

“WORKING YOUR WAY TO HEAVEN”

John 6:22-29

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INTRODUCTION

Jesus and His disciples found themselves back on shore after Jesus’ second miracle of the night—the instantaneous bringing of the boat to shore, preceded by the walking on the water. But those remaining from the “hungry” crowd were not about to let their potential miracle working “King” get away from them so easily. They began pursuing Jesus across the lake—not knowing how He had gotten over there!

Once they found Jesus, He rebuked them for their wholly carnal attitude toward Him, and He exhorted them to work for the only food worth the effort—the food that “endures to eternal life,” the food that can only be obtained from Him—God’s authorized Messenger. Of course, they also had a wrong-headed concept of “working for God.” They believed that they could literally **work their way into heaven**. They only needed to know what kind of Law-deeds were necessary to have the desired outcome.

Jesus made it clear to them and to us that **there are no good works of human effort that can gain eternal life for a person.**

FAITH IN CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN.

I. THE PURSUIT OF THE MATERIALISTIC CROWD (22-25)

- A. They had stayed there, looking for Jesus.
- B. They were able to go back to the western shore due to the small boats sent to retrieve them. A lucrative trade for the merchants!
- C. They had no idea how Jesus had left, nor where He had gone.
- D. They went across to the original departure place, maybe to see if His disciples knew of His whereabouts.

II. THE PERSUASION OF THE MEDIATING SAVIOR (26-29)

- A. You are wrong. (26)
 - 1. You are not interested in the true meaning of the “**signs**” I did. These signs teach concerning His person.

“They were motivated by full bellies, not by full hearts.”

In the sign, they saw only the bread; they did not see in the bread the sign.

MANY TODAY WOULD EMBRACE THE GOSPEL IF IT WERE DEVOID OF THE OFFENSE OF THE CROSS AND FULL OF CARNAL DELIGHTS. *Cf. Seeker sensitive churches.*

- B. Your pursuits in life will never lead you to Life Eternal (27)
 - 1. “Do not work for food that perishes.”

Physical food itself does perish; also, it does not long preserve the person eating it. More must constantly be eaten. {cf. woman at the well.}

2. “Work for the food that endures to eternal life.”
This food doesn’t perish itself; nor does the person eating it perish.
The person has eternal life!
3. “The Son of Man” is the giver of this food” as illustrated in the miracle.
4. His Father—even God—has authenticated Him.
Remember chapter 5—by works, words, John, Scripture, etc.
Jesus is the genuine One—God has “set His seal” on Him!

C. Your Human efforts to earn Heaven are futile. (28-29)

1. We cannot do anything by way of Law righteousness to earn God’s favor. (28)
Present subjunctives stress the continuity of their working to earn eternal life.
“Works of God” are works that are pleasing to God—acceptable to Him and worthy of admittance to heaven.

2. We can only trust in Christ—whom God has sent! (29)

How can faith be called a work? **Because human action must be taken; the human will must be exerted. Yet, it is wholly a GIFT (V. 27).**

Faith is never considered a “law-work” or self-righteousness. Faith itself comes from God. Trust in God deserves no merit. He has earned our redemption; I simply accept His work for me.

Here are a few verses in John that make this truth very clear: 1:13; 1:17; 3:3; 3:16; 4:10; 5:21; 6:33, 37, 39, 44, 51, 55, 65; 8:12; 10:28; 11:25; 14:6; 17:2; 18:9.

Faith is receiving the Gift of God. See esp. 1:12 and 3:16.

When you receive His free gift, you deserve no credit—He gets it all!

Note that faith is **continual—believing continuously.**

Moreover, the act of faith is not “an independent, individual decision to believe”; the act of faith is itself the “work of God.” (v. 44)

CONCLUSION

Keep trusting Christ! That is the only way to eternal life.

Stop working for perishing food!

Life is fragile. Life is uncertain. Death is sure.

Eternal life is found only in Jesus Christ—trust Him. Submit your life to him.