

**Text: Jn 6.32, 17.3**

Once again, we come to our communion service, the service where we remember what the Lord did for us, contemplating especially on his suffering the penalty of our sins, so that we could enjoy the privilege of his life.

Today our topic comes from a paragraph in Millard Erickson's *Christian Theology*. The chapter from which it comes is called, "The Central Theme of the Atonement." The paragraph opens:

"Jesus had a profound sense that he was the source and giver of true life."<sup>1</sup>

Our message this afternoon is more of a meditation than a detailed exposition, but our goal is not to teach, but **to promote our reflection on Jesus as the source and giver of true life.**

**I. The source of true life (Jn 17.3a, c)**

Jn 17.3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

**A. The context: the "high-priestly prayer" in the upper room**

1. Jesus is preparing for his arrest that night and crucifixion the next day
2. His preparation is focused more on his disciples than on himself (though remember the prayer in the garden)
3. Here, he prays for their understanding and will later pray for their preservation in the trying days to come

**B. Life is sourced in the Father and the Son**

1. The Bible describes both the Father and Son as Creator

Ex 20.11 "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

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<sup>1</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1998), 825.

Col 1.16 For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through Him and for Him.

## 2. All life comes from God

a. Before anything else existed, life existed in only one being, our God (God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit – eternally alive)

b. In Genesis, God breathed into man the breath of life

c. All other living things came about by God’s word

## C. Our subject here, though is not just life, but eternal life

1. Every living thing on earth is mortal: it will die

2. The Lord points the way here to eternal life: lives that do not end

This is the true life, the life that is our meditation today.

## II. The reception of true life (Jn 6.32, 35, 48, 50-58)

### A. Jesus describes himself in Jn 6 as the ‘bread of life’

Jn 6.35 ¶ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

Jn 6.48 “I am the bread of life.

### 1. Bread became “the staff of life” from a biblical metaphor (Isa 3.1, KJV)

KJV Isa 3:1 ¶ For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

### 2. “Staff of life” means a diet staple, an essential; most of ancients lived on bread and grains as the bulk of their diet

Life comes from bread.

## B. Jesus extends the metaphor in Jn 6, talking about the “true bread”

Jn 6.32 Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.

1. True bread brings true life
2. True bread requires men to come to Christ

Jn 6.35 ¶ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

Jn 6.50-51 “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup> “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

## C. This metaphor became a hard saying: Jn 6.53-58

Jn 6.53-58 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. <sup>54</sup> “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. <sup>55</sup> “For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. <sup>56</sup> “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. <sup>57</sup> “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. <sup>58</sup> “This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.”

The true bread brings true life: but what is this eating? That’s what makes it a hard saying.

## III. The pursuit of true life (Jn 17.3b)

Jn 17.3 “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

## A. That they may know you: eternal life comes from a relationship with God

B. That they may know you: by faith, we see Jesus as having life, of giving his life for us, and uniting our lives with him forever

True life, in this sense, is an eternity of communion with our Lord Jesus and the only true God, the Father.

### Conclusion:

As we eat the bread and drink the cup, we are reminded that our life doesn't come from bread alone, but from every word that comes from the mouth of our God.