

John 6:35, 41-51  
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### **Another chance**

#### **John 6:35, 41-51**

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall 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 the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors 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. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

### **Another chance**

This morning Jesus delivers the message he has come down from Heaven to give.

We get another chance. Every one of us gets another chance. We've messed up, we've done what we know is wrong, we've coveted, and lied. We've lusted and still, we get another chance.

Since the very beginning we've done what God has told us not to do.

God planted humanity in a garden. A perfect garden of beauty and life without pain, without tears. A garden of safety and security. A garden where God walked among us; a garden filled with unimaginable good.

God commanded just one thing. He told us to stay away from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

We failed.

Ever since those first souls ate of that tree, we've known both good and evil. I for one would happily give up that knowledge and return to the garden of good.

When God freed our ancestors from the slavery that Egypt imposed it didn't take long before our ancestors doubted and rebelled against God. When things are going well for us we tend to try to abandon our need for a power greater than our own.

It is in our weakness that we call to God for the help. Help that is always there for us. It is in our weakness that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are most dear to us; in our weakness we are cherished by God.

It is in our own perceived strength that our foolish stupidity is most evident. Our stupidity that makes us think that we don't need God.

Jesus came to show us the right path. Jesus came to give us another chance. Jesus came down from Heaven to give us another chance at perfect life, to give us a chance to live in the garden God has always intended for us.

When Jesus talks about his body taking away hunger and thirst he means much more than what we might typically think. He isn't being literal when he speaks of bread made from flour and drink made from grapes.

He says, "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." But he starts by saying, "I am the bread of life." and that makes all the difference.

He says, I am the way back to God's perfect garden. Listen to me, learn from me, believe in me, follow me back. Follow me back to God's garden. Follow me back to the garden of life eternal.

Throughout the ages we have proven to God that without His help we are not able to avoid evil.

We proved it in the garden with the Tree of the Knowledge. We just couldn't stay away from what we knew was wrong. We proved it again when Moses

relayed God's law to us in the 10 Commandments. I think all of us know how badly we've failed in that regard.

More personally and more specifically each of us knows that we have not loved God with everything we are and we know that we have not loved those around us as we love ourselves.

We also know that when we start once again to live into God's will, when we repent, that God forgives us when we ask it of God.

Our reading from Ephesians gives us examples of how to live into God's will. Paul lays out what Jesus taught us.

Be angry but don't sin; don't hold onto anger; don't make room for the devil. Don't steal; labor and work honestly and share what you earn with the needy. Don't say ugly things; build others up and let your words be helpful. Put away bitterness, wrath, anger, slander, and the desire for revenge; be kind and tender to each other; forgive one another as God in Christ has forgiven you.

When we confess that our thoughts and our words and our deeds have not been up to God's standards and ask God to forgive us that forgiveness is granted. Because of the "The Bread of Life". Because of Jesus giving his very body and blood to redeem us over and over and over again.

Perfect forgiveness. Perfect peace.

This morning Jesus gives us the message he came down from Heaven to give. We get another chance. The garden is still waiting for us. Jesus is our chance get back to the garden.

We are called to listen to Jesus. Have faith in Jesus. Choose the garden of eternal life. Leave sin and all the terrible pain and heartache it brings behind. Choose Jesus.

Jesus holds out his hand and beckons to us, beckons to you and beckons to me. Jesus calls to every one of us saying, my Father's garden is still waiting, it's not too late".

Look for ways in your life as I look for ways in my life to hold fast to Jesus and live with him in beauty and truth forevermore.