

**CALVARY BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(PANDAN)**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-
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DHW Bible Class

LESSON 16

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

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INTRODUCTION

In this world, man pursues after power and prestige as well as the comforts and the pleasures of life. While there is legitimacy in some of these pursuits, nevertheless they do not truly satisfy the inner cravings of his heart. These material things are temporal, and soon the man dies, and he cannot take anything with him. It is sad to miss out on what Jesus came to

give man—abundant and eternal life.

Christians can sometimes be tempted and lured back to have their priorities in life turned the other way — focusing on earthly things rather than on heavenly things. God has promised that He will provide for the needs of all His children. In this lesson, Jesus demonstrated that He is our good Shepherd who loves and cares for His sheep. Our eternal life is secured in Him.

UNDERSTANDING

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand
Mark 6:35-44, Matthew 14:15-21, Luke 9:12-17, John 6:3-14

A great throng of people followed Jesus. Jesus saw them and had compassion on them for they were like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus sat down and “began to teach to them” (Mark 6:34b, the verb “teach”: stresses a continuous activity). Jesus taught them throughout most of the day. It was now late afternoon; the people had nothing to eat. The disciples called on Jesus to send them away. But Jesus said to them, “They need not depart; give ye them to eat” (emphasizing “ye”). Philip made a quick calculation and estimated that even two hundred penny (denari) could not buy enough food for the multitude. Two hundred denari would be a person’s eight months wages in those days! When Jesus asked them what they had, they found a lad who had five loaves (bread-cakes) and two fishes. The

bread-cakes were made from the coarsest barley wheat. It was the food of the common people. However, Jesus asked for the bread-cakes and the fishes to be brought to Him. He told His disciples to get them to sit down on the grass field in an orderly manner. The purpose of this was to prevent any disorderly and dangerous scramble for food. Jesus then took the bread-cakes and the fishes, looked up to heaven, blessed them, “broke” the bread-cakes, gave thanks to God, and “distributed” them to His disciples to “set before” the people. The verbs — “broke,” “distributed” and “set before”— express continuous action. In other words Jesus kept on giving to the disciples so that they might keep on distributing to the people. After the people ate and were filled (ate to their full), twelve baskets full of the leftovers were collected! There were five thousand men, beside women and children. This means that there were more than five thousand people!

This was a miracle. Some liberal theologians deny the miracle and try to explain the phenomenon. Some say that the disciples shared their lunches and set off a chain of reaction of generosity among the people. Others explained that the disciples found a military cache of food and with it fed all the people. All these explanations contradict the divine account. It takes more faith to believe their illogical explanations! If we accept Jesus as the Son of God, the problem disappears. If

Jesus as the Son of God who created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, there is no reason why He could not make more bread-cakes and fishes out of 5 loaves and 2 fishes!

By this miracle, Jesus taught His apostles a very important spiritual lesson. They were the ones to provide food for the people. Jesus earlier had seen the throng and surmised that they were like sheep without a shepherd. Now He assumed the role of the Shepherd and fed the multitude. He was teaching His disciples that after He was gone, they must provide spiritual nourishment and strength to His disciples and followers. The provisions would always come from the Lord Himself.

We must not pass on without mentioning the lad. The lad willingly gave all his lunch pack to Jesus. How different this lad is from an adult who would be calculative and might even keep part of the food for himself. But the results are wonderful. Anything, no matter how mean and meagre, if given to Jesus will be greatly multiplied to bless many people. And the lad also had his lunch to the full. How we ought to learn to give our all to the Master for His use. Moreover there were leftovers and they were collected. This strongly suggests that Jesus the miracles was real and cannot be denied.

Jesus Walks on Water

Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, John 6:15-21.

Jesus told His disciples to go by boat to the other side of the lake at Bethsaida. The people wanted to make Him their Messiah King. But He dismissed the crowd. He went up to the mountain alone to pray. It was now dark. A storm came up tossing the waves causing the disciples difficulty in rowing the boat to their intended destination. It was about the fourth watch of the night (about 3.00 a.m. to 6.00 a.m.). Jesus must have seen the distress of His disciples. Jesus went to them walking on the sea! When the disciples saw Him, they thought it was a spirit, and they were troubled and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately assured them by identifying Himself saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I (literally 'I AM'); be not afraid." We know from our study in the book of Exodus, God revealed Himself as the "I AM THAT I AM" (3:14). Jesus used the statement "I am" to mean Himself. We can safely say that Jesus was self-revealing that He was deity. The wind and the storm were still raging. Peter then asked Jesus that he would like to go to Him by walking on the water. Jesus bade him, "Come." Peter stepped out of the boat; he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind, he was afraid; and he began to sink into the sea. He cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately lifted him out and remarked, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" When Jesus stepped into the boat, the wind stopped. They were amazed. They had already forgotten the miracle of the bread-

cakes. They then worshipped Him and confessed, "Of a truth, thou art the Son of God."

Jesus sent His disciples off because they might follow the multitude and make Jesus their Messiah King. Indeed Jesus is their Messiah King, but the time was not right. As a man, He was truly tempted here to submit Himself to the multitude and in His own power accomplish the role of the Messiah King. Jesus then retreated to the mountain to pray. That is one way we can learn from Jesus how to overcome temptation, i.e. to pray to God the Father.

This walking on the water was another miracle. Jesus found it not a problem because He is the Creator of the universe. If He could create water, He could walk on it, if He chose to do so. Jesus indeed is deity as He used the name of God, "I AM." This miracle happening straight after the miracle of the bread-cakes should have reminded His apostles again of the true character of Jesus. He is the Son of God who has power over creation. Both miracles were of "nature".

Peter's walk on the water was interesting. He walked on the water, but because of his fear and lack of faith, he fell into the sea. He cried and Jesus lifted Him. The whole episode speaks of a beautiful and comforting spiritual lesson. Jesus knows our distress. When we cry out to Him, He will always be there to lift us up. Augustine, the great theologian commented, "He came treading

the waves, and so he puts all the swelling tumults of life under His feet. Christians—why be afraid?” Yes, only we must have faith in Him.

Jesus Heals the Sick at Gennesaret

Mark 6:53-56, Matthew 14:34-36

They came to shore on the land of Gennesaret, which was a small fertile plain on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, not very far from Capernaum. The wind must have diverted the boat away from their destination. The people there soon recognized Him. News spread like wild fire, and soon a great crowd gathered. They brought their sick for Him to heal. Wherever He went, into the cities and villages, the people brought their sick to Him. They even laid on the streets and they said that if they could but touch the edge of His garments they would be healed. News of the healing of the woman who had an issue of blood previously must have been told to them. Every one who touched Him was healed completely!

These accounts show the extent of Jesus' ministry. He healed many people; only a few were mentioned specifically. It was truly a great imposition on Him. The wonderful part of it all is that Jesus willingly undertook it all. He was serious about doing His Father's will.

Jesus Preaches on the Bread of Life

John 6:22-59

Next morning, following the feeding of the five thousand, the

people were looking for Jesus again. When they found Him in the synagogue in Capernaum, they said to Jesus, “Rabbi, when camest thou hither?” They had not seen Jesus leave with His disciples earlier in their boat. Jesus did not answer their question, but He pointed out their motive for seeking Him. They had seen the miracles that Jesus had done, and in particular, the miracle of the bread-cakes, which they had eaten and their stomachs had been filled. So Jesus commanded them that they should not “labour” for “meat” (food) which would last temporarily, but to work for “meat” which would last “unto everlasting life,” which the Son of man would give to them; for God the Father had put His seal on Him as the Messiah and the Son of God.

Jesus told them to “labour”, they understood it in its literal sense. They meant law-works which one must perform in order to earn a place in the kingdom of God. They had been taught by the Pharisees. The only “work” they needed to do in order to earn a place in the kingdom was to “believe on Him” whom God had sent. He was none other than Jesus who spoke to them. On hearing that, they asked Jesus for a sign. They wanted proof that Jesus was greater than Moses who gave their forefathers bread from heaven in the desert to sustain them.

Jesus then began to teach them the spiritual significance of the manna (bread) which Moses gave them. The bread which Moses gave them was not the true

bread from heaven. The bread Moses gave was to satisfy their physical hunger and needs. But the bread which God gave was the true bread directly from heaven that gave life to the world. When the people heard this, they said to Jesus, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." And Jesus aptly replied, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Jesus then stressed to them that they had seen Him and had not believed. They had seen many signs and wonders done by Jesus. But they failed to see beyond the sign-miracles that Jesus had done to know that He was their Messiah, the Son of God.

Jesus then made it very clear that "at the last day" those who believed in Him whom God sent would have everlasting life. The "last day" is the day of judgement. Jesus taught the people (John 5:28, 29): *Marvel not at this: for **the hour is coming**, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.* And the will of God the Father is that they should believe on Jesus whom God sent into the world so that they might have everlasting life, and at the last day the Son of God would raise him up from the dead.

On hearing this, the Jews murmured at Jesus because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." They failed to

see the significance of the sign-miracles which were done by Jesus. They knew Jesus only "after the flesh". Jesus emphasized again that he who believed in Him would have everlasting life. He is the bread of life which came down from heaven that any man who ate of this living bread would live for ever. The Jews argued among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus stressed again in no uncertain terms (vv.53-58): *"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."* This means to take Jesus into the very depths of your soul. He must own you and become part of you in order for you to be saved. It was not performing some outward acts of obedience which the Pharisees were very good at doing. They had done this their entire lives.

In His discourse on the bread of life, Jesus leaves no room for doubt that gaining a place in the kingdom of God is entirely by grace. It is the work of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus said (v.37): **All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.** We learn that for a person to gain a place in the kingdom of God, he must come to Jesus, and he cannot come unless he is given by the Father. But "all that" is given by the Father will certainly come. The doctrine of election is taught here in no uncertain terms. Jesus then continued (vv. 39-40): **And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.** The doctrine of the perseverance and eternal security of the saints is unmistakably revealed here. When the Jews murmured among themselves Jesus continued (v.44): **No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.** The doctrine of the divine decree of predestination is revealed here. The divine activity of drawing the person is not merely by moral influence, not merely calling the person, but irresistibly drawing him. In plain and simple terms, Jesus expounded the teaching of predestination, election, and eternal security of the saints! This truth is of great comfort and joy to all who sincerely and truly believe in Jesus, as the Christ, the Son of God!

These doctrine are not for unbelievers to question God or not to come to Him but for the believer's assurance and understanding of the depth and height and breadth of his salvation in Christ Jesus.

Jesus is Christ, the Son of the Living God

John 6:60-71

These sayings were too hard for His hearers. Jesus asked them "Doth this offend you?" Were they stumbled at the words of Jesus? Jesus reaffirmed them that the words that He spoke to them, "they are spirit, and they are life." But some of them would not believe, not because of His teaching but because of the hardness of their heart. From then onwards, many of His disciples went back to their own way of life and thinking. They did not intend to return to follow Jesus. Jesus turned to His twelve apostles, and asked them: "Will ye also go away?" Then Simon Peter answered (vv. 67-69): *"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou has the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."* Peter assumed the role of the leader of the twelve and answered on their behalf. Peter could see beyond the sign-miracles that Jesus performed and knew who Jesus was and His spiritual and life-giving words. Yet Jesus knew that not every one of the Twelve shared the same conviction. There was one exception, and he was Judas Iscariot.

SUMMARY

When Jesus saw that the multitude was like sheep without a shepherd, He was moved with compassion for them. These people followed Him and Jesus taught them. When they were in need of food, Jesus was good the shepherd who provided them with food for their sustenance. His intention too was to teach His disciples that they were to be the shepherd of the people, to feed them and protect them and teach them. However, they must realize that Jesus their Master was the source of their provisions.

Jesus also demonstrated His power over nature, but more importantly He showed them that He cared for them just like a shepherd cares for his sheep when they are in distress. Jesus went to the rescue of His disciples when they were in distress in the Sea of Galilee. Jesus walked on the water to them in the night. Peter also walked on water but his faith was weak and he sank because he turned his eyes to the stormy waves around him instead of Christ.

When they landed at Gennesaret, many people who gathered round Jesus brought their sick for Jesus to heal them. Jesus' earthly ministry was very demanding and busy. Many times He would withdraw by Himself to a mountain top to pray to His Father.

When the crowd sought Him, Jesus told them to seek for the bread that could fill their lives forever, rather than the bread that

only nourished their stomachs for a while. Jesus taught them that they should seek the true bread from heaven, which was none other than Himself, who was sent by God the Father. It was only by believing in Him that the people could gain a place in the kingdom of God, their lives filled. Many of the people found His sayings too hard, and they left Him because of the hardness of their heart. However, the Twelve pledged their faithfulness towards Him for they acknowledged that He is their Messiah, and the Son of God. The one exception was Judas Iscariot.

PRACTICAL VALUE

We are comforted to learn that Jesus being our great Shepherd will always care for us. He is our great Provider and Protector. As His sheep, we need not be afraid to be in whatever circumstances as long as we are doing the will of God. Jesus too would choose His under-shepherds to "feed" His sheep. As His shepherds feeding and caring His sheep, we assure ourselves that all provision and power comes from Him.

We learn the great truth about our salvation in Jesus. Salvation is totally the work of God and Jesus Christ His Son. Our eternal security too rests in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is not of works. Man cannot work and earn his salvation. Salvation is a gift from God. Man must come to Jesus, accept Him and believe in Him. Our perseverance in believing in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour is indeed the evidence of our true

identity as a child of God and our eternal security. Any person, who says that he used to believe and now knows better and no more believe in Jesus Christ, is not a true child of God for his initial belief was not true.

Jesus already mentioned that there will be a day of judgement. Every one will give an account of his life and work on earth. If we have believed in Him and have faithfully lived according to His will, we have the assurance that "at the last day" Jesus will raise us up from the dead unto everlasting life.

AMEN

DHW Bible Class

LESSON 16

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

DAILY READING & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Mark 6:35-44, Matthew 14:15-21, Luke 9:12-17, John 6:3-14.

TUESDAY: Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, John 6:15-21.

WEDNESDAY: Mark 6:53-56, Matthew 14:34-36.

THURSDAY: John 6:22-59.

FRIDAY: John 6:60-71.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Jesus say to His disciples, "Give ye them to eat."

2. What kind of power did Jesus show when He performed this miracle of feeding the five thousand? How can we learn from this experience?

3. What can you say and learn about the lad who gave his five loaves and two fishes to Jesus?

4. What did walking on the sea show about Jesus and His power?

5. How did Jesus quieten the fear of the disciples?

6. What do you think of Peter trying to walk on water?

7. What do you think about the people's attitude towards Jesus whom they besought "that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment"?

8. What was the motive of the people seeking for Jesus? And what was Jesus' response to them?

9. What was the work of God through Jesus? What guarantee is there that it will succeed?

10. What security is there for those who truly believes in Jesus?

11. God gives souls to His Son by drawing them through His Word. But what must man do if he is to be saved?

12. What does Jesus mean by saying: “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you”?

13. What did Jesus say about the words that He spoke to them? And what did Peter say?

14. Why do you believe in Jesus?

15. Share what you have learned in this lesson?
