity as the ultimate source of spiritual nourishment and eternal life.

In the "bread of life" discourse specifically, Jesus communicates several significant theological elements:

1. **Jesus as the Bread of Life:** By identifying Himself as the bread of life, Jesus reveals that He is the source of spiritual sustenance and eternal life, surpassing the temporary physical sustenance provided by manna in the wilderness.
2. **Divine Origin of Faith:** Jesus emphasizes that faith in Him as the One sent by the Father is a work of God, rather than a human effort or decision, highlighting the sovereignty of God in salvation and the necessity of divine grace.
3. **God's Sovereign Grace:** Jesus teaches that the Father's giving of a particular people to the Son precedes their coming to faith in Him, highlighting the divine order of salvation and the doctrines of unconditional election and effectual calling.
4. **Assurance of Salvation:** Jesus promises that those who come to Him and believe in Him will never hunger or thirst, conveying the sufficiency of His saving work and the eternal preservation of believers.
5. **Universality of Christ's Redemptive Work:** Jesus declares that the Bread of God comes down from heaven and gives life to the world, emphasizing the all-encompassing nature of His mission and the offer of eternal life to people from every tribe, language, and nation.

Furthermore, John's Gospel underscores the role of the Holy Spirit as the divine agent of illumination and regeneration (John 6:63), a theme that is explicitly present in John 6. The discourse on the Bread of Life emphasizes the necessity of divine intervention for spiritual understanding and belief, as Jesus declares, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44). This emphasis on the sovereign work of God in salvation coheres with the

broader Johannine portrait of the Spirit's role in guiding believers into all truth (John 16:13).

In conclusion, the background and context of John 6 are indispensable for grasping the depth and significance of the events and teachings contained therein. By attending to the historical, literary, and theological dimensions of the passage, readers are better equipped to discern the contours of John's distinctive Christology and its implications for Christian faith and practice. The Gospel According to John, with its rich tapestry of theological themes and motifs, beckons the reader to contemplate the mysteries of the divine Word made flesh, inviting all to partake of the Bread of Life that alone can satisfy the deepest longings of the human soul.

Summary of the Major Themes and Theological Implications of John Chapter 6

In the rich narrative of John chapter 6, we find a confluence of theological themes and implications that invite the believer to embark upon a journey of contemplative reflection. Through the feeding of the five thousand, the miracle of walking on water, and the profound discourse concerning the Bread of Life, the Apostle John presents a deeply pastoral and thought-provoking account that weaves together the threads of divine sovereignty, human depravity, and the efficacy of Christ's atoning work.

First and foremost, we encounter the theme of divine sovereignty. In the miraculous feeding of the multitude and His mastery over the elements, Jesus demonstrates His authority over creation and His power to provide for the needs of His people. This divine control

extends to the spiritual realm, as evidenced by the Father's role in effectually drawing all those whom He has given to Christ through the quickening of the Holy Spirit, ensuring that they will come to Him (John 6:37, 44, 63, 65). This truth underscores the necessity of divine grace in salvation, affirming that God is both the architect and sustainer of our faith. As we ponder the implications of divine sovereignty, let us humbly submit to the Father's will and recognize our utter dependence on His grace for our spiritual well-being.

Secondly, the chapter illuminates the depths of human depravity. Despite witnessing the miraculous provision of bread and fish, the crowd fails to perceive Jesus as the true Bread of Life, seeking only to satisfy their physical hunger (John 6:26-27). This spiritual blindness is further exemplified by the grumbling of the Jews and the departure of many followers, unable to accept the difficult teachings of Jesus (John 6:41, 60, 66). This is a testimony to the pervasive effects of sin, which corrupt the human heart and render it incapable of discerning spiritual truth without divine intervention.

Next, we are confronted with the theme of Christ's atoning work. Jesus presents Himself as the Bread of Life (John 6:35), the source of spiritual nourishment, and eternal sustenance. By partaking in this bread—believing in Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross—believers are promised eternal life and resurrection on the last day (John 6:40, 54). This echoes the biblical emphasis on *sola fide*, the doctrine that salvation is received through faith alone in Christ's redemptive work.

Additionally, the chapter highlights the importance of perseverance in faith. Jesus' difficult teachings serve as a crucible, separating the genuine disciples from those whose faith is shallow or insincere. In the face of many followers departing, Jesus questions the twelve, prompting Peter to confess Jesus as the Holy One of God, acknowledging that He alone possesses the words of eternal life (John 6:68-69). Jesus' statement to the disciples, "Didn't I choose

you," serves as a potent reminder that it is ultimately through divine grace that the true believers are distinguished from the insincere.

This as a call for believers to persevere in faith and devotion, recognizing the importance of sanctification and growth in the knowledge of Christ. As we reflect on the teachings of John 6, let us hold fast to our faith, even in the face of challenging doctrines, knowing that our spiritual sustenance and growth come from the very words of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, John chapter 6 offers a rich theological exploration that challenges and nourishes the believer. Through the examination of divine sovereignty, human depravity, Christ's atoning work, and the necessity of perseverance, this passage serves as an invitation to introspection and growth in faith. As we ponder these themes, let us be reminded of the depth of our need for Christ, the Bread of Life, and the transformative power of His grace in our lives.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

"After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii[a] worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples,

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" - John 6:1-14

In the wondrous narrative of John 6:1-14, we encounter the miraculous account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, a divine event captured by all four Gospel-writers. This extraordinary manifestation of our Lord's power offers us an opportunity to meditate on five theological and practical lessons that are deeply woven into the fabric of this miracle.

Firstly, we witness Christ's divine compassion for His people. As Jesus gazes upon the vast multitude, He is moved by their hunger and takes the initiative to provide for their needs. In this, we are reminded that our Lord is ever attentive to our needs, both physical and spiritual, and His compassion knows no bounds.

Secondly, we discern the divine test of faith presented to the disciples. Jesus asks Philip where they might find bread to feed the multitude, already knowing the answer. In this, He challenges the disciples to recognize their own insufficiency and turn to the One who can provide in abundance. This serves as a timely reminder for believers to continually rely on Christ in times of need and uncertainty.

Thirdly, we observe the value of humble offerings in the hands of the Almighty. The meager five loaves and two fish, brought forth by a young boy, become the means through which thousands are fed. This teaches us that even the smallest of offerings, when given in faith and placed in the hands of Christ, can be used for extraordinary purposes.

Fourthly, is the call to be instruments of God's grace. The disciples, though initially doubtful, played a crucial role in the distribution of the food to the hungry crowd. This miracle reminds us that we too are called to participate in the work of God's Kingdom, sharing the abundance of His grace with those around us.

Fifthly, we learn the lesson of divine abundance and stewardship. Christ not only provides for the needs of the crowd but also ensures that nothing goes to waste. The disciples gather twelve baskets of leftovers, symbolizing the overflowing grace and provision of our Lord. This instructs us to be wise stewards of God's blessings and to share His abundance with others.

Lastly, we grasp the prophetic significance of this miracle. The people recognize Jesus as the Prophet foretold, the One who would come into the world to bring redemption and restoration. This serves as a powerful testimony to the divine nature and mission of Christ, inspiring believers to remain steadfast in their faith.

As we ponder these profound lessons, let us consider the following contemplative questions, which will enrich our understanding of the passage and its relevance to our lives:

1. How can we cultivate a deeper awareness of Christ's compassion and trust in His provision for our needs?
2. In what ways can we acknowledge our insufficiency and turn to Christ during times of challenge and uncertainty?
3. How might we offer our seemingly small gifts and talents to Christ, trusting Him to use them for His divine purposes?

4. In what practical ways can we be wise stewards of God's abundant blessings and share them with others?
5. How can this account of Christ's prophetic significance strengthen our faith and encourage us to remain steadfast in our devotion to Him?

Jesus Walking on Water

"Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going." - John 6:15-21

In the second section of John 6, we delve into the marvelous account of Jesus walking on water (6:15-21). This extraordinary event, steeped in divine revelation and practical application, offers the Reformed believer an opportunity to reflect on four theological and practical lessons drawn from the passage.

Firstly, we observe the sovereignty of Christ over the natural world. As the incarnate Son of God, Jesus demonstrates His divine authority by walking on the turbulent sea. This miracle serves as a powerful reminder of God's supremacy over creation and His ability

to subdue chaos and disorder in both the physical and spiritual realms.

Secondly, we witness the profound humility of Christ, who resists the temptation to seize earthly power. Understanding the crowd's intentions to force Him into kingship, Jesus withdraws to the mountain to pray. This act exemplifies the self-emptying nature of our Lord, who came not to establish an earthly kingdom, but to inaugurate His spiritual reign in the hearts of His people.

Thirdly, we discern the comforting presence of Christ amidst life's storms. As the disciples labor against the fierce winds and waves, Jesus approaches them, bidding them not to fear. This encounter offers reassurance that, even in the midst of life's most turbulent times, Christ is near, providing comfort and strength to those who trust in Him.

Lastly, we learn the transformative power of Christ's presence. Upon receiving Jesus into their boat, the disciples immediately find themselves at their destination. This miraculous event illustrates the life-altering impact of Christ's presence in the lives of believers, guiding and sustaining them on their spiritual journey.

As we meditate on these rich lessons, let us consider the following contemplative questions, which will deepen our understanding of the passage and its significance for our walk of faith:

1. How can we develop a greater appreciation for Christ's sovereignty over the natural world and its implications for our lives?
2. In what ways can we model Christ's humility in our interactions with others and our pursuit of His kingdom?
3. How can we cultivate an awareness of Christ's comforting presence during life's storms and trust in His ability to sustain us?

4. In what practical ways can we invite Christ's transformative presence into our lives, allowing Him to guide us towards our spiritual destination?
5. How might this account of Jesus walking on water encourage and strengthen our faith, reminding us of His constant presence and care?

The Bread of Life Discourse, Part 1

On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. 23 Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 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.

25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” 26 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” - John 6:22-27

In this pivotal passage of John 6:22-27, our Lord Jesus Christ continues His ministry by teaching the searching crowd about the nature of true spiritual nourishment. From a Reformed perspective, we can draw out several theological and practical lessons to deepen our understanding of the Christian life.

Firstly, we encounter the limitations of earthly satisfaction. Jesus acknowledges that the crowd seeks Him because of the physical sustenance He provided, not due to a deeper understanding of His divine mission. This serves as a reminder to believers that temporal satisfaction can never truly fulfill the yearning of our souls, and we must seek the eternal sustenance found only in Christ.

Secondly, Jesus' discourse emphasizes the necessity of spiritual priorities. Jesus instructs the crowd to labor for the food that endures to eternal life, highlighting the importance of prioritizing our spiritual well-being over our material needs. As believers, we should continually evaluate our priorities and strive to align them with God's will.

Thirdly, we see the sovereignty of God in salvation. Christ declares that the Son of Man, referring to Himself, will give the enduring food that leads to eternal life. This emphasizes the sovereignty of God in our salvation, for it is not our own efforts that secure our redemption, but rather the gracious gift of Jesus.

Fourthly, the passage reveals the seal of divine authority. Jesus speaks of the Father setting His seal upon the Son of Man, indicating the divine authority and approval bestowed upon Christ. As followers of Christ, we can take comfort in knowing that our faith is grounded in the One who possesses the full endorsement of God the Father.

Lastly, this discourse highlights the centrality of Christ. Throughout the passage, Jesus continually directs the attention of the crowd back to Himself as the source of eternal life. This underscores the centrality of Christ in our spiritual journey, as He alone is the true Bread of Life, able to satisfy our deepest longings.

Contemplative questions to consider:

1. In what ways do I seek earthly satisfaction instead of the eternal sustenance found in Christ?

2. How can I better prioritize my spiritual well-being over my material needs?
3. How does understanding God's sovereignty in salvation affect my faith and trust in Christ?
4. How can I live my life in a way that recognizes and honors the divine authority of Jesus?
5. In what areas of my life do I need to refocus on the centrality of Christ as the source of true fulfillment and spiritual nourishment?

The Bread of Life Discourse, Part 2

Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe 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.’” Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father 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.” They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” - John 6:28-34

As we delve into the next section of John 6, Jesus continues His discourse on the Bread of Life, revealing profound spiritual truths that enrich our understanding of the Christian faith. We can draw out several theological and practical lessons from this passage.

Firstly, Jesus illuminates the divine origin of faith. When the crowd asks what they must do to perform the works of God, Jesus presents them with a profound truth: "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." In this statement, Jesus

emphasizes that faith is not merely a human effort or decision but rather a work of God within the believer's heart. The hearers would have been confronted with the reality that true belief in Jesus as the One sent by the Father is not something they could achieve on their own, but something that can only be realized through the gracious intervention of God. This understanding aligns with the bible's emphasis on the sovereignty of God in salvation, teaching us that our faith is a gift from God and a testimony to His unmerited favor towards us.

Note: When interpreting the original Greek text, it's important to carefully consider the context and the grammatical structure. The phrase in question is found in John 6:29, which in Greek reads: "τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα πιστεύητε εἰς ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος." The phrase "τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ" (the work of God) is connected with the purpose clause "ἵνα πιστεύητε εἰς ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος" (that you believe in him whom he has sent).

There are two potential ways to understand this verse:

1. The work of God is the faith itself, meaning that God is the one who grants or enables the faith in the believer.
2. The work of God refers to the action of believing, which is what God desires or commands the believer to do.

While the Reformed perspective tends to emphasize the first interpretation, it's important to note that the Greek text can support both interpretations. The context of John's Gospel, which often emphasizes the necessity of faith and the divine origin of faith (e.g., John 1:12-13, 3:3-8, 6:65), might suggest that the first interpretation is more in line with the overall message of the book. However, when considered as a standalone text, the second interpretation is also valid, and the verse itself

does not definitively settle the matter. As we continue to study the chapter, the true meaning should become increasingly clear.

Secondly, we are reminded of the insufficiency of human efforts. The crowd, seeking a sign to validate Jesus' claims, cites the manna provided to their ancestors in the wilderness. Jesus, however, clarifies that it was not Moses but the Father who provided the bread from heaven. When Jesus exhorts the crowd to "labor for the food which endures to eternal life," their minds immediately turn to self-reliant deeds and efforts to secure their own righteousness. "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" they ask, fixating on doing, as their pathway to heaven. This serves as a reminder that our own efforts and achievements, no matter how significant, can never compare to the divine work of God.

Thirdly, this passage reveals the spiritual blindness and unbelief inherent in the natural man. Despite witnessing Jesus' miraculous deeds, the crowd remains fixated on self-reliant efforts to secure their own righteousness. Their skepticism and reluctance to believe, even when instructed by Jesus Himself, demonstrate the extent of human dullness, prejudice, and unbelief in spiritual matters. This serves as a poignant reminder of our need for divine intervention to attain true understanding and faith.

Fourthly, the passage underscores the supremacy of Christ. While the manna in the wilderness served as a type or a foreshadowing of Jesus, He asserts that He is the true bread from heaven, given by the Father to bring life to the world. This declaration positions Jesus above all other means of sustenance, emphasizing His unique and unparalleled role in providing spiritual nourishment to humanity.

Lastly, we witness the universal scope of Christ's redemptive work. Jesus declares that the Bread of God comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. This statement emphasizes the all-encompassing nature of Christ's mission, revealing His intention to

extend the offer of eternal life, not only to Israel, but to people from every tribe and language and people and nation.

Contemplative questions to consider:

1. How does the understanding that faith is a gift from God, rather than a human effort, change our perspective on salvation and our relationship with God?
2. In what ways do we, like the crowd in this passage, often rely on our own efforts and achievements rather than recognizing our dependence on God's divine work?
3. How can we guard against spiritual blindness and unbelief in our own lives, and what role does God's intervention play in helping us to grow in faith and understanding?
4. In light of Christ's supremacy and His role as the true bread from heaven, how can we better prioritize our spiritual nourishment and relationship with Jesus?
5. How does the universal scope of Christ's redemptive work encourage us to share the gospel message with others, regardless of their cultural or linguistic backgrounds?

The Bread of Life Discourse, Part 3

Jesus said to them, "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. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I

should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” - John 6:35-40

In this portion of John 6, we encounter the profound depth of Jesus' discourse on the Bread of Life. Here we can glean several rich theological and practical lessons that illuminate our understanding of the Christian faith.

Firstly, the phrase "I am the bread of life" is a profound declaration by Jesus that carries deep spiritual significance. In making this statement, Jesus identifies Himself as the ultimate source of spiritual sustenance, nourishment, and life. This self-proclamation points to several important theological truths:

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of God's provision: By referring to Himself as the "bread of life," Jesus alludes to the manna that sustained the Israelites during their time in the wilderness. Just as the manna was a miraculous provision from God to nourish His people physically, Jesus is the divine provision for our spiritual nourishment and eternal life. In this way, Jesus fulfills and surpasses the Old Testament foreshadowing of God's provision.
2. Jesus is the source of eternal life: The comparison with manna also serves to highlight the superiority of Jesus over the temporary sustenance that the manna provided. While the manna could only satisfy physical hunger for a short time, Jesus, the bread of life, offers spiritual nourishment that leads to eternal life. This underscores the transcendent nature of Jesus' mission and the eternal significance of His saving work.
3. Jesus is essential for spiritual growth and sustenance: Just as bread is a staple food that provides essential nourishment for physical life, Jesus, as the bread of life, is indispensable for our

spiritual well-being. Believers must continually "feed" on Him through faith, drawing their strength, sustenance, and spiritual vitality from their relationship with Christ. This metaphor of feeding on Jesus emphasizes the ongoing nature of our dependence on Him throughout our spiritual journey.

Secondly, Jesus unveils the marvelous truth of God's sovereign grace in salvation. In verses 37 and 39, He emphasizes the divine order of salvation: "All that the Father gives me will come to me...and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me." Here, we see that the giving of the Father to the Son precedes their coming to faith to Christ, and the Father's will is that none of those He has given to the Son shall be lost. This divine ordering reveals that God's gracious election and irresistible call are at work in drawing His people to Himself, underscoring the biblical doctrines of unconditional election, effectual grace, and the preservation of the saints. The text assures us that the same sovereign power that initially brought us to Christ will also keep us secure in His love, confirming the inseparable bond between divine election and the ultimate perseverance of believers.

Thirdly, the passage highlights the comprehensive and irrevocable nature of Christ's saving work. Jesus declares that whoever comes to Him shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Him shall never thirst. The word "never" here signifies a definitive and eternal assurance. This means that once a person comes to Christ and believes in Him, the satisfaction and sustenance they receive from Him are everlasting and cannot be taken away. This assurance of complete and enduring satisfaction in Christ serves as a reminder that His redemptive work is not only sufficient to save but also to sustain the believer throughout the entirety of their spiritual journey and into eternity. The irrevocable nature of Christ's provision for those who believe in Him underlines the security and permanence of the believer's union with Him, emphasizing the eternal bond that exists between the Savior and those He redeems.

Fourthly, the passage underscores the inseparable connection between coming to Jesus and believing in Him. Jesus asserts, "The one who comes to me will never go hungry, and the one who believes in me will never be thirsty." By using these parallel expressions, He reinforces the idea that to come to Him is to believe in Him, and to believe in Him is to come to Him. This linguistic repetition serves to emphasize the essential nature of faith as the means by which we enter into a saving relationship with Christ. It is through this act of coming and believing that we experience the spiritual nourishment, satisfaction, and sustenance that only Jesus, the Bread of Life, can provide. This interconnectedness of coming and believing highlights the centrality of faith in our relationship with Christ, underscoring its vital importance in the believer's spiritual journey.

Fifthly, we are confronted with the depth of Christ's compassion and commitment to His people. Jesus asserts that He will never cast out anyone who comes to Him. This promise of divine acceptance and steadfast love serves as an enduring source of comfort for believers, reminding us that our security in Christ is founded upon His unwavering faithfulness and the unchanging nature of His covenant love.

Sixthly, the passage underscores the centrality of Christ's obedience to the Father's will. Jesus declares that He has come down from heaven not to do His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him. This humble submission to the Father's purpose exemplifies the heart of true obedience and offers a model for believers to emulate in their own lives as they seek to follow Christ.

Lastly, the passage accentuates the hope of resurrection and eternal life for all who believe in Jesus. The Father's will is that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and Jesus assures us that He will raise them up on the last day. This hope of resurrection serves as a bedrock for Christian faith, providing a sure foundation for the believer's confidence in the face of death and the uncertainties of this present life.

As we ponder the depths of this passage, let us consider the following contemplative questions:

1. How does understanding Jesus as the "bread of life" shape our perspective on our spiritual dependence and the role of Christ in our daily walk with God?
2. How does understanding God's sovereign grace in salvation impact our view of our own faith and spiritual journey?
3. In what ways can we find comfort and assurance in the comprehensive and irrevocable nature of Christ's saving work?
4. How can Christ's promise to never cast out those who come to Him encourage us in times of doubt or spiritual struggle?
5. In what areas of our lives do we need to follow Christ's example of humble submission to the Father's will?
6. How does the hope of resurrection and eternal life in Christ shape our perspective on the trials and challenges we face in this life?

The Bread of Life Discourse, Part 4

"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'?" Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down

from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." - John 6:41-51

In this portion of Jesus' discourse about the Bread of Life, we find a treasure trove of theological insights and practical applications, as the Savior continues to unveil the richness of His person and work to those who would grumble and question His divine origin. Let us consider five lessons that emerge from this profound passage.

First, we observe the divine condescension of the Incarnation. As the Jews grumble and express disbelief, questioning how Jesus, the son of Joseph, could claim to have come down from heaven, we are reminded of the great mystery and humility of the Word made flesh. In Jesus, the eternal Son of God took on human nature, entering into the frailty and limitations of our existence, that He might redeem and elevate humanity to share in the divine life.

Second, we find a reaffirmation of the necessity of divine grace for coming to Christ. Jesus declares, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." This statement, along with verse 37, where Jesus says, "All that the Father gives me will come to me," underscores the biblical teaching that our faith and salvation are entirely dependent upon the sovereign and irresistible work of God, who draws us to His Son through the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. The connection between these verses highlights the divine orchestration of our salvation, from the Father's gracious choice to give us to Christ, to the Spirit's work in effectually enabling us to come to Him.

In John 6:37 and 6:44, the use of the universal positive "all" and the universal negative "no one" combine to form a compelling syllogism that underscores the effectual nature of God's grace in drawing His people to Christ. Verse 37 states that "all" whom the Father gives to Jesus will come to Him, while verse 44 declares that "no one" can

come to Jesus unless the Father draws them. These two verses together create a logical framework that makes a synergistic view of human will cooperating with God in salvation untenable.

The connection between these verses indicates that the "drawing" mentioned in verse 44 must be understood as an effectual call, rather than a mere wooing or gentle persuasion. To interpret the word "draw" as something less than effectual would undermine the force of the universal positive "all" in verse 37, which emphasizes the certainty of the elect coming to Christ as a result of the Father's sovereign work. By recognizing the interplay between these verses, we can better appreciate the profound biblical teaching that our salvation is solely dependent upon the sovereign, gracious, and irresistible work of God in drawing His people to Christ, and not upon any cooperative effort between human will and divine grace.

Furthermore, the theological implications of the connection between the Father drawing individuals to Christ and raising them up on the last day are profound. This link serves to emphasize not only the sovereignty of God in salvation but also the preservation of the saints.

The doctrine of preservation of the saints maintains that those who are truly saved will persevere in faith and godliness to the end, enabled and preserved by God's grace. This perseverance is rooted in the fact that those whom the Father has drawn to Christ are the same ones who will be raised up on the last day. The security of the believer is founded on the sovereign work of God in both their conversion and their ultimate glorification.

The connection between being drawn by the Father and being raised up on the last day also highlights the cohesive nature of God's redemptive plan. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work together in perfect harmony to secure the salvation of the elect, from their initial calling to their final resurrection. This emphasizes the unity of the Godhead and the unfailing nature of divine grace.

In sum, these interconnected concepts emphasize the doctrines of unconditional election, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. Unconditional election teaches that God, in His mercy and wisdom, has chosen a people for Himself before the foundation of the world, not based on any foreseen faith or merit, but solely on His sovereign purpose. Irresistible grace affirms that God's grace, when applied to the elect, is effectual in bringing about their conversion and faith in Christ. Finally, the perseverance of the saints is the conviction that those whom God has chosen and drawn to Christ will be kept by His power and grace, ensuring that they will remain in faith and ultimately be raised up on the last day.

Thus, the theological implications of verses 37 and 44 in John 6 are profound, revealing the depths of God's love and the security of the believer's salvation, as it is founded upon the unchanging and sovereign work of the triune God. The Father, in His eternal counsel, chooses and gives a people to the Son; the Son comes to redeem and secure their eternal inheritance; and the Holy Spirit applies this redemption, drawing the elect to Christ and enabling them to persevere in faith until the end.

Third, we observe the vital interplay between divine revelation and the work of the Holy Spirit in nurturing faith. Jesus quotes the prophets, asserting that all who come to Him will be taught by God. This teaching accentuates the primacy of divine revelation in the process of salvation, as the Father discloses the Son through the Scriptures. It is in this context that the Holy Spirit plays a critical role, illuminating the minds and hearts of the elect, allowing them to grasp the truth and beauty of God's Word.

This interconnection between divine revelation and the Holy Spirit can be likened to the planting and nurturing of crops. Just as the sown seeds require rain to grow and bear fruit, so too does the preaching and teaching of God's Word necessitate the work of the Spirit to bring about spiritual life and growth in the believer. The Word of God, as the seed, provides the essential truths and principles

for spiritual life, while the Holy Spirit, like the rain, vivifies (quickens) and nourishes the believer, enabling them to understand, believe, and live out the message of salvation.

In this dynamic, the Word and the Spirit work together to create, sustain, and mature the faith of the believer, ultimately leading them to an ever-deepening relationship with Christ. This interdependence of the Word and the Spirit showcases the harmony and wisdom of God's plan of redemption, revealing how He graciously provides all that is necessary for His people to flourish in faith and bear fruit for His glory.

Fourth, we learn about the life-giving power of Jesus as the living bread. Jesus contrasts the manna eaten by the Israelites in the wilderness, which sustained their physical life but ultimately led to death, with the living bread that He provides, which bestows eternal life on those who partake of it. This teaching not only highlights the superiority of Christ's saving work over the old covenant provisions but also underscores the sufficiency of His sacrifice to secure the eternal life of all who would believe in Him.

Finally, we are drawn to contemplate the profound significance and ultimate purpose of Christ's mission: to offer His flesh as a sacrificial gift for the life of the world. The bread that Jesus tenderly proffers is, in fact, His very own body, which He willingly allowed to be broken and sacrificed on the cross, in order to secure our redemption and reconcile us with God. This astonishing act of self-giving love epitomizes the depth of Christ's commitment to our salvation, revealing the unfathomable lengths to which He went to rescue us from the power of sin and death.

In this sacrificial offering, we find the true heart of the Gospel: that the Son of God, the incarnate Word, would take upon Himself the full weight of our transgressions and endure the wrath of God on our behalf, so that we might be forgiven, cleansed, and restored to a right relationship with our Creator. Christ's body, given as the bread of

life, represents the culmination of God's redemptive plan, foreshadowed by the manna in the wilderness and the Passover lamb, ultimately fulfilled in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

As we meditate on this profound truth, we are called to respond with awe, gratitude, and faith, recognizing the incalculable worth of the gift we have been given in Christ. In the broken body of Jesus, we discover not only the source of our spiritual sustenance but also the foundation of our hope, our joy, and our eternal life. In the bread of life, we find the essence of God's grace, the manifestation of His mercy, and the inexhaustible wellspring of His love for us.

As we meditate upon this profound passage, let us consider the following contemplative questions:

1. How does the reality of the Incarnation deepen our understanding of God's love and humility in coming to save us?
2. In what ways does the recognition of God's sovereign grace in drawing us to Christ affect our view of our own faith and spiritual journey?
3. How can we cultivate a greater reliance on divine revelation, through Scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit, in our pursuit of a deeper relationship with Christ?
4. What does it mean for us, practically, to partake of Jesus as the living bread and find our sustenance in Him?
5. How does the understanding of Jesus' sacrificial offering of His flesh for our redemption affect our appreciation of the gospel and our response to His saving work?

The Bread of Life Discourse, Part 5

"The Jews then 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. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum." - John 6:52-59

In this final section of Jesus' discourse on the Bread of Life, we encounter some of the most profound and challenging teachings found in the Gospel of John. Delving into this passage, we find five theological and practical lessons that beckon us to consider the depths of Christ's redemptive work and the implications for our faith.

First, we are confronted with the scandalous nature of the Gospel message. The Jews, perplexed and even offended by Jesus' words, questioned how He could give them His flesh to eat. In the face of this skepticism and hostility, Jesus boldly reaffirms the necessity of partaking in His flesh and blood, thereby emphasizing the radical and transformative nature of the Gospel. This lesson serves as a reminder that the message of Christ often challenges our preconceptions, inviting us to embrace the seemingly paradoxical truth of God's grace.

Second, the passage underscores the vital importance of union with Christ. Jesus declares that whoever feeds on His flesh and drinks His blood abides in Him and He in them. This mutual indwelling, beautifully illustrated by the metaphor of eating and drinking, highlights the intimate and life-giving relationship that believers enjoy with their Savior. In this union with Christ, we find the source

of our spiritual vitality, as well as the assurance of our salvation and eternal life.

Third, the text affirms the transformative power of Christ's sacrificial work. By partaking of His flesh and blood, symbolizing the benefits of His atoning death, believers are granted eternal life and the promise of resurrection on the last day. This profound truth serves to remind us that our hope is not rooted in our own efforts or merits but in the finished work of Christ on the cross, which alone can secure our eternal destiny.

Fourth, we are reminded of the role of faith in our relationship with Christ. The act of feeding on Jesus' flesh and drinking His blood is an expression of faith, signifying our dependence upon Him for our spiritual sustenance and well-being. This imagery challenges us to cultivate a deep and abiding trust in Christ, recognizing that our spiritual nourishment and growth are contingent upon our ongoing reliance on His grace.

Finally, we see the contrast between the temporary sustenance provided by the manna in the wilderness and the eternal life offered by the true Bread from heaven. In Jesus, the longings of the human heart for lasting satisfaction and fulfillment find their ultimate answer. This lesson invites us to turn away from the fleeting pleasures and pursuits of this world, and instead, to seek the eternal nourishment and satisfaction found only in Christ.

As we reflect on these profound lessons, let us contemplate the following questions:

1. How have we experienced the scandalous and transformative nature of the Gospel in our own lives?
2. In what ways do we actively seek to cultivate a deeper union with Christ?
3. How do we daily remind ourselves of the sufficiency of Christ's sacrificial work for our salvation?

4. How might we grow in our faith and dependence upon Jesus for our spiritual sustenance?
5. In what areas of our lives do we need to turn from temporary, worldly pursuits and seek the eternal satisfaction found in Christ?

Many Followers Depart

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." - John 6:60-65

In this somber yet instructive portion of John's Gospel, we witness the departure of many disciples who found Jesus' teachings difficult to accept. From this disheartening scene, we glean five theological and practical lessons that illuminate the essence of the Gospel message and the nature of genuine faith.

First, the passage reveals the divisive and challenging nature of Christ's teachings. Many disciples, confronted with the hard sayings of Jesus, were unable to reconcile them with their preconceived notions and expectations. This lesson serves as a reminder that the

Gospel often offends our human sensibilities, calling us to relinquish our own wisdom and submit to the divine revelation of God's truth.

Second, we see Jesus' foreknowledge of human hearts and the varying responses to His message. He knew from the beginning those who did not believe and who would betray Him. This omniscience highlights both the deity of Christ and the sovereignty of God in the unfolding of His redemptive plan.

Third, we encounter the vital doctrine of regeneration, as Jesus asserts that it is the Spirit who gives life or quickens the soul. This divine act of imparting new life to the spiritually dead underscores the Reformed understanding of the necessity of God's sovereign grace in salvation. It is by the Spirit's work that a person is enabled to respond to the Gospel in faith and be united to Christ.

Fourth, Jesus' words, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father," point back to verses 37 and 44, where He emphasizes the divine initiative in drawing sinners to Himself. The interconnectedness of these verses highlights the indispensable role of God's effectual calling in the salvation of His people, confirming the doctrine of unconditional election and irresistible grace.

The interconnectedness of John 6:37, 44, and 65 is striking in their use of similar language and concepts. The Greek words used for "grant" in verse 65 (δίδωμι, didomi) and "give" in verse 37 (δώσει, dosei) convey a sense of bestowing or granting something. The Greek words used for "grant" in verse 65 (δίδωμι, didomi) and "give" in verse 37 (δώσει, dosei) share the same Greek root. Both words are derived from the root verb δίδωμι (didomi), which means "to give" or "to grant." The form δώσει (dosei) in verse 37 is the future active indicative form of the verb, while δίδωμι (didomi) in verse 65 is the present active indicative form. These related terms highlight the connection between the Father's granting and giving in the context of salvation in John 6. In all three verses, Jesus employs the phrase

"come to me" to emphasize the divine initiative in drawing sinners to Himself. Furthermore, these verses remind us that the granting of the Father precedes the coming to Christ, reinforcing the biblical teaching of God's sovereign grace.

As we have seen earlier in the text, "coming to" Jesus and "believing in" Jesus are essentially synonymous, denoting a wholehearted faith and trust in Him as the sole source of salvation. This connection is vital for understanding the theological implications of these three verses. In each of these statements, Jesus emphasizes the divine initiative in salvation and the necessity of the Father's enabling grace for sinners to come to Christ in faith.

Taken together, the universal positive in verse 37 ("All that the Father gives me will come to me") and the universal negative in verse 44 ("No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him") form a syllogism that underscores the doctrine of unconditional election and irresistible grace. This logical structure makes it difficult to maintain a synergistic interpretation of these passages, which posits that human will cooperates with divine grace in the process of salvation.

By emphasizing the divine initiative in drawing sinners to Himself and the indispensability of God's effectual calling, Jesus underscores the central tenet of Reformed soteriology: that our salvation is wholly dependent upon the sovereign grace of God.

Fifth, we gain valuable insight into the necessity of regeneration for faith. Jesus draws a sharp contrast between the flesh, which is entirely unhelpful, and the Spirit, who imparts life. The unconverted sinner (those in the flesh), lacking the Holy Spirit, can only rely on their own fallen resources, which renders their flesh incapable of producing genuine faith. This passage highlights the Trinitarian work in our redemption and implies that God, from eternity past, made a covenant of redemption with the Son to save a people for Himself. In this covenant, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

agreed upon the specific roles each would fulfill in the process of redemption, illustrating the unity and cooperation within the Godhead.

The Father's role in this covenant is to choose a people for Himself and grant them to the Son. The Son's role is to come to earth, take on human form, and accomplish the work of salvation for them by His perfect life, atoning death, and victorious resurrection. The Holy Spirit's role is to apply the accomplished work of Christ to those whom the Father has granted to the Son, quickening or regenerating them (v. 63), enabling them to come to Christ in faith (v 65).

In John 6, we catch a glimpse of how Jesus unveils God's behind-the-scenes work to fulfill this covenant of redemption. The Father grants to the Son those He has chosen, and the Holy Spirit quickens them, imparting life so that they may come to Christ in faith. This Trinitarian work in our redemption demonstrates the perfect harmony and unity within the Godhead, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit work together in unison to save a people for God's glory and their eternal joy.

As we ponder these profound insights, let us meditate on the following contemplative questions:

1. How have we wrestled with the challenging teachings of Jesus in our own faith journey?
2. In what ways do we submit to the divine revelation of God's truth, even when it offends our sensibilities?
3. How have we experienced the quickening or regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in our lives?
4. How might we grow in our appreciation of God's sovereign grace in drawing us to Himself?
5. What steps can we take to cultivate greater spiritual discernment, relying on the Holy Spirit to illuminate our understanding of God's Word?

Peter's Confession

"After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil." He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him." - John 6:66-71

In this final section of John 6, we witness a pivotal moment in the ministry of Jesus, as many of His disciples turned away from following Him. Despite the challenge of Christ's teaching, the twelve apostles remain steadfast in their allegiance to Him, and Peter's confession testifies to the depth of their faith. From this profound exchange, we draw five theological and practical lessons for believers today.

First, we observe the sobering reality of apostasy, as many of Jesus' disciples choose to abandon their commitment to Him. This unsettling scene reminds us that not all who profess faith in Christ will persevere in that faith, and it calls us to examine our own hearts and lives to ensure that we are genuinely rooted in Christ and His teachings.

Second, we find a powerful expression of faith in Peter's confession: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." In the face of difficult teachings and the unpopularity of Jesus' message, Peter recognizes that there is no other source of truth, hope, and

salvation outside of Christ. This affirmation challenges us to cling to Jesus and His Word, even when doing so may be costly or unpopular.

Third, Peter's confession reveals the vital connection between belief and knowledge: "We have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." True faith is not a blind leap in the dark but an informed trust in the person and work of Jesus, grounded in a deepening understanding of His identity and mission. As believers, we must continually seek to grow in our knowledge of Christ and the truths of the gospel.

Fourth, Jesus' response to the twelve underscores the reality of their calling to apostolic office: "Did I not choose you, the twelve?" This statement highlights the fact that Jesus appointed them to their roles as His representatives, reminding us of the importance of recognizing and submitting to divinely appointed leadership within the church.

Finally, the mention of Judas as a betrayer highlights the complexity of divine calling and human responsibility. Though Judas was chosen by Jesus to be an Apostle, he would ultimately betray his Master, fulfilling the Scriptures and playing a crucial role in the unfolding drama of redemption. This situation calls us to trust in God's sovereign plan while also recognizing our responsibility to walk in faithfulness and obedience.

As we reflect on this passage, let us consider these contemplative questions:

1. How does the reality of apostasy challenge us to examine our own faith and commitment to Christ?
2. In what ways does Peter's confession encourage us to cling to Jesus and His Word in the face of difficulties?
3. How can we cultivate a deepening knowledge of Christ and the truths of the gospel in our daily lives?

4. In times of doubt or struggle, how can we, like Peter, remind ourselves of the unique and invaluable nature of Jesus' teachings and his role as the Holy One of God?
5. How can we be more discerning in recognizing and submitting to divinely appointed leadership within our own church communities?
6. What can we learn from the example of Judas about the importance of cultivating personal faithfulness and obedience, even when entrusted with significant responsibilities in ministry?
7. How can we better trust in God's sovereign plan, even in situations where His purposes may seem mysterious or difficult to comprehend?
8. What practical steps can we take to remain committed to Jesus and his teachings, even when confronted with challenging or unpopular truths?

Epilogue:

A Heart Transformed by the Bread of Life

As we conclude our journey through the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, let us pause for a moment to reflect upon the profound spiritual truths that have been unveiled before our eyes. The narrative of Jesus, the Bread of Life, has invited us to partake in the divine sustenance that He alone provides, nourishing our souls with eternal life and unshakable hope.

Throughout our meditations on this sacred text, we have beheld the majesty of Christ, the incarnate Word of God, who has descended from heaven to dwell among us and to offer Himself as the sacrificial Lamb for the salvation of His people. We have been drawn into the

mystery of divine election and irresistible grace, marveling at the sovereign work of the Father who grants, the Son who redeems, and the Spirit who quickens. In each verse, we have been reminded of the incomparable riches of God's love and mercy, poured out upon undeserving sinners through the selfless offering of the Son.

As we ponder the implications of these divine truths for our own lives, may our hearts be stirred to greater devotion and adoration. Let the reality of Christ's sacrifice and the efficacy of His atoning work inspire within us a renewed sense of gratitude and humility, as well as a fervent desire to live in obedience to His commands. With our gaze firmly fixed upon our Savior, may we strive to walk in the footsteps of those faithful disciples who, like Peter, recognized in Jesus the words of eternal life and the fulfillment of their deepest longings.

In the face of life's trials and tribulations, may we find solace in the knowledge that we have been redeemed by the Son to live in communion with the Triune God. With the assurance of our salvation and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, may we boldly proclaim the good news of the Bread of Life to a world that desperately need Jesus. And as we journey onward, nourished and sustained by the living Bread, may our lives bear witness to the transforming power of the Gospel, bringing glory to our God and King.

As we close the pages of this devotional commentary, let us not forget the lessons we have learned, nor the divine invitation that has been extended to each of us. Rather, let the words of Jesus continue to resonate in our hearts and minds, spurring us on to a deeper communion with our Savior and a more fervent pursuit of His Kingdom. In the power of the Spirit and the grace of the Son, let us press on, our souls feasting on the Bread of Life, and our hearts aflame with the love of the Father.

Appendix:

Monergistic Regeneration in The Bread of Life Discourse in John 6

The Bread of Life discourse in John 6 is a treasure trove for Reformed theology, particularly as it pertains to the doctrine of monergistic regeneration. Monergism, derived from the Greek words "monos" (meaning "alone") and "ergon" (meaning "work"), posits that God alone is responsible for the regeneration of a sinner, apart from any human cooperation. This doctrine has its roots in the biblical teaching of God's sovereignty in salvation, a theme that finds rich expression in the words of Jesus in John 6.

Central to the monergistic view of regeneration is the understanding that the Holy Spirit unilaterally and irresistibly works to bring about new life in a sinner, making them spiritually alive and enabling them to respond in faith to the Gospel. Jesus speaks directly to this truth in John 6:44, where He declares, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." The Greek verb translated "draw" (ἔλκω, *helkō*) conveys the sense of an irresistible and effectual drawing, indicating that the Father's work is not merely an invitation but a divine action that ensures a sinner's response.

In verse 37, Jesus states, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." This passage highlights the divine origin of faith, as it is the Father who gives sinners to the Son, ensuring that they will come to Him. The phrase "will come" (ἔξει, *hēxei*) in the Greek is in the future indicative tense, denoting certainty and inevitability. Here, the text unequivocally connects the Father's giving with the believer's coming, making the

synergistic interpretation of human will cooperating with God untenable.

Furthermore, the universal positive "all" (πᾶν, pan) in verse 37 corresponds to the universal negative "no one" (οὐδεὶς, oudeis) in verse 44, forming a syllogism that reinforces the monergistic view. Since all those given by the Father will come to Jesus, and no one can come unless the Father draws them, it follows that the Father's drawing is an effectual call, sufficient to ensure the salvation of those He has chosen.

The interconnection between divine revelation and the work of the Spirit is also evident in this passage. Jesus quotes the prophets in verse 45, stating that all who come to Him will be taught by God. This teaching underscores the centrality of divine revelation in the process of salvation, as the Father reveals the Son through the Scriptures and the inner illumination of the Holy Spirit, enabling believers to respond in faith and embrace the gift of eternal life.

Moreover, Jesus emphasizes the life-giving role of the Holy Spirit in verse 63, proclaiming, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." The Greek word for "gives life" (ζωοποιέω, zōopoieō) is synonymous with regeneration, signifying the act of imparting spiritual life to the sinner. The contrast between the Spirit's life-giving work and the futility of the flesh highlights the indispensability of regeneration in the process of salvation.

In conclusion, the Bread of Life discourse in John 6 presents a compelling case for the doctrine of monergistic regeneration. Jesus' words underscore the sovereign and irresistible work of the Father in drawing sinners to Himself and granting them to the Son. This divine action, rooted in God's eternal plan and purpose, ensures the believer's faith and perseverance. Furthermore, the Trinitarian nature of our redemption highlights the perfect harmony and unity within the Godhead, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit work

together in unison to save a people for God's glory and their eternal joy. This rich biblical teaching invites us to marvel at the depths of God's grace and to rest in the assurance of His unchanging love and faithfulness.

What about those who object to John 6:44 by saying that it only means "to woo" and is not speaking of effectual grace?

Those who object to the interpretation of John 6:44 by suggesting that it only means "to woo" and does not speak of effectual grace are not considering the broader context of the passage and the deeper implications of the Greek verb ἔλκω (helkō).

While it is true that the verb ἔλκω can be used in certain contexts to describe a "drawing" or "attracting" force, the broader context of John 6 indicates that Jesus is referring to an effectual and irresistible drawing by the Father. This understanding is supported by several factors:

1. The context of John 6:44 is closely connected to verse 37, where Jesus says, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." The certainty of the connection between the Father's giving and the believer's coming implies that the drawing is more than a mere wooing but an effectual action.
2. The broader context of John's Gospel also supports the idea of divine sovereignty in salvation. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus repeatedly emphasizes that His mission is to do the will of the Father and that those who believe in Him are granted eternal life as a result of the Father's will (e.g., John 1:12-13; 10:27-29).
3. The concept of "wooing" does not align well with the biblical teaching on human depravity and the inability of fallen human beings to respond positively to the Gospel apart from divine

intervention (e.g., Romans 3:10-18; Ephesians 2:1-5). The idea of an effectual drawing by the Father is more consistent with the biblical portrait of human sinfulness and the need for divine grace in salvation.

In light of these factors, it is more appropriate to understand John 6:44 as referring to an effectual and irresistible drawing by the Father, which is consistent with the Reformed doctrine of irresistible grace. This interpretation not only aligns with the immediate context of the passage but also coheres with the broader biblical teaching on God's sovereignty in salvation.

What about those who attempt to argue that John 12:32, where Jesus says, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." means that John 6:44 is also speaking of drawing every person on earth without exception? .

The distinction between John 6:44 and John 12:32 lies in the context and audience of each passage. It is essential to recognize that these two passages are addressing different aspects of Jesus' mission and should not be conflated to argue for a universal drawing in John 6:44.

In John 6:44, Jesus is addressing a primarily Jewish audience and is emphasizing the Father's role in drawing people to Him. The context of this passage is focused on the relationship between Jesus, the Father, and those who will come to faith in Him. The use of the verb ἔλκω (helkō) in this passage suggests an effectual drawing, which is consistent with the Reformed doctrine of irresistible grace.

On the other hand, John 12:32 takes place in a different context, as Jesus is speaking to a mixed audience of Jews and Gentiles. The statement, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself," refers to the universal scope of Jesus' atoning work on the cross. The term "all" in this passage is better understood

as a reference to people from every tribe, tongue, and nation, rather than every individual without exception. This interpretation is supported by the broader context of John's Gospel, which highlights the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's redemptive plan (e.g., John 10:16).

To argue that the drawing of "all men" in John 12:32 implies a universal drawing in John 6:44 is to overlook the distinct contexts and purposes of each passage. While both passages use the verb ἔλκω, their meaning and scope are different. John 6:44 emphasizes the Father's effectual drawing of those He has chosen, while John 12:32 highlights the universal scope of Jesus' atoning work, encompassing both Jews and Gentiles.

The proper exegesis of these two passages demonstrates that the "all" in John 12:32 refers to the ingathering of people from every nation, not necessarily every individual. This interpretation does not conflict with the effectual drawing described in John 6:44 but rather complements it by showing the comprehensive nature of Jesus' mission to save people from all corners of the earth.

Furthermore, the context of John 6:44 is closely connected to both verse 37 and verse 65, creating a cohesive argument for the effectual nature of God's drawing. In verse 37, Jesus says, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." The certainty of the connection between the Father's giving and the believer's coming implies that the drawing is more than a mere wooing but an effectual action.

In verse 65, Jesus further reinforces this point by stating, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." In this passage, Jesus refers back to verses 37 and 44, emphasizing the divine initiative and the essential role of the Father's granting for an individual to come to Him. It is crucial for those reading verse 44 to examine the immediate context of verse 37, which establishes that Jesus is speaking specifically about those

whom the Father draws, and the fact that these individuals will inevitably come to faith in Him. Those who advocate for a universal drawing of all people based on John 12:32 overlook the vital context found in John 6, which unmistakably shows that Jesus is referring to all those whom the Father draws, and only these individuals will come to faith in Jesus. This underscores the importance of interpreting Scripture within its appropriate context and strengthens the scriptural support for the doctrine of monergistic regeneration. This statement highlights the indispensable role of God's effectual calling in the process of salvation, providing additional support for the Reformed doctrine of irresistible grace.

By integrating verse 65 into the argument, we see a clear and consistent message throughout John 6 that underscores the Father's sovereign and effectual work in drawing people to Jesus. The interconnectedness of verses 37, 44, and 65 demonstrate that coming to Jesus is not merely a matter of human will or effort but is ultimately dependent on the Father's gracious and powerful action in the lives of His chosen people.

What do the words "give" or "grant" in verses 37 and 65 respectively mean?

The words "give" (δώσει, dosei) in verse 37 and "grant" (δίδωμι, didomi) in verse 65 share the same Greek root and convey the idea of bestowing, granting, or committing something to someone. In the context of John 6, these words refer to the Father giving or granting certain individuals to the Son.

In relation to faith, the passage is unmistakable in that the giving or granting precedes faith, as it is the Father's sovereign action that enables individuals to come to Jesus and believe in Him. This divine action is rooted in God's eternal plan and purpose. John 17 supports this understanding, as Jesus says, "For you granted him authority

over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him." This statement indicates an eternal agreement between the Father and the Son to save a people for themselves.

This understanding is not mere speculation but is supported by other biblical texts as well. For example, Ephesians 1:4-5 states, "Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will." This passage highlights God's eternal plan to save His people through Jesus Christ and emphasizes the pre-temporal nature of this divine decision.

From these texts, we can learn that our salvation is rooted in God's eternal plan and purpose, which involves the Father giving or granting His chosen people to the Son, and the Son providing eternal life for them. This truth underscores the sovereignty of God in salvation, the security of the believer, and the glorious interplay between the members of the Trinity in our redemption.

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