

Example of the bread of life the i am statements of jesus christ essay

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Jesus Christ as “ The Bread of Life”

“ In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God;” (John 1: 1) During His time, the Jews with whom Jesus Christ had been preaching were already believers of God, who was called Yahweh. The appearance of our Christ, then, paved way to a new faith and new teachings of the scriptures. However, the Jews were not easily swayed by these teachings for they find it hard to believe that the Messenger of God was a simple man. During that time, they were extremely monotheistic, believing in the one God, and the Scriptures of Moses, the Old Testament. These scriptures that Moses told them were even harder to overcome. As the Old Testament proclaims, “ You shall have no other Gods before Me.”

(Deuteronomy 5: 7)

Furthermore, Jesus Christ spoke of bold statements extending to claims even of deity, such as the “ I Am” statements. In the Book of John, which can be seen the most powerful and meaningful of the “ I Am” statements, Jesus spoke of the food and drink eternal, with which one may be able to live an eternal life. “ Then Jesus declared to them, ‘ I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me shall never be thirsty.’” (John 6: 35)

The events surrounding such statement happened near Tiberias, on the other side of the sea of Galilea, where Jesus sat down to rest. There was a feast that night with the Jews, and the food was evidently not enough for the audience in attendance – only five loaves and two fish. Jesus, seeing their dilemma, instantly knew what to do. And He performed one of His many miracles by dividing the available food to the people and having leftovers

after. Their amazement to what Jesus did made them follow Him after.

But Jesus, realizing they only followed because of what they saw, told them to “work [then], not for perishable food, but for the lasting food which gives eternal life.” (John 6: 27) Such eternal food can only be given by the Son of Man, who was chosen by the Father. This food was different from the bread which was given to them by their ancestors in the desert during the Exodus from Egypt. Jesus explained of the bread not coming from Moses or their ancestors but from the Father, who shall give them “true bread from heaven” (John 6: 32) To this, Jesus then spoke of Himself as the “Bread of Life” and that he has come from heaven to bring eternal food and life to the people. It was, however, evident with the Jews that they were doubtful of what Jesus was telling them. As such, by the end of His teaching, only twelve of the many disciples that started followed Him.

Such were the events, and the bread Jesus Christ referred to which was given by their ancestors was the manna. “Now I am going to rain down bread from heaven for you.” (Exodus 16: 4) During the time of Exodus, God realized their lack of sufficient food for the long trip home and thus made food available to them. The Old Testament spoke of manna as the Father’s way of showing that He has not abandoned the people of Israel, His sons but this was given not for them to constantly want more of the “mortal” bread. Through their experience and the gift of manna from heaven, God also intended to let the people know that not physical bread alone gives life to man. “He made you experience want, He made you experience hunger, but he gave you manna to eat which neither you nor your fathers had known, to show you that man lives not on bread alone, but that all that proceeds from

the mouth of God.” (Deuteronomy 8: 3)

As time passed on, however, the people grew more dependent on the bread that was given to them by God. They were thankful at first and for that they followed Him. But how may they know who God truly is if they saw Him only as a sponsor to whom they can ask for favors? Continually asking for these favors, they could only see that which God had given them, and if He would not give them anything they only continued to ask and then criticize. What they don't realize during the Old Testament is that material things only go so far in this world and they are not accepted in heaven. They do not make a better man and they do not give a better life.

Because of such dependence, God opted to renew the bread which came from heaven, and this bread is not something but someone, in the image of our Jesus Christ. He promises everything that the Father may offer but only when the people come to him. And he shall not reject anyone who comes to him. “ Yet, all that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I shall not turn away. For I have come from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me.” (John 6: 37-38)

The will of God is for us to embrace eternal life through the works of Jesus Christ. He is the very symbol whose works we must embody and practice in our lives. Such is the will and such are the requirements for eternal life, but to accomplish this we must first believe in what Jesus Christ is preaching to us and make a commitment to Him.

This was commitment very hard, again, for the Jews to believe and consequently make for they have heard and known of their Father in heaven all their life through the teachings of Moses and his descendants, but none of

them spoke of such claims about God. The Jews questioned Jesus' claim of being the "bread which comes from heaven" (John 6: 41) while murmuring to themselves and saying he was only a simple carpenter and son of Joseph. The murmur of the Jews has a particular significance to the Bible because in the Old Testament, murmuring or whispering something was a sign of distrusting God and criticizing Moses. These were times when they felt they were abandoned by God during times of hunger and thirst.

But Jesus was ready to quiet their disturbed minds saying, "My flesh is really food and my blood is drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood, live in me and I in them." (John 6: 55-56) The key words here are flesh and blood. His is food that is eternal and drink that is eternal through which one will not experience hunger and thirst anymore. This ultimately symbolizes the renewal of the manna that was given by God to the Israelites in the Old Testament. Through these words, Jesus finally and unmistakably reveals Himself as one with God and therefore true deity. John had acknowledged this even in the being when he referred to Jesus as the Word which is with God and which is God, himself.

When we take a look at the flesh and blood in the Old Testament, it somehow represents the mortal form of life, the body and the blood which gives life. By sharing in his flesh and blood, we share in the divinity of Jesus. The ordinary bread that was manna in the Old Testament only serves to satisfy our hunger and allows us to survive. But Jesus serves as the living bread with which not only alleviates our hunger but also transforms us. Jesus actively changes us and makes our life united with Him and the Father. This claim of the divinity of Jesus is also somehow related to another "I Am"

of Jesus Christ, “ I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Through Jesus Christ, we are connected with God. When we share in the flesh and blood of Jesus, we become more connected with God. It is only through Him, the Son of God, that we can be one with God in the heavens.

The “ I am” statements, though originally preached to the Jews in order to correct their ways during Jesus’ time, very much relates to our present time and faith. It is evident in our ways that even people today still doubts and lacks the will to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. But we must come to realize that it is only through Him, and Him alone, can we know and have God in our lives.

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