

JOHN SIX, THIRTY-FIVE

Intro: One reason for the familiarity of this verse is that it is the first of nine times that the Lord identifies Himself with the use of "I am":

- 1) "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51).
- 2) "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5).
- 3) "I am the door" (10:7, 9).
- 4) "I am the good shepherd" (10:11, 14).
- 5) "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25).
- 6) "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). This last one was in 11:25.
- 7) "I am the true vine" (John 15:1, 5).

These expressions are not found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Bishop Westcott (p. 102) says that "the figures with which it (i.e., "I am") is connected furnish a complete study of the Lord's work."

The background of this statement is the feeding of the 5,000--  
the one miracle which is recorded in all four Gospels!

The immediate result of that miracle was that the people were going to come and take Him by force to make Him king. Cf. 6:15.

Our Lord was never deceived by the response of people.

The next day they were still looking for Him, and they found Him across the sea of Tiberias. After they asked Him a question, He indicated that He knew exactly what was in their minds--and He tells them so, and then issues a solemn warning. Cf. 6:26, 27.

Their response indicates that they were familiar with the OT, that they took it literally, and that they had the feeling that the Lord might be at least comparable with Moses.

Then it was that the Lord spoke to them, giving them, among other things, the words of our text tonight. Let us notice how John has recorded it for us.

First, we have it on

- I. THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE AUTHORITY (John 6:35a): "And Jesus said unto them."

When Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church he said that he was thanking God without ceasing, because, when they received the word of God, they received it not as the word of men,

"BUT AS IT IS IN TRUTH, THE WORD OF GOD, WHICH EFFECTUALLY WORKETH ALSO IN YOU THAT BELIEVE" (1 Th. 2:13).

If you believe that the Bible is the Word of God, then you accept its authority--whether the words were written by Paul, or John, or Isaiah, or David, or any of the other writers.

HOW MUCH MORE, THEN, SHOULD WE ACCEPT THE AUTHORITY OF OUR LORD JESUSCHRIST! And especially is this true when we have come this far into the Gospel with John and have read all that John declares about Him, all that John said He did, and all the words of our Lord that are recorded.

II. THE GREATEST POSSIBLE CONDESCENSION: "I am the bread of life."

Imagine! The Lord identifying Himself with the basic food of the people. He did not claim to be a delicacy, but He claimed to be and to have that which would give life, eternal life, to the people. Cf. 6:27.

And, Bishop Ryle points out that at this point the Lord begins to refer to Himself in a most pointed way, using "I" and "me" no less than 35 times! He did not want them to miss the point: There is no life apart from Him--no eternal life!

Notice how simple our Lord was, and how simple the Gospel is. Spurgeon used to say that the longer he lived the more he blessed God "that we have not received a classical gospel, or a mathematical gospel, or a metaphysical gospel." It is not a gospel just for scholars or men of genius, but it is a gospel for the very lowest as well as for the highest. Cf. Sermons on Christ's Names and Titles, p. 93.

And He did not alter His message to make men understand it. He knew that no man would come, and no man would understand, if the Father did not draw him. Cf. 6:37, 44.

III. THE WIDEST POSSIBLE OFFER: "he that cometh to me . . . and he that believeth on me . . ."

It is the widest for two reasons:

A. Our Lord put no limitation on who might come.

He knew that all men needed to come, and He opened the way for all. Cf. John 3:16--where He was talking to a religious man. Cf. John 4:10--where He was talking to a sinful, Samaritan woman. If she had asked, He would give!

But then it is the widest for another reason:

B. He put it on a basis which made it available to all.

All anyone has to do is to come to Him--not to a church, not to any other person, and not with anything but a heart that is hungry and thirsty. And when a person is truly hungry, all he needs is to be told where he should go. Cf. Cornelius in Acts 10.

IV. THE MOST MARVELOUS POSSIBLE PROMISE: "shall never hunger . . . shall never thirst."

Here again we have two outstanding thoughts:

A. In the first place, our Lord meant to indicate that all who come to Christ and all who believe in Christ learn that their search is over.

Cf. John 6:66-68.

The Lord Jesus guarantees satisfaction. Think of Paul's testimony in Phil. 3:7, 8, "But what things were gained to me . . ."

I used to be the pastor of a church in Vancouver, B. C. Often on Sunday night we would sing hymns that I had never heard before. One of them I learned to love has the following words which fit in with this verse tonight:

"O Christ, in Thee my soul hath found,  
And found in Thee alone,  
The peace, the joy I sought so long,  
The bliss till now unknown.

"I sighed for rest and happiness,  
I yearned for them, not Thee;  
But while I passed my Savior by,  
His love laid hold on me.

"I tried the broken cisterns, Lord,  
But ah! the waters failed!  
E'en as I stooped to drink they'd fled,  
And mocked me as I wailed.

"The pleasures lost I sadly mourned,  
But never wept for Thee,  
Till grace the sightless eyes received,  
Thy loveliness to see.

"Now none but Christ can satisfy,  
None other name for me;  
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,  
Lord Jesus, found in Thee."

But there is another truth which makes this the most marvelous promise the Lord could have made.

- B. This is a promise that once you come to the Lord He will never let you be anything but His forever after.

Twice our Lord uses double negatives in this verse. Our translators have given us the word, "never." I wish they had said, absolutely never.

He did this again in John 10:27, 28.

We are so used to things that we can get in and out of that it is hard for us to realize that God can do something for us that will never come to an end--but He can! YOU WILL NEVER HUNGER. YOU WILL NEVER THIRST. YOU WILL NEVER PERISH.

I heard of a man not too long ago who said he believed this, but he didn't talk about it because he didn't want to offend people who rejected this truth. MAY I SAY TONIGHT THAT YOU CANNOT HOLD BACK ON THIS TRUTH WITHOUT ROBBING GOD OF GLORY WHICH IS DUE HIM. OUR LORD TALKED ABOUT IT. WHY SHOULD WE NOT REVEL IN THE FACT THAT OUR LORD IS ABLE TO SAVE US FOR EVER AND EVER AND EVER . . .

Concl: Are you not glad that the Lord said these words which we find here in John 6:35? There is enough truth in this one verse to enable every person in the world to know how to find satisfaction, and how to find eternal life. IT IS IN CHRIST. HE IS "THE BREAD OF LIFE." NO ONE ELSE IS!

Am I speaking to a Christian tonight who has forgotten this? Then come back to Him. He is not going to let you go. This is His promise regardless of how you feel about it. Your only place of blessing is in walking in fellowship with Him.

Perhaps you are searching. You are still looking. Would you believe me tonight if I told you your search could be over before you leave this place? No, Central Bible Church is not your answer. I am not your answer. BUT CHRIST IS! Will you come to Him? Will you believe in Him? That is all it takes. He has saved and satisfied countless numbers before, and He will do the same for you!