

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

HUNGER VANQUISHED

John 6:24-35

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Analysis by Robin J. Morgan

John 6:24-35 6:24 So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" 26 Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." 28 Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." 30 So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? 31 Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" 32 Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." 35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

DIAGNOSIS: Starving, but for What?

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *Looking for Jesus*

Like the crowd in John 6, many of us in the U.S. are looking for Jesus – in fact, it can be a trendy thing to do these days. Most spiritualities, regardless of their underlying beliefs will admit that Jesus was a wise man, a significant teacher in the history of the human race. But what are we really looking for as we say we're looking for Jesus? Jesus tells the crowd and us that often we're looking for Him, not because we've seen signs, but because we've eaten our fill.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *Feed Me Now*

The crowd challenges Him: "Our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness...what work are you going to perform that we might see and believe?" Meet my needs. Give me what I need, what I want. Prove yourself worthy of my time and devotion. Don't we, like the crowd, challenge Jesus to prove his worth to us by meeting whatever need we have at the moment? "I want what I want when I want it" may not be the explicit sound byte here, but it is surely a subtext of the way people can interact with Jesus. Moses gave us bread from heaven to eat. What are you going to do for us today?

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *The Divine Restaurateur*

"It was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven to eat." Jesus makes it clear who is in charge and directing the drama that the crowd is so sure they are controlling. We may think we know the score. Yet, in the end, the Creator finds us unworthy of a seat at the table.

PROGNOSIS: Hunger Vanquished

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *Bread that Endures for Eternity*

"It is the Father who gives the true bread from heaven that gives life to the world." Jesus tells the crowd and us, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." Jesus is the bread that was broken for the world, He is the wine poured out for our sin. The feast God has prepared for us began and continues eternally through Christ's body and blood.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) : *Coming to the Meal*

"This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent," (v. 29) Accepting that God has sent Jesus to fill us, to quench our thirst for the eternal is our calling and our joy. The gnawing in our beings that we try to fill with all manner of people, activities and substances, is only satisfied as we entrust our lives to the One whom God sent for us.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *Inviting Others to the Table*

In Christ there's plenty to share and more than enough to go around as we encounter other famished people looking for Jesus. He is a great teacher, but he is much more than a role model or mentor. He is the One whom God sent into the world to meet the most essential need of our lives – to satisfy our hunger for God and eternity. So we invite others to the table.