



STUDY GUIDE – March 29, 2020

Message Title: The Bread of Life
Teaching Pastor: Brian C. Hughes

This study guide has been designed for Small Groups in mind, and can be used by individuals as well.

Warm-up/Icebreaker:

Guess the answer in each factoid:

1. Each American consumes, on average, _____ pounds of bread per year. (53)
2. Farmers receive approximately _____ from each loaf of bread sold. (5 cents, or less)
3. It takes 9 seconds for a combine to harvest enough wheat to make about _____ loaves of bread. (70)
4. Napoleon gave a common bread its name when he demanded a loaf of dark rye bread for his horse during the Prussian campaign. "Pain pour Nicole," he ordered, which meant "Bread for Nicole," his horse. To Germanic ears, the request sounded like _____," which is the term we use today for this traditional loaf. (pumpernickel)

Pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for your Presence as we go deeper in our understanding of your Word. Thank you for the beautiful gift of being able to draw near to You as a community. Please clear our hearts and minds of what is going on around us, and give us renewed sustenance, found only in You.

Get Started:

Bread is popular around the world, and one of oldest foods to exist. Bread is a powerful symbol, seen as a vital staple of life. Think about it. In times of inclement weather forecasted, or in the current "storm" the world is facing, it is considered a life giving and essential asset that people race to get.

Read John 6:51

Read the following quote out loud: "In each of our lives Jesus comes as the Bread of Life - to be eaten, to be consumed by us. This is how He loves us. Then Jesus comes in our human life as the hungry one, the other, hoping to be fed with the Bread of our life, our hearts by loving, and our hands by serving. In loving and serving, we prove that we have been created in the likeness of God, for God is Love and when we love we are like God. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect. -Mother Teresa

Considering all of the above, how can our lives reflect that we both **have** the bread of life and **show** the bread of life in loving and serving?

Watch and Discuss video:

In the video, Pastor Brian talks about the correlation between the passover meal and the passover event, and how this was the turning upside down of a symbol that had endured for thousands of years.

Is this something that you had realized before or a new understanding to you?

Bread is a theme from the OT to the NT, first with God providing the manna in the wilderness to Passover to

Jesus stating that He is the bread of life and taking communion with His followers (on Passover) on the night he was betrayed. Communion is a powerful act to consider in the life of the follower of Jesus.

Bread of Life.... Jesus lived up to the title. But an unopened loaf does a person no good. Have you received the bread? Have you received God's forgiveness? -Max Lucado

Reflect and Commit:

Read Acts 2:37-47

Even in times of persecution or hardship, the church endured and continued on the mission and grew rapidly and passionately. They continued to take communion together with joyful hearts, despite their circumstances. The passage says *the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved (NIV)*.

How does this apply to the current situation we are all facing and what can we learn in practical application for how we live our lives currently?

Consider online communion together. (Take a moment to get bread and juice- even if people don't gather the items, the small group host/leader can read the scripture and people can pray individually.)

Communion began on the annual celebration of Passover when Jesus told his disciples to remember his sacrifice as they ate the bread and drank the wine. Just as Israel celebrated the sacrifice of the Passover lamb when the angel of death passed over their homes, so believers in Jesus celebrate and remember his sacrifice of our sins when he died on the cross.

Communion uses bread as a symbol of the body of Jesus and wine as a symbol of his blood. The act of taking communion does not save us, it is an act of worship and remembrance.

Read Luke 22:19-20 as you do communion together.

Pray:

Dear Lord, thank you for the awesome reminder that church didn't stop with the coronavirus... that we actually have gotten stronger. We may have felt held back, but we've actually reached farther. We may have felt suppressed, but we have actually been unleashed. We're still here. We're still moving. We're still on mission. Our church is stronger than ever. Thank you for the opportunity to center our thoughts and minds on Jesus, which is how we will continue to withstand the crisis around us and point others to you.