

The Bread of God

The VISION Newsletter / March 2014

Pastor E. Keith Hassell

John 6:30–66 (NKJV) “Therefore they said to Him, ‘What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?’ ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ ³² Then Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.’”

This generation of believers is in a spiritual drought. Multitudes of starving sheep are crying out to their shepherds for life-giving food. Instead of life-giving food they are being offered life-taking substitutes such as Pop-Tart Preaching and Twinkie Teaching. Instead of the Word they are being offered pop-psychology (“Dr. Fill-Em’ Up”), self-esteem band aids (“You Can Become a Better You”); flesh tingling experiences (Shake, Rattle, and Roll); dead man-made traditions (“Zombie Nation”); false visions and dreams (“Welcome to my nightmare!”); false revelations (“I see! I see! Said the blind man”); false prophecy (“Prophelying”); false teaching (“I Can’t Believe It’s Not Blabber”); Hype (“Hot Air Factory”); and entertainment (“Lights, camera, action!”) These substitutes inoculate people from receiving the truth. These actually produce spiritual malnourishment and starvation while giving people a sense of being satisfied.

What is the Bread that believers so desperately need today? It is the Bread of God—Jesus Himself: *“For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”* (John 6:33 NKJV) Jesus is the true Bread that comes down from the Father out of heaven. Those who feed on this Bread will live: *“As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.”* (John 6:57 NKJV)

Because the Church has strayed from the Word of God, God has sent a famine in the land: *“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord GOD, ‘That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.’”* (Amos 8:11 NKJV) This famine is not a famine of methods and means. We have more Bibles now than ever before and in every translation imaginable. We have an abundance of television and radio preachers. We have churches of every flavor and size. In fact, some would say that this is the greatest advancement of Christianity in history. The problem is that while the outlets are many, finding the true Bread of God is rare. If what is being offered is not the true Bread from heaven, it is not spiritual food and it will lead to spiritual famine.

Spiritual starvation and malnourishment abounds in the house of God today. Church members are spiritually sick. Churches are over run with fornication, adultery, divorce, drug abuse, alcoholism, and worldly music. Many young people in the church are turning to drugs and sex to find fulfillment. Young people as well as adults are out partying, drinking, dancing, dressing, shacking up, having sex, and doing whatever else the world is doing. Are these signs of healthy spiritual life in the church? No. They are signs of spiritual famine and disease.

Many sitting in church houses today are not hearing the Word of God regardless of how many sermons are preached. Today’s sermons are expected to be “fun” and “entertaining.” They are supposed to make people feel good about themselves regardless of their choices. Sermons should comfort rather than convict. They should be inclusive rather than divisive. However, the true preacher of God is called not only to *comfort the afflicted* but also to *afflict the comfortable*. David Wilkerson once said: “The most convenient and conscience-easing place to hide from the flaming eyes of a holy God is inside a dead church.” Dead preachers are more like pall bearers than

prophets. Instead of leading sheep to the green pastures, they comfort them in the blackest of sin. They say, "Yes, but our worship is full of praise and glory!" They fail to consider that worship from unclean lips and estranged hearts is an abomination to God. Some have grown so dull of hearing that they would rather be entertained than sit under the preaching of God's Word.

Not all is lost. In the midst of this spiritual famine, God is raising up a new generation of believers who, while living in a corrupt religious environment, are seeking the heart of God. We might liken our current backslidden generation to the "Saul Generation". Saul catered to the people rather than to God. Saul tried to cloak his disobedience under the pretense of worship. (1 Samuel 15) Saul transgressed against the true worship of God. (1 Samuel 13) As a result, God rejected Saul as king: *"And Samuel said to Saul, 'You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. ¹⁴ But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.'"* (1 Samuel 13:13-14 NKJV)

In contrast to the Saul Generation is what we might call the "David Generation". David was the man that God raised up as king in Saul's place. Why did God choose David? David was a man after God's heart. David was a man committed to doing things God's way rather than his own way or man's way. David was a man who sought the Lord: *"When You said, 'Seek My face,' My heart said to You, 'Your face, LORD, I will seek.'"* (Psalm 27:8 NKJV) David saw himself as a sheep before he became a shepherd of God's people. David's Psalm 23 describes this relationship. David was a true shepherd who gave God's people what they needed rather than what they wanted. In the same way, God is looking for true shepherds like David.

True shepherds are not motivated by pride or selfish ambition. They burn with a passion for holiness. They are consumed with a desire to please God rather than man. They feed His sheep the true Bread of God—Jesus Christ. They dare not feed the sheep anything other than Christ. They understand that they are Christ's representatives to the sheep. Therefore they offer no ministry other than what God has prescribed. They do nothing except what they see the Lord do. They speak nothing except the Word of God. They love the truth but hate the lie. They love righteousness and hate lawlessness. They expose sin and confront wolves. They show mercy to the fainthearted and challenge the faithless. They build up the faith and tear down strongholds of lies. They exalt true worship but smash the idols lodged in men's hearts. They are committed to bringing people to an insatiable hunger for the true Bread of God, a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The David Generation is a holy remnant in the midst of a corrupt majority. Even now God is calling out a holy remnant for Himself. It is a small but growing band of committed followers of Jesus Christ. They worship the Lord in spirit and truth. They don't march to the drumbeat of the immoral majority. They don't compromise to win the friendship of their peers. While they receive the scorn of the world they rejoice to receive the praise of God their King.

Regarding the Bread of God, it is important to mention the Table of God and the Table of demons. The "Table of God" refers to the altar of God. Paul declares, *"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?"* (1 Corinthians 10:21-22 NKJV) God will not give the Bread of God to those who cling to idols, lust, and pride in their heart. We cannot partake of the bread of demons and then expect to partake of the Bread of God. Those who try will provoke the Lord to jealousy and be judged for their arrogance, deception, and sin. Those who feast on the bread of demons will become spiritually defiled, diseased, and sick unto death.

How do people feast on the bread of demons? People feast on the bread of demons at the altar of worldly television, internet, movies, music, etc. They feed on immoral garbage, filth, foul language, blasphemy, lust, lies, perversion, sensuality, violence, greed, and worldly entertainment. These do not flow from the fountain of life but are drawn from a polluted cistern of lies. After feeding on the bread of demons, is it right to come to the Lord's Table and say, "Feed us Lord"? Jeremiah 2:11–

13 (NKJV) says, *“Has a nation changed its gods, which are not gods? But My people have changed their Glory for what does not profit. ¹² Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; Be very desolate,” says the LORD. ‘For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.’”* These are those who refuse the truth of God while demanding ear-tickling lies.

The church needs shepherds who will preach the Word of God without apology, mixture, or compromise. Paul exhorted Timothy to *“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”* (2 Timothy 4:2-4 NKJV) We must ask God to raise up faithful shepherds and then pray for and support them when He does.

God is looking for a David generation. God is calling out a holy remnant who will separate themselves unto Him. Are you one of them? It is time to reject the bread of demons and overturn their altars. It is time to return to the Table of God and feast upon Jesus, the true Bread of God!

© Edward Keith Hassell
Grace Fellowship
P.O. Box 260
Rusk, Texas
(903) 683-6550
www.gracefellowshiprusk.com