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Sermon Outline

“What’s This?” EXODUS 16

1. Introduction

- a. Mottos which have governed my life:
 - i. “Beggars can’t be choosers.”
 - ii. “You get what you get and you don’t throw a fit.”
- b. Exodus 16:1-3
 - i. Complaining will become a recurring theme in the coming stories.
 - ii. For now, it is enough to notice that the people are hungry immediately following a story wherein they were thirsty (15:22-27).
- c. Exodus 16:4-5
 - i. All gifts are tests. Every blessing from God is an opportunity for us to either respond with gratitude or indulge in selfishness.
 - ii. All tests are gifts. Every test in life is an opportunity for us either to grow through challenge or shrink into victimhood.

2. Two Views of Manna

- a. From the Psalms
 - i. Psalm 78:24-25 “Yet he commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven, and he rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. Man ate of the bread of angels; he sent them food in abundance.”
 - ii. In a perfect world, we would respond to all God’s blessings with poetic praise!
- b. From Reality
 - i. Exodus 16:14
 1. “a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground”
 2. It is a wonder, but perhaps not the wonder they wanted.
 - ii. Exodus 16:15
 1. They said to one another, “What’s This?” The Hebrew term for “what” is “man” which forms the name of the bread.
 2. Their response to manna said more about them than about it. They did not pass this blessing-test admirably.

3. The True Bread

- a. John 6:30-31, What sign? Seriously?
 - i. Feeding of 5000 (v. 1-14)
 - ii. Walking on Water (v. 15-21)
 - iii. “on the next day” (v. 22)
- b. John 6:32-36, The bread of God is a man who gives life.
- c. John 6:41-42
 - i. They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?”
 - ii. My response to Jesus says more about me than about Him.

Sermon Questions for Classes: (or you can teach the lesson plan further below)

1. Discuss: "All gifts are tests." What does that mean? Agree or disagree?
2. Discuss: "All tests are gifts." What does that mean? Agree or disagree?
3. Psalm 78:24-25 describes the manna beautifully, whereas Exodus 16 sounds plain. How do we view our own blessings? Is there a choice in how we view blessings? Is gratitude a choice?
4. What qualities of Jesus do we find undesirable, as Israel viewed manna? Why?
5. Ever hear the phrase, "Familiarity breeds contempt"? In John 6:41-42, the familiarity the people had with Jesus made it harder to believe Him to be special. Why?
 - a. What "common place" blessings in our lives are actually wonderful works of God?
 - b. In what ways do we forget to be amazed by Jesus? Do we get "used" to Him?

Bible Class Outline: "The Significance of the Sign of Bread"

1. Old Testament Back Story to John 6
 - a) Moses & Bread, **Exodus 16** (Today's Sermon)
 - i) Moses prays for the bread of heaven and the people receive manna.
 - ii) In another related story, Moses laments that he is tasked with providing food for the people, a job that is too heavy a burden for any man (**Numbers 11:13-15**).
 - b) Elisha & Bread, **2 Kings 4:42-44**
 - i) God's prophet takes just twenty loaves of bread and feeds 100 men.
 - ii) There is food leftover! Sound familiar?!
2. Jesus & Bread
 - a) **John 6:1-6; 10-13**
 - i) v. 1-4, The Setting: Passover, aka The Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - ii) v. 5-6, When Moses asked this question, he did not know the answer. Jesus did.
 - iii) v. 10-13, Elisha fed 100. Jesus fed 5000 plus.
 - b) The Point
 - i) Jesus is the true and better Moses.
 - ii) Jesus is the true and better Elisha.
3. Who Does This Make Jesus?
 - a) **John 6:14** – They *knew* this made Jesus a Prophet.
 - b) **John 6:15** – They *thought* this might make Jesus a King.
 - c) **John 6:16-21** – They did not yet understand that this same Jesus was God!
 - i) The sign of walking on water in the midst of a storm is greater than the sign of bread.
 - ii) Compare **Psalms 77:16-19**
4. Responses in **John 6**
 - a) Jesus tests his disciples with a question about bread (v. 5-6). Note: This is very similar language to **Exodus 16:4** where God tests the people with manna.
 - b) Practical Response
 - i) **v. 7**, Philip: We don't have enough.
 - ii) This response is practical, but faithless.
 - c) Faithful Response
 - i) **v. 8-9**, Andrew: We have a little.
 - ii) This response is faithful, precisely because it is so impractical.