

Word notes Sunday 28/2/10 Tony Hodge
Jesus, the Bread of Life

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Text: John 6:35-59

Jesus described himself saying “I am” in eight different ways, “The Bread of Life” is one of these.

This passage comes after Jesus had fed 5,000 using only a few loaves and fish, in Capernaum some had followed looking for more (food) which leads Jesus to tell them not to look for earthly food by spiritual food. Jesus takes this a launching platform to tell them of his ministry on earth – to be the Bread of Life. Not earthly food that gives sustenance for a short while but food from heaven that brings eternal life.

The Jews he was speaking to were not prepared to accept Jesus came from heaven for this purpose – “isn’t this Joseph and Mary’s son?” Many today will accept Jesus as a man, with good things to say but reject the idea he is also one with Father God, sent by Him for the salvation of the world. Jesus points out that only those whom the Father draws near will come to him – it’s not about his earthly being but his heavenly identity.

In using the concept of “bread” and addressing the provision of manna to Israel in the wilderness Jesus is showing how the one was provided by God for life just as the other is too – the main difference being that Jesus brings eternal life and is once and for all, not like manna that goes off after a day. Manna like the Levitical sacrifices (referred to as the bread of God, Lev 21:21,22, KJV, NKJV) had to be re-accessed each time someone sinned or was ill or on a regular schedule, imperfect compared Jesus sacrifice which is perfect.

Many Jews found it too hard to accept eating Jesus flesh and drinking his blood – understandable as both ideas were detestable to their culture (and ours!). They failed to grasp that Jesus was speaking symbolically while at the same time talking of the reality of his physical sacrifice that we must accept for ourselves.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

Read John 6:35. What kind of hunger and thirst is Jesus talking about?

Read John 6:53. How do we feed on Jesus (Matt 4:4, Jn 8:51 & John 1)?

How do we “drink Jesus’ blood” (Matt 26:26-28, Luke 22:19,20, Mark 14:24)?

How does the Lord’s Supper (“Breaking Bread”, “Communion” Luke 22:19,20, 1 Cor 11:24-26) fit into this teaching?

Why do we do this?

Do we eat bread and drink wine, eat and drink the body and blood of Jesus or eat and drink flesh and blood?

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

April 4th, Easter Day, we will have a guest service at NCC from 10:30. Discuss how to reach out and invite people. How might we bless others with God’s love at Easter time?