

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Written by the Rev. Christopher Brown '08, coordinator of CPI, and brought to you by the Church Planting Initiative at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

## **Scripture**

John 6:27-40

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. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; 38 for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

## **Devotional**

In John 4, Jesus’ disciples urge him to eat something. His response: “I have food to eat that you do not know about. . . . My food is to do the will of him who sent me.” He had been speaking with the Samaritan woman, revealing to her that he is the Messiah. The Son of Man had been sent to “seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10) and fulfilling this mission was more fulfilling than any food Jesus’ disciples could provide.

A short time later in John’s Gospel, Jesus calls us to also seek this same nourishment from him: “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you.” One works for eternal food not by the sweat of one’s brow, but through “the work of God,” which is “to believe in the one whom he has sent.” Those who believe are also sent, in the same way the Father sent the Son (John 20:21), and are nourished in the same way the Son was nourished—by fulfilling the will of the Father to seek and save the lost.

No matter how tantalizing our meals may taste, the fruits of the Spirit are more delectable, and they grow within us as we join in Christ's mission. This Lent, may we be filled with eternal food as we summon all whom Jesus came to seek and save to join us in the heavenly feast.

### **Prayer**

Almighty Father, thank you for giving us the bread of heaven, your Son who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. Let our food be to always do your will, to believe in your Son, and to proclaim his reign and his glory. Give us this bread always, that we may be nourished to do your will and that our world may know your life. Amen.