

Identity Crisis

- As adults, we tend to identify ourselves, and others identify us, by what we do and the positions we hold...
 - Often the level of respect granted to us is directly proportionate to the amount of authority that accompanies the title...
- So why is it that we so easily dismiss the authority of the sovereign Lord of All Jesus Christ?...
- **Jesus stated in Matthew 28:18** “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me (Matt. 28:18).” This is a clear statement of His authority.
 - After this He states His authority, he commands, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (**Matt. 28:19-20**)
 - The imperative command is not the word “Go” but “make” (*μαθητεύω*). We are to make disciples ...
- In his book *Reinventing Jesus*, Ed Komoszewski rightly stated, “the media's assault on the biblical Jesus, postmodernism's laissez-faire attitude toward the truth, and America's collective ignorance of scripture have joined together to create a culture of cynicism. In short, society has been conditioned to doubt.”¹
- I propose we need to strengthen our resolve by once again gaining a full understanding of whom it is that we serve; Jesus Christ the Sovereign Lord of all Creation.
 - What did Jesus Christ say about Himself?
 - I am the bread of Life (6:35)
 - I am the light of the world (8:12; 9:5)
 - I am the door (10:9)
 - I am the good Shepherd (10:11)
 - I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)
 - I am the way the truth and the life (14:6)
 - I am the vine (15:5)
 - I am (4:26, 8:24, 28, 58; 13:13, 19; 18:5-6, 8)
- Today I am going to concentrate on the first I Am in this list; “I am the Bread of Life” (6:35).
- **John 6:22-59** “On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been...”
- **Jn. 6:25** After Jesus had fed the 5000 we read in **John 6:15**, “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” (6:15). When their bellies were full and their needs met, they desired to make Christ their King; now that they were hungry again, Christ is returned to the status of Rabbi. (Jn. 6:25)
- **Jn. 6:26-27**. He does not address the question and states; “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me...” (Jn. 6:26-27).
 - Jesus begins his response with the familiar “truly, truly” or “verily, Verily” the double *amēn*, that states listen I tell you the truth, marking this as an important statement.
- **John 6:28** “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” (6:28). Gerald L. Borchert (Ber-Kurt) writing in the New American Commentary writes that the occurrence of this question, “suggests that the conversation is most probably the kind that would have taken place in a synagogue among those who were bent on gaining precise definitions of legitimate, God-honoring work that would provide the devotee with God’s assured affirmation.”²
- **John 6:29** “Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent” (6:29).
 - To truly believe in something requires complete dedication to the thought at the subconscious level; It must become more than a presupposition. To truly believe in something means that it has become part, of what philosophers refer to, as your noetic structure, the sum total of all your beliefs and the relationships between those beliefs. This is not a temporary commitment; it is a lifelong dedication, a complete realigning of one’s former beliefs. The Jews that had gathered with Jesus in the synagogue recognized that what Jesus was asking for would require a dramatic shift in their thinking.
- **John 6:30-31** “So they said to him...”
 - They wanted proof; did they not just witness Jesus feeding 5000 people from 5 loaves of barley and two fish? Human nature is a funny thing, sometimes people will refuse to believe something even if all the evidence points to the truth of the matter. We are always looking for that ironclad “proof,” yet we define “proof” in such a way that one begins to wonder if we can truly “prove” anything.
- **John 6:32-34** “Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses...”
 - (6:32) Jesus is quick to correct this misuse of Old Testament scripture and then asserts, “For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (6:33). For you and I, it is easy to note the reference to the gospel message in this verse; however, the Jews completely missed the point. Still thinking about their stomachs they replied, “Sir, give us this bread always” (6:34).
- **Jn 6:35-40** “Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes...”

¹ J. Ed Komoszewski, M. James Sawyer, and Daniel B Wallace. *Reinventing Jesus; How Contemporary Skeptics Miss the Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture*. (Grand Rapid, MI: Kregel Publications, 2006), 16

² Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1-11*, vol. 25A, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 262.

- Christ replies, “*Egō eimi*,” “I Am” followed by “the bread of life,” as I mentioned in the beginning, this is one of seven such sayings in the book of John. Christ asserts, that it is not a physical food to which He has been referring, but the work of the Father in Him.
- The authority of Christ’s sovereign rule transcends all but the Father Himself. He has power over death itself, He will not lose one single soul of all the Father has entrusted Him with, and in the end, He will come for His Church. Why is it so difficult for many in the Church today to get beyond seeing Christ as just friend, provider, and our help in time of need? While these are all true of Christ, He is so much more; He is the Sovereign Lord, the ruler of all creation
- **Jn 6:41-42** “So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”...”
 - This is no different from what we face today when nonbelievers attack the validity of the scriptures... we should note how Christ responded to this particular attack.
- **Jn 6:43-44** “Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves...”
 - Jesus does not attempt to answer the allegations and quickly brings the conversation back on point...the gospel message must remain central, not goofy allegations.
 - Verse 44 is the subject of much debate depending on whether one takes an Arminian or Calvinist bent, for the purpose of today’s message it will suffice to say, salvation is God’s work, and cannot be separated from the drawing power of the Holy Spirit. As Christians, we are given the honor of being His messengers, so again we need to know and understand His message; otherwise, how are we to teach others?
- **Jn 6:45-47** “It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard...”
 - Jesus turns to scripture for support of His argument, He again makes the case that it is the Father’s teaching that draws one to Christ, and reaffirms His authority as the one “who is from God.” Christ again asserts the double *amēn*, I tell you truth, this is important, “whoever believes has eternal life.”
- **Jn. 6:48-51** “I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died...”
 - *Egō eimi*, “I am the bread of life,” Jesus reasserts that it is He who brings eternal life. The mana given in the wilderness was not sufficient to sustain life eternally, those who ate of it still died. However, the bread that Christ has to offer sustains us for eternity.
 - **John 1:14** “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14).
 - That Jesus refers to His giving of flesh for “the life of the world” certainly points towards His crucifixion as well.
- **Jn 6:52** “The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”
 - Why they argued is not stated in the text, but they certainly seemed to miss the entire point of the analogy and rather than taking Christ’s words metaphorically, they continued to take them literally.
- **Jn 6:53-57** “So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man ...”
 - While it is certainly possible that Jesus had the Eucharist (Lord’s Supper) in sight here that does not seem to be keeping within context, instead to “feed on His flesh and drink His blood” is better seen as a strong metaphor for believing in Christ. Borchert rightly stated, “The means to life, accordingly, is not eating and drinking communion elements, but believing is the means of inwardly accepting the suffering death of the Passover Lamb who gave his life for the sin of the world”³
 - Christ promises to “abide” in those who “feed on His flesh and drink His blood,” again a strong metaphor for belief in Christ. The imagery presented is profound and should lead the Christian to understand, this is not a belief that can be changed. To believe in Christ requires a complete digestion of His truth and an infusion of His life giving blood.
- **Jn. 6:58-59** “This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died...”
 - Jesus Christ is the “bread of Life” sent from heaven to do the will of the Father. These passages simply do not allow for us to view Jesus Christ as anything less than the Son of the living God, the sovereign Lord of All creation. Whose authority comes directly from the Father and in whose presence, every knee shall bow.

As Christians, we above all need to have a right understanding of Jesus Christ, an understanding that is only gained by the continual daily study of His word, our daily bread. It is only through this that we may keep the great commission and make disciples of all nations. With attacks on fellow Christians happening throughout the world today; now, perhaps more than ever before we need to remain strong in our faith. In this time of great need, I implore you, take the time to learn about Christ, see Him for who He really is and then teach others to do the same. Maybe together we can begin to reduce “America’s collective ignorance of scripture.”

³ Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1–11*, vol. 25A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 272.