

**Mark:** Good morning everyone, my name is Mark, I'm one of the pastors here at North Shore Alliance, and I'm glad you're here with us. I want to pick up where we left off last week and continue to focus on the idea that God intends for worship to encompass our whole life.

If you were here last week, you may remember a pie chart I created to depict the way we spend our time in a given week. Well this past week someone from the congregation sent me a pie chart breaking down the way they spend their time: about 50 hours for sleeping, 43 hours for working, 7 hours for eating, which leaves him about 67 hours to look for things he had just a minute ago. I laughed out loud when I got the email.

In our teaching this morning Pastor Linda and I want to turn your minds to the following question: *how can eating a meal become an act of worship?*

In order to get our juices flowing, we're going by asking you another question and we want to hear your responses by way of a roving mic. The question is: *what is your favourite kind of food?* **Get Responses.**

**Linda:** Aren't taste buds amazing? Part of the reason why we eat is because food tastes so good, but there is a more important reason for eating: we don't live to eat, we eat to live. God has given us fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy because our bodies need to be fed. Food sustains us, it strengthens us, it gives our bodies energy to go to school, to work, or to play. Without food, our bodies shut down.

How many of you kids have ever gone a whole day without food? How about the adults, how many of you have gone a whole day, or a few days without food? And how did your bodies feel? You probably felt hungry, you probably didn't have a lot of energy, you probably

felt weak. God has designed our physical bodies to be fueled by food, and when our stomachs are running on empty, we have a really hard time.

It's no different when it comes to our life with God; we need to be sustained, strengthened, and energized by spiritual food. The Bible tells us that our mind, heart, and spirit gets hungry and we need to be fed. There is only one person who can satisfy our hunger and quench our thirst, and His name is Jesus.

I want to read two passages for you this morning; the first is found in John 6:35, and the second is found in John 7:37. In John 6:35, Jesus said "*I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*"

The problem with the bread we bake in our ovens or buy from the store is that it doesn't last for very long. In many families, a loaf of bread doesn't last more than a day; before long it's gone, and we're still hungry. Fresh bread tastes wonderful, but if we leave it on the counter for a day or two it gets stale and hard, and before long it's not fit to eat.

When it comes to spiritual food, we never have this problem with Jesus: the food He provides never runs out, and Jesus never gets stale and hard...He is always fresh, and always just what we need.

In John 7, Jesus spoke to a large crowd who had come to Jerusalem to take part in a year feast, celebrating the harvest. And every year, they would take part in a ritual: the priests would go down to the spring of Gihon and fill up a bowl of water and parade it in front of the people, and the people would cry out to God and ask Him to send the rain they needed to survive...in a desert climate, you need the rain.

And in the middle of this ritual, Jesus stood up in front of the crowd and in a loud voice said, *"If anyone is thirsty, let them come to me and drink."* If you run around on a hot day, you get thirsty; your body needs water. But Jesus knew that there is a deeper thirst within each of us, a thirst that only He can quench.

**Discussion Question:** In just a moment, we're going to take a few minutes to break into small groups and spend some time talking with one another. If you came with your family you can talk with them, or you can talk with the people right around you. Here's the question I would like you to discuss: In the same way we need bread and water for our Physical bodies. We need Jesus. *What do we need Jesus for? What are we hungry or thirsty for that can be found in Him?*

**Mark:** *What do we need Jesus for?* We need Jesus for all of life...our greatest need is for Him. *What does He have that we are hungry for?* Each of us are hungry for love, and Jesus connects us to God's perfect love. We are hungry for forgiveness and thirsty for mercy; we find these in Jesus. We are hungry for a life of purpose and meaning, and in Jesus this life takes on a whole new meaning.

In the time remaining, I want to get back to the question I began with: *how can eating a meal become an act of worship?* In some respects, the Lord's Supper is like any other meal, there is both food and drink to nourish our bodies. But, the Lord's Supper is an uncommon meal because we eat and drink recognizing that our deepest hunger and thirst can only be satisfied through the life of Jesus; Jesus is real food and drink.

This simple meal becomes an act of worship when we come with thankful and humbled hearts. Who can love us like Jesus? Who can forgive our sins and transform our lives like Jesus? We come to this

meal full of praise for the One who put His life on the line and died on the cross for our sake. Romans 5:8 says, *"God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."*<sup>1</sup> Romans 5:5 says, *"For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love."*<sup>2</sup>

This meal becomes an act of worship when we come with hungry and thirsty hearts. We come knowing that Jesus is what we need; we come expectant that He will meet us with both His welcome and His generosity.

In a few moments, we are going to invite you to come and partake of the bread and cup, and I want to invite you to come in an attitude of prayer...come asking Jesus to meet your hunger and thirst, come expecting to receive.

If you are a follower of Jesus, if you have asked Jesus to forgive your sins and lead your life, then this holy meal is for you. We have our kids with us this morning, and parents I will leave it up to your discretion as to whether your kids ready to partake in this meal. If you are here as a family, please come with your kids to receive the bread and the cup, you can crowd around the servers as a family...we don't need to come single file. If you're not here with a friend, or with your family, let me invite you to come forward with your discussion group from earlier and you can all receive together.

At this time I want to invite the servers to come and take their places, and I want to invite our worship team to come and lead us. As the music begins, please come forward to receive.

### Worship/Lord's Supper

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<sup>1</sup> New Living Translation.

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**Benediction**

The formal part of our service is over, but we have lots of time before the next service begins...I want to invite you to stick around, enjoy some food and coffee and take the time to connect with one another. If you see someone new, let encourage you to introduce yourself and make them feel welcome.

**Announcement:** One final announcement, next Friday night at 7:30, there will be an warm gathering in the foyer--we're going to turn the lights down, and after a time of worship there will be fellowship with coffee, snacks and live jazz. One of worship leaders, Bart, is putting on the event and he would love to have you come...and if you think you might like to attend, you connect with Bart in the foyer so that he knows how many people to plan for.