

Spiritual nourishment – bread

ODCC – 24/01/10 (.doc)

Text: M

Introduction

1. Last week as an introduction to the next two messages, we looked at the makeup of the human.
 - a. Without repeating too much we saw that man comprises 3 parts: the body, the soul and the spirit.
 - b. The body houses the soul and is the perfect environment for the soul – it is through the body that the soul relates to the world and communicates with other people.
 - c. The soul is the real you. Incidentally, I didn't cover this last week, but the Bible shows that the soul is always conscious. When the body dies the soul does not lose consciousness but it is unable to relate with the living. That is why when a person dies they are unable to communicate with the living after leaving the body. In fact it appears that God prohibits the communication of the dead with the living (1 Sam 28).
2. The spirit is that part of a person that is created in the image of God when God said, *"Let us make man in our image."*
 - a. The spirit is the most important part of a man because men were created to live in fellowship with God.
 - b. Unless you are living in intimate fellowship with God you will never ever ever discover the true meaning of life and if you don't know what life is all about you will never find true satisfaction.
 - c. Jesus said, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (Jn 10:10). If we translated the Gk into our modern vernacular we would say, ***I have come that they might have life to the max!***
3. So the spirit is the most important part of a person. The trouble is that the spirit of every single person born after Adam and Eve has a dead spirit. So we cannot come into our own as human being.
 - a. The part of us that enables us to communicate with God is dead. So what do we do? We try and find fulfilment in life by elevating the value of the flesh.
 - b. And we generally live for the flesh and try and get as much life which includes everything that makes me feel GOOD!
 - c. King Solomon said (paraphrasing) "I put life to the test. I never held back. I did what ever I wanted to do". And he could because he was very rich and very powerful. He lists all the things that he did and the conclusion he came to was, *"Meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless; a chasing after the wind."*

Jesus is the source of life

1. I said that the spirit was dead. Last week we saw that it was not so dead that it could not be "quickened" or made alive. I used an illustration of an egg that will never become a living thing unless it is fertilised by a seed. When that happens, life is the result.
 - a. Our text last week was from John 3 – Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"You must be born again."* Your spirit needs quickening life from God.
 - b. It must come from God – it cannot come from anywhere else. Jesus also told Nicodemus *"Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."*
 - c. In other words non-one has real life or fullness of life until they have the life that comes from God.
2. The Bible gives several pictures as to how this takes place and I want to concentrate on the picture that we have from our text today.
 - a. One thing is clear – Jesus is the source of eternal life.
 - b. He said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* There is no life outside of Christ.
 - c. There is **no spirituality, no quickening, no union with God** except through Jesus Christ.
 - d. There are not many roads to God – there is only one way and that is the ChristWAY.
3. And Jesus made that very clear at all times in His ministry and in our text it can't be any clearer. He said, *"I am the bread of life."* The source of life, the food that imparts life.
 - a. Remember we are speaking about spiritual life – **that which** makes alive our dead spirit, **that which** constitutes intimate relationship with God.
 - b. And Jesus said, *"I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."*
 - c. This upset the Jews because just as Nicodemus thought that to be born again meant literally entering a 2nd time into the womb and being born, these people thought they had to literally eat Jesus' flesh and drink His blood.

Eating and drinking life

1. Obviously Jesus was speaking figuratively – He did not mean that they would have to literally eat His flesh and drink His blood.
 - a. But the figurative stands for the literal. And as Jesus pointed out to Nicodemus that to be born again was not a physical birth but a spiritual birth, so eating and drinking the Lord’s flesh and blood was not partaking of a material substance but a spiritual.
 - b. Twice a month we share communion and eat a little bread and drink a little wine. The bread is a symbol of Christ’s flesh broken and killed as a sacrifice, and the wine is a symbol of His blood that was shed for the forgiveness of sin.
 - c. We eat the bread and drink the wine – the symbols of Christ’s flesh and His blood to show that we have put our trust in Christ as the sacrifice for the cleansing of our sin and for the forgiveness of God.
 - d. Paul says in Romans, *“For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, ‘Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’”* (10:10-11).
2. Anyone who does that literally receives the life that Jesus is talking about. There is that union of the Spirit of God with our spirit and life is imparted to our lifeless spirit.
 - a. It’s not something that can be seen although with some people it brings about such a sudden and dramatic change that it is obvious that something has happened.
 - b. It is usually not felt – though some people describe a variety of emotions or strange experiences.
 - c. Everyone’s experience is different but the reality of what God has done spiritually is exactly the same.
 - d. God has given life through His Son, Jesus Christ.
3. So what now? Having received spiritual life we do not continue to live the old life where the flesh demanded satisfaction:
 - a. We now elevate the spirit and live our lives for God. Since our spirit is the most important part of our being we develop our intimacy with God.
 - b. Make no mistake, we still have a sinful nature and will have until we die so there will always be a battle between our human nature and our spirit. Paul speaks of this in Romans 7 & 8.
 - c. In our text the Jews ask Jesus for manna just as Moses gave to them and Jesus says, God gives the manna and I am the manna that comes down from heaven.
 - d. In other words, we must feast on Christ on a daily basis in order to elevate the spiritual life in us.
 - e. Later on Jesus told His disciples, *“I am the vine and you are the branches...remain in me and I will remain in you”* (Jn 15:1-4).

Conclusion

1. Last week I emphasised that the spirit of a man is the most important part of our being.
 - a. Today I want to emphasise that spiritual life can only come through Jesus and that anyone who believes in Him and confesses Him as saviour must LIVE A SPIRITUAL LIFE!
 - b. If you’ve made that commitment to God, He’s made a commitment to you. God takes your commitment very seriously and you can take His commitment very seriously.
2. Next week I want to talk about the spiritual life that God gives to us.