

# 11th Sunday after Pentecost August 5, 2018

Seventh Sunday after the Trinity Proper 13 (18)

Year B – the Gospel of Mark

**LUTHERAN**

## **LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY**

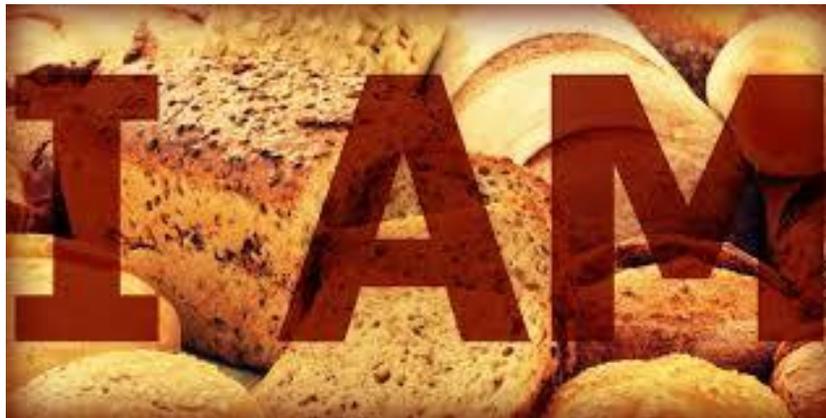
*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.  
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms  
of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134
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<http://lutheran-church-regina.com/blogs/post/sermon-pr-ted-giese-august-2nd-john-622-35-the-bread-of-life>

### Hymn of the Day

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 918 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 54**

“Guide me, O Thou great Redeemer (Jehovah)”

"The popularity of (*William*) Williams's text ("Guide me, O thou great Jehovah") is undoubtedly aided by its association with CWM RHONDDA, composed in 1905 by John Hughes (b. Dowlais, Glamorganshire, Wales, 1873; d. Llantwit Fardre, Wales, 1932) during a church service for a Baptist *Cymanfa Ganu* (song festival) in Capel Rhondda, Pontypridd, Wales. Hughes received little formal education; at age twelve he was already working as a doorboy at a local mining company in Llantwit Fardre. He eventually became an official in the traffic department of the Great Western Railway. Much of his energy was devoted to the Salem Baptist Church in Pontypridd, where he served as both deacon and precentor... The tune is named after the valley of the Rhondda River, a coal mining area in Wales. Though composed with simple melodic means, CWM RHONDDA is a vigorous melody in major tonality (contrary to the popular belief that most Welsh tunes are minor). Sing in harmony. The altos and basses may wish to sing the little notes on the last line as they repeat the words "evermore," "strength and shield," and "sing to you." Accompany in a forceful, confident manner. --*Psalter Hymnal Handbook*"

- [https://hymnary.org/tune/cwm\\_rhondda\\_hughes](https://hymnary.org/tune/cwm_rhondda_hughes)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UdPGoF6KZM> "Chosen as a tribute to Princess Diana, this Hymn was sung by the Choir of Westminster Abbey in the Official Royal Wedding of Prince William & Kate Middleton. The same was the last hymn sung at Princess Diana's funeral."
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofp6rdAgRrY> with a bit of a fanfare and lyrics.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7s1suWhb5KA> "I am not Welsh but I love the traditional music that has come out of Wales. I have uploaded this to try and make US listeners aware that the version they appear to play and sing is not true to the original tune..." "This makes me patriotic for Wales. And I'm not even Welsh." "I hate religion but love the music." "We sang this Hymn in Church just yesterday. Being Mormon (LDS) it is one of our standard hymns and beloved by all. I really cannot discern any difference except for using Jehova in place of Redeemer. It is a wonderful version." "I'm a non-practicing Catholic, but I feel like I should stand when I hear this. Breathtaking :-)" "One Day I hope to hear this sung in St Peters Basilica, In Welsh!"

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

**Exodus 16:2-15; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15 or 2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a (Next week: 1 Kings 19:1-8; RCL, 1 Kings 19:4-8 or 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 31-33)**

*"...The story begins with a complaint, a death-wish, and a stark assertion of lack (Exodus 16:2-3). The congregation has left the land of Egypt only to find itself in a dry and barren wilderness (16:2). They are united by insecurity, anxiety, and hunger. Their complaint soon emerges as a central*

*motivator in the narrative: four times the congregation is told that God acted because God heard their complaint (16:7, 8, 9, 12)...*

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3433](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3433) [Anathea Portier-Young](#) Associate Professor of Old Testament, Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC

<sup>2</sup> And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, <sup>3</sup> and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. <sup>5</sup> On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” <sup>6</sup> So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, <sup>7</sup> and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” <sup>8</sup> And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

<sup>9</sup> Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’” <sup>10</sup> And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. <sup>11</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup> “I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

<sup>13</sup> In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. <sup>14</sup> And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. <sup>15</sup> When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?”<sup>[a]</sup> For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

- a. [Exodus 16:15](#) Or “*It is manna*”; Hebrew *man hu*

“The present often seems worse than the past. We often romanticize the “days of yore” and think of them as better than now... we think back to when everyone just went to church because it was “what you did.” And we assume that this was better. Maybe it was better, maybe not...

Or we think back and look at society and culture and think things were so much better than. People were more polite, you didn’t have to lock your doors, everything was closed on Sunday, no school would ever schedule activities on Wednesday nights, etc.

I could go on and on about the things we think were “better” back in the previous times. But I think the main reason we romanticize the past is that we know that we can get through the past whereas the present and future is still undecided...

The God of Israel, however, is not a God of the past. This God is a God of the present and future, one who calls us to new places and new ways of being in relationship with God and with each other. Jesus himself hinted at this idea when he taught, “[H]ave you not read what was said to you by God, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is God not of the dead, but of the living” (Matthew 22:31-32; cf. Mark 12:26-27, Luke 20:37-38)...

And in this story of bread from heaven, we are reminded that while the future may be uncertain God does not send us to a place where we will not be provided for. As God tells Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day” (Exo 16:4). God will provide us what we need to go on, to live and to survive in our wilderness places. It is a promise that God will be with us daily, providing us what we need to get by, whether this “bread from heaven” is physical or spiritual food.

And lastly, how God provides may be in ways that we don’t recognize at first and we’re unsure what God is at work doing...”

Where are those gifts and blessings God has sent that we don’t immediately recognize? What are some of the things we have that we haven’t realized is God’s doing in order that we might be people of life and love and not people dragged down by what always was? Where is God raining “bread from heaven” in your life and in the life of your church or family or community in order that it might find its way forward in the wilderness, away from the past of bondage and into a new day of life with God?

As Jesus taught his disciples to pray, so we too pray this day: “Give us today our daily bread,” whatever form that bread might take in order that we can be the liberated people of God.”

- <http://gmcelroy.typepad.com/desertscribblings/2008/09/september-21-2008-nineteenth-sunday-after-pentecost.html> [Geoff McElroy](#)

**Psalm 145:10-21; RCL, Psalm 78:23-29 or Psalm 51:1-12 (Psalm 34:1-8; RCL, Psalm 34:1-8 or Psalm 130)**

*“The psalm contains a comprehensive expression of praise for God as heavenly king. Perhaps this is why the psalm’s superscription designates it as a “song of praise” (Tehillah). Psalm 145 is the only psalm to be identified this way. The Talmud recognizes its unique identity as a song of praise by saying, “Everyone who repeats the Tehillah of David thrice a day may be sure that he is a child of the world to come” (Berakot 4b).<sup>1</sup> What the Talmud surely recognizes is that Psalm 145 invites the believer to praise God in ways that acknowledge God’s exclusive prerogative as ruler of the cosmos and God’s unique care for those who seek him. This central set of concerns is expressed in verses 10-18...”*

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2499](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2499) [Jerome Creach](#) Robert C. Holland Professor of Old Testament, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Penn.

### **Great Is the LORD A Song of Praise. Of David**

<sup>10</sup> All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,  
and all your saints shall bless you!

<sup>11</sup> They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom  
and tell of your power,

- <sup>12</sup> to make known to the children of man your<sup>[a]</sup> mighty deeds,  
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
- <sup>13</sup> Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

[The LORD is faithful in all his words  
and kind in all his works.]<sup>[b]</sup>

- <sup>14</sup> The LORD upholds all who are falling  
and raises up all who are bowed down.
- <sup>15</sup> The eyes of all look to you,  
and you give them their food in due season.
- <sup>16</sup> You open your hand;  
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
- <sup>17</sup> The LORD is righteous in all his ways  
and kind in all his works.
- <sup>18</sup> The LORD is near to all who call on him,  
to all who call on him in truth.
- <sup>19</sup> He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;  
he also hears their cry and saves them.
- <sup>20</sup> The LORD preserves all who love him,  
but all the wicked he will destroy.
- <sup>21</sup> My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,  
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

- a. [Psalm 145:12](#) Hebrew *his*; also next line
- b. [Psalm 145:13](#) These two lines are supplied by one Hebrew manuscript, Septuagint, Syriac (compare Dead Sea Scroll)

"Psalm 145 is the last of a group of eight psalms at the end of Book Five of the Psalter that are ascribed, in their superscriptions, to David (Psalms 138-145).

It is an acrostic, in which in each verse of the psalm begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Acrostic poems were the works of highly skilled literary artists and functioned in ancient Israelite literature in a number of ways. Acrostics were most likely memory devices to aid in private and public -- that is, individual and corporate -- recitation. In addition, they literarily summarized all that could be said or needed to be said about a particular subject, summing it up from *alif* to *tav*, from A to Z.

Adele Berlin, in an article in a 1985 *festschrift*, comments on the structure of Psalm 145: "The poet praises God with everything from A to Z: his praise is all inclusive. More than that, the entire alphabet, the source of all words, is marshaled praise of God. One cannot actually use all of the words in a language, but by using the alphabet one uses all potential words."<sup>1</sup>

The Babylonian Talmud tractate Berakot 4b states that Psalm 145, like the *shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4-5: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD is our God; the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."), is to be recited three times a day and everyone who does so, "may be sure that he (or she) is a child of the world to come."

Psalm 145 appears in the Jewish Prayer Book more than any other psalm in the Psalter. Also, the Dead Sea Psalm scroll 11QPs<sup>a</sup> contains a version of Psalm 145 in which the refrain, "Blessed is the LORD and blessed is his name forever and ever," is included after each verse, indicating some sort of liturgical use.

All indications are the words of this psalm were and are a vital part of the faith of the Jewish people..."

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=356](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=356) **Nancy deClaissé-Walford** Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages, McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, GA

### **Ephesians 4:1-16; RCL, the same reading (Ephesians 4:17-5:2; RCL, Ephesians 4:25-5:2)**

The readings from Ephesians that will continue through September 2.

*"Our passage begins the so-called "moral" section of Paul's letter to the Ephesians.*

*In other words, commentators often remark that in chapters 1-3 the focus is on doctrine while chapters 4-6 highlight implications for the personal and social life of Christians. But the truth is a little more complicated. These verses contain a number of images and metaphors that are not neatly contained in the category of "morality."*

*Our passage appears to be tied together by the theme of unity in the church. Depending upon the interpreter's situation, it might be useful to speak to the need of unity in the church. But there is also a wealth of other ideas in these verses that can be unpacked separately..."*

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1348](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1348) **Mark Tranvik** Professor of Religion, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN

### **Unity in the Body of Christ**

4 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,<sup>3</sup> eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism,<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.<sup>7</sup> But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.<sup>8</sup> Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,  
and he gave gifts to men.” [Cited from Ps. 68:18](#)

<sup>9</sup> (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) <sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds<sup>[c]</sup> and teachers,<sup>[d]</sup> <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood,<sup>[e]</sup> to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in

love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

- a. [Ephesians 4:8](#) The Greek word *anthropoi* can refer to both men and women
- b. [Ephesians 4:9](#) Or *the lower parts of the earth?*
- c. [Ephesians 4:11](#) Or *pastors*
- d. [Ephesians 4:11](#) Or *the shepherd-teachers*
- e. [Ephesians 4:13](#) Greek *to a full-grown man*

“Ephesians 4:1 is a major hinge in the letter. Here the author turns from describing all that God has done for the cosmos, the church, and Paul himself to consider the kind of life that is the fitting response.

As the author turns toward exhortation, the preacher will need to be clear and careful so that this text does not lose its moorings in God’s grace. Fortunately, this passage is rich with reminders that the life being described comes as God’s gift. Three aspects of that divine giving are particularly highlighted.

**First**, the exhortation begins with a reminder that God is the one who has called us. This “worthy” life must begin there. The calling referred to here is not some particular activity or occupation, but is the entirety of our life in Christ. This life within God’s grace has always been God’s plan...

**Second**, since we have already heard how God intends to bring everything to unity in Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10), it is unsurprising to hear that the worthy life nurtures the unity of the church. Verse 3 calls us to “maintain” (or “guard”) the unity given by the Spirit. Though this unity is certainly central to the exhortations of this passage, it is first of all a gift from God rather than something we produce.

The author stresses this by naming seven (the number of completion) things that are “one ‘... Finally, the list comes to its climax in the one God and Father of all, whose saving activity fills the cosmos...

**Third**, “bearing with one another” (verse 2) will be necessary because God has not only given the church its fundamental unity, but has also given the church a rich diversity of members. Each is a recipient of God’s grace (verse 7) as the Spirit calls, equips, and gives people to the church. The goal behind such giving is not uniformity, but a unity which reflects and serves God’s reconciliation of the whole creation in Christ...

...this text reminds us that we are held by the calling of God, we are given to one another by the Spirit, and we are united in the Lord who is head of the whole body.

The church’s growth into Christ (verse 15) is God’s gift and promise. We have not yet grown up, but it is happening as we continue to encounter one another at the Supper, at the hearing and singing of the Word, and in the ministries of the church. As Martin Luther once wrote:

*This life, therefore, is not godliness but the process of becoming godly, not health but getting well, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not now what we shall be, but we are on the way. The process is not yet finished, but it is actively going on. This is not the goal but it is the right road. At present, everything does not gleam and sparkle, but everything is being cleansed.<sup>1</sup>*

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3749](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3749) **Brian Peterson**

Professor of New Testament, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC

**John 6:22-35; RCL, John 6:24-35 (John 6:35-51; RCL, John 6:35, 41-51)**

*"...Today and in the next two weeks we will be looking at the Gospel of St. John chapter 6 and we will dig into what Jesus means when He says, "I am the Bread of Life whoever comes to Me shall not hunger and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst." There is a lot going on in this chapter of the Gospel of St. John..."*

- <http://lutheran-church-regina.com/blogs/post/sermon-pr-ted-giese-august-2nd-john-622-35-the-bread-of-life> Rev. Ted Giese, Pastor, Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Regina Saskatchewan Canada.

*"The text for this week sets up in much the same way as last week's. The crowd is looking for Jesus.*

*This time they have trailed around the lake to the new location on the other side. The new location is going to provide a new context for the interpretation of the miracles from the previous text. The crowd is still struggling with what happened. The prophet/king understanding of who Jesus is will now be stretched.*

*It is now time for Jesus to unpack, to deconstruct, the sign. The sign was not about having a belly full of food. The sign is about who Jesus is...*

*This conversation about food (verse 27), manna (verse 31), and bread (verses 26, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35) provides an interesting parallel to the enigmatic, multi-level conversation about water with the woman at the well (chapter 4).*

- Both include references to "ancestors" -- Moses (6:32) and Jacob (4:12)
- Both include the identical "command" to Jesus: "Lord/Sir give" -- (6:34, 4:15)
- Both share the desire for a permanent supply of bread/water -- (6:35, 4:14)

*Just as the conversation with the woman at the well was about water, but was not, this conversation is about bread, but is not..."*

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1405](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1405) **Ginger Barfield** Professor of Theology and Executive Director of the Academy of Faith and Leadership, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University, Columbia, S.C.

## The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 6th Chapter

### **I Am the Bread of Life**

<sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.

<sup>24</sup> 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.

<sup>25</sup> When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" <sup>26</sup> 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.*  
<sup>27</sup> *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.* <sup>28</sup> Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?"  
<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered them, *"This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."* <sup>30</sup> So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?" <sup>31</sup> Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."* <sup>34</sup> They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."  
<sup>35</sup> 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... (quote continues through verse 40 – part of next weeks reading.)"*

*"This is the Gospel of the Lord" "Praise to You, O Christ"*

#### **"Background and situation..."**

The crowd is "seeking Jesus." (Seeking Jesus is a common theme in the fourth gospel.) They found him on "the other side"--again, literally, "beyond the sea". They address him as "rabbi." The title is respectful. It appears half a dozen times in the fourth gospel and does not have the negative connotation that it does in, say, Mark's gospel. Still, it is a lesser title than "savior of the world" (4:42) or even "prophet" (6:14).

#### **"When did you come to be here..."**

The theology of the fourth gospel would answer this question by saying that the *logos*, the Word, has always existed, but "came to be" here when "the Word became flesh" (1:14). Philosophically speaking, when the Word became flesh, the "essential" entered into the life of the world and became "existential."

As is customary for the fourth gospel, Jesus seems to speak on one level while his listeners relate on another. (See the dialog with Nicodemus in chapter 3 as one among several possible examples.) Jesus turns their question around. Rather than talk about when he "came to be" here, Jesus responds with "truly, truly," which underlines what is to follow, and poses a query as to why they are there.

He says that they are seeking him not because they saw "signs," when, actually, the author of the fourth gospel had said the people were responding to his "signs" (6:2, 6:14). That was then, however, and this was now. Jesus has decided that they weren't responding to signs any longer, and that they were merely interested in getting a good meal--"because you ate out of the loaves and were fed."

#### **Food that perishes...**

The contrast is between "perishing food" and "abiding (*menein*) food into life eternal." *Menein* is one of the most important verbs in the fourth gospel. It means "reside with," "abide," or "dwell." In every single case, Jesus is the one who "abides," the one who is there, the one who is with the people...

#### **The works of God...**

Any Jewish crowd would know what it meant to "work the works of God." They are to observe the Torah. But this is a crowd "on the other side" and they seem to have no knowledge of Torah. In any case, the "work of God" is that "you might faith into that one whom he sent."

NRSV and other translations typically translate *pisteuein* as "believe." *Pisteuein* is a verb which means "faith." Unfortunately, using faith as a verb sounds odd in English which is why the translators made the regrettable leap to "believe" instead.

The Greek actual phrase is *pisteuete eis*--"faith into." The fourth gospel uses this phrase quite often--26 times! It does not mean "believing" things about Jesus, as many suppose. It means, rather, "trust into" Jesus, which is an orientation of one's entire self.

### Back to "signs" ...

We are back to "signs" again. It is interesting that the crowd asks "what sign?" since Jesus had just done one of his more spectacular ones, the feeding of the 5000. If they get a "sign," then maybe they will "see" and maybe they will "faith." (The verbs are in the subjunctive, expressing contingency.)

They cite the tradition regarding manna in the wilderness, and even cite scripture: "He gave them bread out of heaven to eat." This is all the more remarkable since here they are requesting the very sign they had just been given.

Jesus' answer is to assert God over Moses, and that God "gives"--present tense--while Moses "gave". The crowd is focusing on the past. Jesus is shifting them to present and future. Moses gave "the bread from heaven" while God gives "the true bread from heaven."

Where once God gave "bread" to the Israelites wandering in the desert, now the "bread of God" is "the one coming down"--Jesus--who "gives life to the universe." One notes also that the word "gives" is a present participle, which subtly intensifies its meaning and implies continuous action. One might translate: "The bread of God...is in a continuous process of giving life to the whole world."

The crowd responds by calling Jesus "Lord." (*Kyrie* may mean either "sir" or "lord," much as *senor* may mean "sir" or "lord" in Spanish.) First, they had called Jesus "rabbi." They've moved to "Lord." They're making progress! Their response is similar to that of the Samaritan woman in chapter 4. Where she had said, "Lord, give me this water," the crowd says, "Lord, always give us this bread."...

➤ [http://www.progressiveinvolvement.com/progressive\\_involvement/2012/07/lectionary-blogging-john-6-24-35.html](http://www.progressiveinvolvement.com/progressive_involvement/2012/07/lectionary-blogging-john-6-24-35.html) [John Petty](#)



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