



## Pastor Dave's Miracle Diet Plan

Some Diets are not for Everyone except this One! - John 6:24-35

## Scripture

- Once the **crowd** realized that neither **Jesus** nor his **disciples** were there, they got into the **boats** and went to Capernaum in **search** of Jesus. (John 6:24)
- When they found **him** on the other side of the **lake**, they asked him, “**Rabbi, when did you get here?**” (John 6:25)
- **Jesus** answered,
  - “I tell you the truth, **you** are looking for me, **not** because you saw **miraculous signs** but because **you ate the loaves** and had **your fill**.” (John 6:26)
  - Do not work for **food that spoils**, but for **food that endures to eternal life**, which the **Son of Man** will give you. (John 6:27a)
  - On **him**, **God the Father** has placed his **seal of approval**.” (John 6:27b)

## Scripture

- Then **they** asked him,
  - “What must **we do** to do the works **God** requires?” (John 6:28)
- Jesus answered,
  - “The **work of God** is **this**:
    - to **believe** in the **one** he has sent.” (John 6:29)

## Scripture

- So **they** asked him,
  - “What **miraculous sign** then will you give that **we may see it and believe you?**” (John 6:30a)
  - What will **you do?** (John 6:30b)
  - Our **forefathers** ate the **mannna** in the **desert**, as it is written:
    - ‘He gave them **bread from heaven to eat.**’” (John 6:31)

## Scripture

- **Jesus** said to them,
  - ▶ “I tell you the truth,
  - it is not Moses who has given you the **bread from heaven**, but
  - it is my **Father** who gives you the **true bread** from heaven. (John 6:32)
  - ▶ For the **bread of God** is he who comes down from heaven and **gives life to the world**.” (John 6:33)

## Scripture

- Then **Jesus** declared,
  - ▶ “I am the **bread of life**. (John 6:35a)
  - **He who comes to me** will never go **hungry**, and
  - **he who believes** in me will never be **thirsty**. (John 6:35b)

## Introduction

- If you want or need to **lose weight**, you can pay to get the job done.
- **Forbes magazine** recently ran an article that touted the **best** commercial weight loss programs:
  - ▶ Noom, Perfect Health, Reverse Health, Keto Cycle, WeightWatchers, Nutrisystem, DoFasting, Beyond Body, and Simple.
- According to **Forbes**, these are among the **best programs for people** looking to drop a few pounds.



## Introduction

- Some people avoid paying for **weight loss** by following some **basic dietary principles**.
- The ketogenic, or keto, diet stresses high fat intake, low to moderate protein intake, and very few carbohydrates.
- It's typically ...
  - ▶ rich in foods like butter, cheese, eggs, meat, nuts, oils, seafood, and seeds, and
  - ▶ poor on fruits, vegetables, grains, potatoes, sweets, or other carbohydrate-rich foods.
  - ▶ **Carbs** are a no-no.





## Introduction

- Others prefer a **Paleolithic**, or caveman, diet.
- This **diet** is based on the idea that **obesity** is caused by ingesting “**modern**” food that is loaded with sugar, fat, and highly processed ingredients.
- Instead, we should regress to the **hunter-gatherer** motif that our **Paleolithic** ancestors practiced 2.5 million years ago.



## Introduction

- Still, others praise **intermittent fasting (IF)** as the best way to shed poundage.
- Intermittent fasting is a **dietary routine** that regularly alternates between periods of eating and fasting.
- While it may require you to **fast** for 12 to 40 hours at a time.
  - The results are **simply amazing** as not only does it reduce the number of calories,
  - But it also helps **reset** our blood sugar levels as well as our immune system and hormone levels.



## Can the Bible Help?

- People of **faith** are naturally interested in how the **Bible** might help them trim some fat from their frames.
- As one dietician noted, we can't go wrong with **biblical foods** such as
  - ▶ grapes,
  - ▶ olives and olive oil,
  - ▶ flax,
  - ▶ whole grain bread and
  - ▶ pomegranates.



## Can the Bible Help?

- But when we turn to the **Bible** for diet advice, we run into problems with all the dietary rules and restrictions found in **Leviticus**.
- While our **Jewish friends** may prefer kosher food, for **Christians**, it is not so much about what we eat but how much we eat.
- If the **Bible** is going to influence our eating decisions at all, we should probably recognize the biblical stress on **moderation**.
  - ▶ “Let your **moderation** be known unto all” (Philippians 4:5, KJV)
- The apostle reminds us,
  - ▶ “The **fruit of the Spirit** is ... **self-control**” (Galatians 5:22-23).
- As satirist **Oscar Wilde** once said,
  - ▶ “Everything in **moderation**, including **moderation**.”



## Can the Bible Help?

- And then we have the **Jesus diet**: Bread and fish.
- The details are here in **John 6** — the longest chapter in John's gospel.
- The **“beloved”** disciple ...
  - ▶ devotes more words to Jesus' **self-identity** as the **“bread of life,”**
  - ▶ than he does to an account of his **death** and **suffering** in chapter 19.
- In other words, Jesus' diet plan is **Himself!**



## Jesus Feeds the Thousands

- **John**, chapter 6, begins with one of Jesus' **most iconic miracles**: the feeding of 5,000.
- Some put the number to as many as **15,000** people if women and children were present.
- So, it is no wonder that the disciples came to Jesus and said,
  - ▶ **“Rabbi, we've got a problem.**
  - ▶ **We** need to tell people to go home.
  - ▶ We have no food, no money, and even if we did, it would **cost more than six months' wages** to **feed** these people” (Matthew 14:15).



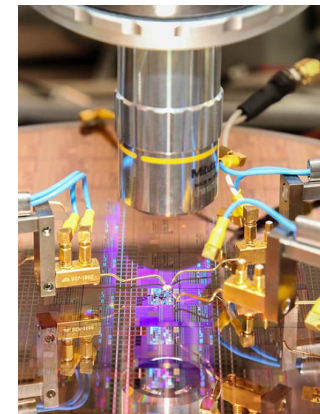
## When Miracles begin . . .

- It has been said that **miracles** often begin when **someone** declares to **God** that something is **impossible**.
- Think about it. A mere 150 years ago, you would be certifiably crazy if you believed, or even imagined, that:
  - ▶ A **machine** would replace the horse and get you 500 miles over land in eight hours;
  - ▶ A **flying machine** could hold 500 people and zip through the air, leaving **New York City** and landing in Paris six hours later;
  - ▶ We could **talk to someone anywhere in the world** in **real-time**;
  - ▶ We could **see someone anywhere in the world** in **real-time**;
  - ▶ Instead of candles or oil lamps, we could get **light** with the flick of a switch.



## Jesus Feeds the Thousands

- The **list** is inexhaustible if we move to fields like
  - ▶ biotechnology,
  - ▶ nanotechnology,
  - ▶ advances in agriculture,
  - ▶ aerospace,
  - ▶ and EV cars with “Full-Turning Navigation.”
- So then, just when we **think** something is impossible, it's **possible**.



## Jesus Feeds the Thousands

- When **Mary** was initially told by the **angel** that she would have a child, what was her response?
  - ▶ “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a **virgin**?” (Luke 1:34)
  - ▶ “For nothing,” as **Gabriel** told Mary, “**shall be impossible with God**.” (Luke 1:37)
  - ▶ “I am the **Lord’s servant**,” Mary answered. “**May it be to me as you have said**.” Then the angel left her. (Luke 1:38)



## Jesus Feeds the Thousands

- The **first lesson** we learned, as did the disciples, is that we should not allow our **limited vision** and **frail faith** to constrain the work of a **powerful God**.
- **Miracles** are not merely a display of **Jesus’ power over nature** but a **symbolic act** of divine authority and approval.
- In this **miracle**, **Jesus** demonstrates **his power**
  - ▶ to satisfy the **physical hunger** of the masses, but he can also
  - ▶ **multiply abundantly**—every little thing we give him, even when we are in the **wilderness**.



## Jesus Feeds the Thousands

- The effect of this **miracle** on at least 5000 people was **dramatic**.
- There was a **groundswell of opinion**, no doubt accentuated by shouting and clamor.
- **Jesus** realized that the **people** were going to “take him **by force** to make him king” (v. 15).
- **Jesus**, sensing the **urgency** of the situation, knew that **he** and the **disciples** had to swiftly depart from the scene.
- The **disciples** hopped in a boat and made their escape.
- That night, **Jesus** met them in the middle of the **Sea of Galilee**, where he **walked on water** to join them.



## The “Bread of Life Discourse”

- The **crowds** meet up with **Jesus** and the **disciples** on the other side of the Sea of Galilee.
- But instead of receiving them with **open arms**, this time, he **rebukes them** and says ...
  - ▶ “I tell you the **truth**, you are looking for me, not because you saw **miraculous signs** (evidence of God’s approval on Jesus) but because you **ate the loaves** and had your **fill**. (John 6:26)
  - ▶ Do not work for **food that spoils**, but for **food that endures to eternal life**, which the Son of Man will give you. (John 6:27a)
  - ▶ On him, God the Father has placed his **seal of approval**.” (John 6:27b)





## The “Bread of Life Discourse”

- “Sir,” they said, “from now on, give us this **bread**.” (John 6:34)
- Then Jesus declared,
  - ▶ “I am the **bread of life**. (John 6:35)
  - ▶ **He** who comes to me will never go **hungry**, and **he** who believes in me will never be **thirsty**. (John 6:36a)
  - ▶ But as I told you, you have seen me, and **still** you do not believe. (John 6:36b)
  - ▶ All that the **Father** gives me will come to me, and **whoever** comes to me, I will never **drive away**. (John 6:37)



## The “Bread of Life Discourse”

- I am the **living bread** that came down from **heaven**. (John 6:51a)
- If anyone eats of this **bread**, he will live forever. (John 6:51)
- This **bread** is my flesh, which I will give for the **life** of the world. (John 6:51c)
- Then the **Jews** began to **argue sharply** among themselves. “How can this man give us his **flesh** to eat?” (John 6:52)
- Even many of **Jesus’ disciples** said, “This is a **hard teaching**. Who can accept it?” (John 6:60)
- The **Spirit** gives life; the **flesh** counts for nothing. The **words** I have spoken to you are **spirit**, and they are **life**. (John 6:63)



## The “Bread of Life Discourse”

- From this **time**, many of **his disciples** turned back and **no longer** followed him. (John 6:66)
- “You do not want to leave, too, do you?” **Jesus** asked the **Twelve**. (John 6:67)
- Simon **Peter** answered him,
  - ▶ “Lord, **to whom shall we go?** You have the **words** of eternal life. (John 6:68)
  - ▶ **We** believe and know that **you** are the **Holy One of God**.” (John 6:69)



## Trust the Diet Plan

- Like most **diet plans**, the **miracle Jesus diet** isn’t always easy.
- At times, his **teachings**
  - ▶ may not make **sense**,
  - ▶ challenge our **beliefs** and
  - ▶ stretch our **faith**.
- Nevertheless, like all good **diet plans**, the **proof** is in the pudding and the **results** it produces.



## Trust the Diet Plan

- If only ...
  - ▶ we would take **Jesus** at his word and
  - ▶ then **put his words** into action and
  - ▶ we would see that **they** clearly **come** from **God**.
- Just as eating **fewer calories** produces weight loss is a simple and undeniable **truth**, so is what **Jesus** is saying.
  - ▶ Put his **teachings** into practice, and
  - ▶ **we will live in God**, and **God** by his **Spirit** will not only live in us but
  - ▶ **produce** in us all kinds of **good fruit**—even **eternal life**.



## Trust the Diet Plan

- Just as **we don't** lose weight by **reading Diet books**, **we don't grow spiritually** and **flourish** by **reading the Bible** or **listening to preachers** who don't know what they are talking about.
- We **grow** and **thrive** with **good fruit** when we become **imitators of Christ** and **live out the virtues of his character**, as the Bible declares that **Jesus Christ** is the **living word**.
- According to the **Apostle Paul**,
  - ▶ **Follow my example** as I **follow the example of Christ**. (1 Cor. 11:1)
  - ▶ You became **imitators of us** and **of the Lord**; in spite of **severe suffering**, you welcomed the **message with the joy** given by the **Holy Spirit**. (1 Th. 1:6)
  - ▶ Whatever **you** have **learned** or **received** or **heard** from me or **seen** in me — **put it into practice**. And the **God of peace** will be with you. (Phil. 4:9)



## Trust the Diet Plan

- As the **Apostle Paul** wrote to the **Ephesians**,
  - ▶ Get **rid** of all **bitterness**, **rage** and **anger**, **brawling** and **slander**, along with every form of **malice**. (Eph. 4:31)
  - ▶ Be **kind** and **compassionate** to **one another**, **forgiving each other**, just as in Christ, **God forgave you**. (Eph. 4:32)
  - ▶ Be **imitators of God**, therefore, as **dearly loved children** and **live a life of love**, just as **Christ loved us** (Eph. 5:1-2)
- As the **Apostle John** wrote in **one of his letters**,
  - ▶ **Whoever lives in love lives in God**, and **God in him**. (1 John 4:16)
  - ▶ In this way, **love is made complete among us** so that **we will have confidence** on the **day of judgment** because, in this world, **we are like him**. (1 John 4:17)



## Conclusion of the Matter

- When Jesus referred to himself as the "**Bread of Life**," he wasn't talking **literally** but **figuratively**.
- However, if we are **literally consumed with his teachings** and so **put into practice what he says and does**, we will find **food for our souls** that will yield **good fruit** and bring **eternal life**.
- While most **people** are consumed with their temporal and **material needs**, those **truly called by God** will be **consumed** with their **spiritual needs** instead.
- As **Jesus** has said,
  - ▶ If **you remain in me** and **my words remain in you**, **ask whatever you wish**, and it will be **given to you**. (John 15:7)
  - ▶ This is to my **Father's glory** that you **bear much fruit**, showing yourselves to be **my disciples**. (John 15:8)





## Final Thought

- For the past several weeks, our **Sunday Evening Group** has been studying the **Book of 1st Kings**.
- One of the **biggest issues** in this book is that
  - ▶ **we** can worship the **right God** but
  - ▶ **fail** to worship Him in the **right way**, especially as it is outlined in the Bible.
- So then, it is very important that **we**, as **Christians**, don't fall for the **same deception**.
- However, if we set our minds on **imitating** the virtues of **God**, we will never go wrong.



## Final Thought

- For **he** will live in us, and **we** will live in him, and through this **intimacy**, it will produce life in **us** that will yield **good fruit** and **confidence** when **God** comes to visit the earth.
- This is **true wisdom** and **insight** from **God**, who has called you to his **eternal kingdom**.
- Truly, I say to you . . .
  - ▶ Run from all forms of **gnosticism** (secret knowledge), **mysticism**, **super spirituality**, and **formalism** (form over function).
  - ▶ For **death** comes from the **tree** of the knowledge of good and evil, so do not eat its **fruit**.
  - ▶ Instead, feed on the **tree of Life** (Christ, aka the Bread of Life), and **you** will see a **transformational miracle** in your life and **live forever**.

