

PENTECOST 10

YEAR B

1 KINGS 19:4-8

EPHESIANS 4:25-5:2

JOHN 6:35, 41-51

AUGUST 11, 12, 2018

Jesus, in our reading from John 6, says that he is the living bread. We heard those words last week as well. Those that followed Jesus and were fed argued about this teaching from Jesus. Jesus did not say he is the living bread. Jesus simply said he is the living bread. The Jews following Jesus thought he was saying this about himself. They stumbled over what they thought Jesus was saying instead of what Jesus actually said. You and I know that Jesus is the living bread from heaven. Jesus being the living bread that came from heaven changes everything in the world. Jesus came that we would have life and have it abundantly. Being living bread means our lives are sustained. Although we might get hungry and thirsty for food and drink from time to time, we will never lack the presence of the Lord to care for us. Jesus says we will never be hungry or thirsty. We pray that God would give us daily bread. We pray that God would give us everything we need in this life. Among our needs in this life is the need for relationships.

The Jews disputed among themselves about Jesus and the living bread. They argued because they did not make the connection from Jesus the man from Nazareth and Jesus the Son of God. They did not believe he was the one that came down from heaven. They did not believe Jesus is all things to all people. The Jews failed to believe that Jesus is the living bread. They could not believe they will never be empty of the things of God because God would provide them. Because they did not believe or receive his words about living bread they could not be in a relationship with Jesus. If there is no relationship with Jesus there can be no relationship with the Father. The Lord Jesus claimed us as God's children on the cross. Through the cross of Jesus Christ we have life, health and love. This is God's gift that comes through Jesus Christ.

The Lord is always ready to feed those that are hungry and thirsty for righteousness. The Lord always teaches those ready to hear. Those believing and receiving this bread from heaven would always have their fill because they would always be in relationship with the living bread. They will never want because they will always be filled with the bread of life from heaven.

**Ephesians 4:25-27**      **So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil.**

Paul talks about the lives of those that have received this living bread. Paul does not actually talk about living bread but he talks about those that are faithful to the Lord and have received the blessing of life. The blessing of life come though Jesus Christ. Paul gives instruction to the Ephesian Christians about their relationship with each other and others in the body of Christ. There are ways we behave as people of God. As Christians we have certain qualities or traits that set us apart from others not believing in the promise of life. Paul lists them in many places. In this reading from Ephesians, Paul talks about remaining faithful to the Lord but also to each other. They are to remain faithful to the Lord and not let Satan have a strong hold in their lives.

As we know, our actions speak louder than our words. I can say all the right things, but people will listen more to the things I do. Our relationships begin at home. Jeremiah and I have always spent lots of time together. Denise and Paige are not always pleased with some of the things he picks up from me. Jeremiah sees how I interact with people and how I enjoy being with people. Jeremiah has learned how to tease others because that is what I do. Sometimes his mother and grandmother are not so appreciative. Jeremiah has also learned how I care for people and he also knows how to care for others in ways that are loving. Jeremiah listens to what I say and he sees what I do. I've always been careful to be a good influence on Jeremiah. I know there are

things I do that become part of who he is. He will have that for the rest of his life. I am not afraid he will repeat something I have said because I never got into the habit of using bad language. I try to be as honest with him because I think honesty is one of the most important qualities any of us can have. I want Jeremiah to follow my example when it comes to prayer and loving the Lord. I want Jeremiah to imitate me in honesty and caring for others. I want him to know the Lord in the same way I know the Lord. I want Jeremiah to imitate me as I imitate the Lord. It is easy to lead our children and grandchildren in the right way. It is also easy to teach them the wrong way.

Paul says that we are to put away falsehood. We are to speak the truth to our neighbors because we belong together being part of the same family of God. Our children are not born knowing how to lie. If our children learn how to lie they learn it from the people around them. We are together as the body of Christ. We do not lie to each other. We are honest as we gather and as we seek to minister to the people of God. You and I are the family of God. We are a family that seeks a closer relationship. We cannot be in a relationship with someone that lies to us. Sometimes the truth is difficult because we may not like what the truth has to say.

There is more to what Paul says to Christians in this reading from Ephesians 4. He says even when we are angry we must not sin. Each of us gets angry from time to time. There are godly ways to deal with anger and there are ungodly ways. Anger in itself is not sin. Anger becomes sin when it seeks to get even. I must never seek to destroy you with my anger but to help mend the relationship. We are honest about anger and we seek reconciliation. In the first church I served as pastor there was a couple that had been married almost 50 years. During a Bible study the topic of anger came up. As the discussion continued this couple told me they had never been angry with each other. I argued that they must have been angry at least a couple of times in 50 years. They denied it. The truth is that we get most angry with the people we love the

most. Anger is not a sin. What I do with the anger determines whether it is sin or not.

**Ephesians 4:29-32** Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

A couple of Sundays ago we were at Perkins. We were sitting in the waiting area. There is a claw machine near where I was sitting. A young child with his mother decided to try to win something from the machine. When he did not win the prize a word of frustration came out of his mouth. His mother immediately looked at me and apologized for her son's words. I would not consider his words to be sinful. He was expressing his frustration at not winning a prize. Many look at me and think they need to stop being human. They might think I never get frustrated. I am not in the habit of using profanity but I have ways of venting my frustration. We are people of God forgiven and set free by the blood of the Lamb. We are not condemned for sharing anger or frustration. We are set apart as people of God. We are fed with the bread of life.

You and I have been saved by grace through faith. We love God and we love one another. The only Christ others will see is you. How do we treat one another in the church? How do we share our lives together in the body of Christ? Jesus is the living bread that came down from heaven. He gives us everything we need and asks that we remain faithful. He asks that we reach out in faith so that others come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. We share our blessing because God shared with us. We share the bread of life. Jesus is that living bread.

AMEN