

# “Bread of Life/Word of God”

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*First Presbyterian Church  
Wilkes-Barre, PA  
John 1:1-4  
John 6:47-51*

Here are some actual announcements from church bulletins:

- Miss Charlene Mason said, “I will not pass this way again,” giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- “Ladies, don’t forget the rummage sale. It’s a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don’t forget your husbands.”
- The sermon this morning” “Jesus Walks on the Water.” The sermon tonight: “Searching for Jesus.”
- Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack’s sermons.
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and the deterioration of some older ones.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hospitality.
- Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday. Please us the back door.

I hope I have your attention. This morning I am going to offer you but an appetizer, of what could be a great feast. As you can see, as you have heard, this is World Communion Sunday – billions of Christians worldwide are celebrating the Lord’s Supper on this day! Now notice – if we were in a Roman Catholic Church, or an Eastern Orthodox Church, or an Episcopalian, Anglican, Lutheran churches – the priest, minister would not be uplifting the fact on this particular day receiving the Lord’s Supper. Why? Because they receive it at all the masses! We don’t! There are those parts of the body of Christ, and I’ll here refer specifically to our brothers and sisters of the Roman Catholic tradition, who take John 6 and literally apply the body and blood of Jesus to the elements of the bread and wine. And their theology tradition, and ecclesiology – believe that in this Sacrament the people of God feed on the living Christ – they are sustained by him. He is their food, their nourishment. Jesus in John 6 says so! Therefore go to mass regularly! You need sustenance, do you not? The Church of Christ supplies your needed spiritual wellbeing. Of course, there is much more involved, and I say all of this in positive terms for our sister faith.

What I want you to hear is that Christ, for the Christian is the Bread of Life. Now, (and ever so briefly) 500 years ago, one of the greatest reformers of the church was born – John Calvin, in 1509.

According to Peter Steinfels of “The New York Times” John Calvin was “...a religious thinker and leader who may have done as much as anyone to shape the modern world.” And yet he is more often than not misunderstood, caricatured, or totally neglected by the secular historians of the past several generations.

This second generation reformer, exiled from his homeland France – in his mid-twenties wrote a treatise that revolutionized Christianity, and is still read today, The Institutes of the Christian Religion. Among his contributions; he laid the ground work for the development of capitalism, helped legitimize representative political institutions, and had a great impact on the formation of American exceptionalism, along with the concepts of providence, democracy, liberty and Christian redemption.

Calvin's contributions to our modern development, and our contemporary thinking are significant. I hope to share more of this at a later date. But for now, of great significance – Calvin, following Augustine, a great Church father, and others, evolved his theology via John 1 and elsewhere seeing Jesus as Word of God – Word - seeing Jesus in the Scriptures! Seeing the extreme importance of a literate people! Calvin was pivotal in implementing literacy – all God's children needed to be able to read God's Word – which reflected The Word of God – Jesus Christ. Education was paramount! You see our shift –

Bread of Life/Word of God!

The Lord's Supper is special and meaningful to us of course!!

Christ is present!

For Calvin/for the Reformed/for Presbyterians, we feed on the Word of God! Calvin took it for granted – you (Christians) would be in church because you needed to take in the Word for spiritual nourishment.

The Bread of Life/Word of God.

Society-culture changed because of this vision of knowing the Word –hence knowing how to read, to communicate! As Christians this Bible – my friends, there is so much guidance in this “Word”. It has been belittled, mocked, and scorned. There is truth, hope and purpose herein! I say this with my intellect and reasoning powers intact.

In order to survive and thrive you need to regularly take in the “Word of God.”

Amen.