

What Is In This Bread?

Mark 8:1-21 (ESV)

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?" And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side. Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

Herod murders John (Mark 6:14-29)

Feeding of the 5,000 (Mark 6:30-44)

Walking on water (Mark 6:45-56)

Pharisees demand hand-washing (Mark 7:1-23)

Breadcrumbs for the Gentile woman (Mark 7:24-30)

Feeding of 4,000, Pharisees demand sign, Back on the boat

Mark 8:15 (ESV)

Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.

Leaven = the additive that increases the bread

What are we tempted to add?

Leaven of the Pharisees = Law

Galatian 5:1, 7-9 (ESV)

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. ...You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

We leaven with law when we do not fully believe in Christ's grace

Colossians 2:20-23 (ESV)

If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations – “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (referring to things that all perish as they are used) – according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

Leaven of Herod = Lust

1 Corinthians 5:1-2 (ESV)

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. ...Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (ESV)

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

We leaven with lust when we do not fully believe in Christ's goodness

1 Timothy 4:1-5 (ESV)

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

Unleavened bread Jesus gives = Love

Love shows us that the grace of Jesus is what saves us

Romans 5:8-9 (ESV)

God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Titus 3:3-7 (ESV)

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but

according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Love shows us that the goodness of Jesus is what satisfies us.

Psalm 65:4 (ESV)

Blessed is the one you choose and bring near, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house; the holiness of your temple!

Jeremiah 31:14b (ESV)

...and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the LORD.

John 6:35 (ESV)

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.