

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1 TEMPTED

2 POWER AND FAME

3 NICODEMUS

4 REJECTION

5 THE BREAD OF LIFE

1 TEMPTED

At the beginning of creation, Lucifer defiantly rebelled against God, grasping after His position. Now God the Son, though still fully God, had set aside all his visible glory and majesty to leave Heaven and come to earth as a human being. Jesus must have appeared very vulnerable to Satan. If he could only entice Jesus to do his bidding, it would be a great victory. From God's perspective, it was time to reveal something more about himself.

*see pages 178 to 180 for an explanation of the term, "Son of God."

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

Matthew 4:1,2

Devil means false accuser, slanderer

Jesus had just completed a lengthy time without food.

The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Matthew 4:3

A SUGGESTION

Satan was suggesting that Jesus do something that everyone would understand, namely, take care of his physical well-being. It also seemed like a prime opportunity for Jesus to prove who He really was. If he was God, then he had created the world simply by speaking it into existence. To turn stones into bread would be a simple matter. But there was a catch. To do so, he would be following Satan's orders.

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4:4

JESUS QUOTES THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Christ responded to Satan by quoting Scripture, God's written Word. He said that it was more important to follow God than to take care of physical needs. This is a significant statement as many people are so concerned about this physical life that they ignore their spiritual well-being.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

Mark 8:36 NKJV

SATAN “QUOTES”

Then the devil took him to the holy city [or Jerusalem] and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”

Matthew 4:5,6

Now the challenge was brazen. “Prove it! Prove that you are God’s Son! If God is truly your Father, then he will save you!”

Satan was quoting a passage found in the Book of Psalms. Satan loves religion and quoting Scripture is a favorite trick of his. The problem was that Satan was not quoting Scripture accurately. He was selecting only the portion that suited his purposes. He had done this with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and now he was trying it on Jesus.

JESUS QUOTES SCRIPTURE

Once again, Jesus answered Satan’s temptation by quoting Scripture, only he quoted it correctly.

Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Matthew 4:7

AN OFFER RESISTED

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

Matthew 4:8,9

Satan was offering Jesus the nations of the world, if Jesus would only worship him. After all, wasn’t that what Jesus wanted—for people to follow him? What Satan did not mention was that if Jesus worshiped him, then Jesus would also be serving him. Worship and service always go together. You can’t divide the two. But Satan’s ploy didn’t work. Again Jesus quoted Scripture:

Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Matthew 4:10-11

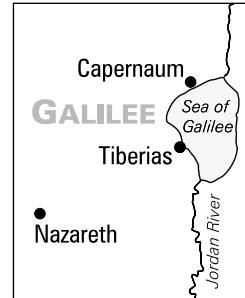
Satan means
adversary, or
enemy

Satan had not succeeded in entrapping Jesus in his treacherous web of deceit. Jesus was above reproach, uncompromising in his resistance to temptation. The Devil retreated temporarily, still determined to destroy Jesus.

From Satan's perspective, he did have a measure of success. John the Baptist had been thrown into jail.¹

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake...

Matthew 4:12,13



SINLESS

The struggle between good and evil is not a balanced one. Jesus, the Creator God, is far more powerful than Satan, a created being. Though Jesus was tempted, he did not give in to temptation. He was perfect.

True and false prophets have come and gone, but none have claimed to be sinless. The Scripture records the lives of many people who were either revealed as sinners, or confessed their sinfulness. But Jesus never did. You will search the Scripture in vain looking for one reference where Jesus sinned or asked for forgiveness. Even those who were closest to him, and most likely to know of any character flaws, wrote that Jesus ...

... committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:22

Jesus' temptation was just one more way in which he identified with humanity. When God finally judges all mankind, no one will be able to stand before him and say, *"Lord, you don't understand! You were born in a palace; I in dirt. You were never tempted; I was. How can you judge me when you never faced what I faced."* No, the Bible says we don't have a God ...

... who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

2 POWER AND FAME

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”

Mark 1:14,15

Since Israel had failed as a nation to be a light displaying God's relationship to mankind, Jesus came offering a new kingdom. He was not offering a political empire based on laws written in stone, impossible to keep; but a spiritual kingdom, available to all, written in men's hearts and empowered by God.

Initially, the people must have been somewhat nonplussed by this offer. Here was Jesus, dressed in homespun clothes. *“Were not his kin from Nazareth? His father was a carpenter, I believe.”* And he was on foot. Kings don't walk! A real king would come on a horse—a steed, with chariots and armies—and he would ride right up to Herod's palace. A king would issue a challenge, a royal proclamation of independence. You could never read that into Jesus' message even at the best of times. He said *repent*. What sort of king would say that? The local gossips were having a heyday. Even the most serious folk were twitching with laughter.

But not everyone was scoffing. Repentance—that change of mind—was something that happened inwardly, and the heart was the place where Christ intended to begin his rule. For those who actually met Jesus... well, he was different. His words made you pause and think.

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they left their nets and followed him.

When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Mark 1:16-20

AUTHORITY

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.

Mark 1:21,22

Those who heard Jesus knew there was something very unusual about him. His teaching commanded attention, and no wonder, they were listening to God Himself. But Jesus not only spoke with authority, he also demonstrated it.

Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

Mark 1:23,24

This was a case of demon possession. One of Satan's angels was living inside this man, with the man's consent. The demon knew who Jesus was, calling him *the Holy One of God!*

“Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” Mark 1:25

Because demons always twist the truth for their own purposes, Jesus did not want them telling others who he was. Christ himself validated that he was THE PROMISED DELIVERER by ordering the demon out.

The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.” News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Mark 1:26-28

Now the tongues were wagging to a different tune. Jesus' incredible power must have made headline news in the local gossip sessions and this was only the beginning!

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.”

Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

Mark 1:40-42

In ancient times, leprosy was a dreaded disease—a horribly mutilating, slow death. The Scripture says Jesus healed all kinds of nasty ailments, where the person was obviously ill or severely crippled. No man was ever sent away because his disease was incurable. He even raised the dead!

It's important to understand that Jesus wasn't putting on a show for the entertainment of the local populace. Jesus not only felt genuine compassion for the people he helped, but he was also establishing that both he and his message were from Heaven. No, he didn't need a horse, a chariot, or an army. All he needed to do was *speak*. Remember, he was *THE WORD*... the PROMISED SAVIOR of whom all the prophets wrote.

DEMONS

Jesus had complete control over all creation, including the created spirit beings. The Scripture tells us ...

... by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things ...

Colossians 1:16,17

The struggle between good and evil is not a balanced one. The Lord Jesus is infinitely more powerful than Satan, a created being. If a person fears the spirit realm, then he needs to know that Jesus Christ came to set him free of that fear. We will see just how Jesus does that later in the book.

3 NICODEMUS

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, *“Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” John 3:1-3

*Rabbi is the name for a Jewish religious teacher. To call a person Rabbi implied respect.

BORN AGAIN?

Nicodemus was a man of status. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council that advised the Romans. As a Pharisee, he kept Moses' law meticulously. As a Jew, descended from Abraham, Nicodemus considered himself part of the chosen race. Nicodemus had a privileged ancestry; everything was *right* about his birth. But Jesus found fault with it and said, “*You must be born again.*” Jesus was supposed to be giving good news—but this was bad news. Besides, how was it possible to be born again?

“*How can a man be born when he is old?*” Nicodemus asked. “*Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!*”

Jesus answered, “*I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'*” John 3:4-7

So that was it. Jesus wasn't talking about Nicodemus' birth as an infant—when he was *born of water* or *born of the flesh*. The second birth was about a spiritual birth, a spiritual beginning. Well, that was straightforward enough. To go to Heaven you not only needed a physical birth, but you also needed to be born a second time with a spiritual birth. But how could one be born spiritually? Jesus continued:

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."

John 3:14,15

Jesus was saying that to be born again, Nicodemus must be like the people of Moses' day. He must first recognize that he was a sinner. Then he needed to have a *change of mind* about thinking that his birth and status would make him acceptable with God, and instead trust Jesus who came from Heaven to provide a way of acceptance. If he put his faith in him, Jesus said that he would provide Nicodemus with eternal life.

FAITH AND TRUST

The word *believe* in this context implies more than intellectual assent. An Israelite could have acknowledged that looking at Moses' bronze serpent would heal him, but if he did not demonstrate faith in God by actually *looking* at the pole, then he would have died. The biblical meaning of the word includes an act of the will, and is synonymous with faith and trust.

The *object* of one's faith is also important—it's critical! A number of years ago, someone with a twisted mind placed deadly poison in the capsules of a pain reliever. Subsequently several people, sincerely believing the medicine to be what was advertised, took the medication and died. They were honestly trusting, but inadvertently trusting in the wrong thing.

A man might devoutly believe that an UFO could save him from his sin, but sincerity based on an erroneous belief is meaningless. However, if the object of his faith is Almighty God, such trust will have a very different effect. We've seen that God keeps His Word.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

EVERLASTING LIFE

Jesus was promising eternal life, not just to Nicodemus, but to *whoever believes* in him! The angel had instructed Mary and Joseph to name their son *Jesus* because that name meant DELIVERER or SAVIOR. And now Jesus was saying he would

deliver man from the consequence of sin, eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire.

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." *John 3:17*

Jesus had not come to earth to judge it. Rather he had come to save the world from all the tragedy that sin, Satan and death had brought.

"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

John 3:18

NO MIDDLE GROUND

Jesus said that those who put their faith in him would not be judged as sinners. But those who did *not* trust in him were already under judgment. There was no middle ground; you couldn't get around it. One could not say, *"I'll think about it,"* and comfortably remain in a gray zone. You had to choose to believe, otherwise you remained an unbeliever. To make no choice was, in effect, to make a choice.

Also, you didn't need to wait until death to find out your eternal destiny. Jesus was stating it in black and white terms. A man was under judgment, bound for the Lake of Fire, until he put his trust in Jesus to deliver him. Then he would have eternal life. This was the promise Jesus was making.

"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life." *John 5:24*

Jesus wasn't ignoring the judgment of sin. He knew that not everyone would trust in him. Many would choose not to do so for their own reasons.

"This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed." *John 3:19,20*

Jesus was talking about spiritual light versus spiritual darkness. He said that many hate the light because light exposes sin. People don't like being revealed as sinners. They'd rather

hide or blame their sin on someone else, just as Adam and Eve did. The Scripture says such people prefer darkness. But what is this *light*?

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world.”

John 8:12

At the time of creation, God made light so we could see our way along a physical path. Now he had come to earth to be the *light* for our spiritual path.

Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 8:12

4 REJECTION

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them.

Mark 2:1-3

THE PARALYZED

This was a familiar scenario wherever Jesus went. As soon as he put in an appearance, the sick and lame began to arrive. In this case four men brought a paralyzed friend.

Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on.

Mark 2:4

The houses were typically flat-roofed. Stairs led to the top, making it a cool place to relax in the evening. When the four men could not get close to Jesus, they simply went up on the roof, tore it open and lowered the paralyzed man down in front of Jesus. I say “simply,” but that only applies to getting up on the housetop. Tearing up the roof must have been an ordeal. You can imagine the dust and chunks of packed earth that rained down on those inside. Of course, Jesus’ lesson was interrupted. Everyone stared at the ceiling wondering what was going on. As the faces of the determined men came into view, probably Jesus’ audience took to yelling

and carrying on: “*For crying out loud! Where’s your respect?! We’re covered in dust! You’re wrecking the house!*” But Jesus saw something different.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Mark 2:5

THE HEART

Jesus was first concerned about the inward man, the heart. It was no problem for him to forgive sin, but some of his audience had trouble accepting that. Though they didn’t say anything out loud, their thoughts were hostile.

Now some teachers of the law [or the Scribes] were sitting there, thinking to themselves, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

Mark 2:6,7

They were right—only God *can* forgive sin!

Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things?”

Mark 2:8

Jesus knew what they were reasoning, and he told them so. You can imagine the Scribes’ mortification. They probably reeled back in their minds trying to remember what they had been thinking during the last ten minutes. One thing was certain—Jesus could read their thoughts! But Jesus wasn’t trying to impress them. He had a question.

“Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk?’”

Mark 2:9

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

A lawyer could not have framed a more difficult question. You can see the Scribes straining their brains. “The man was obviously paralyzed. To restore the crippled limbs to use was impossible. Only God could heal such an infirmity. But if Jesus could give life to withered limbs, then that meant he was... no, that was unthinkable. God would never come to earth and live a life like Jesus did. He was a nobody, living on the dusty outskirts of the empire. The audacity to ask such a loaded

question! Who did he think he was anyway? God!?" Jesus answered their query without them asking...

"...But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." He said to the paralytic, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Mark 2:10-12

The purpose of the miracles was not to create something equivalent to a vaudeville act or a circus side show. The miracles authenticated who Jesus said he was.

HELPLESS SINNERS

Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. ...As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

Mark 2:13,14

Though Levi was a Jew, he worked as a tax collector for the Romans. These money-grubbers gained their shekels from a hidden surcharge on the tax, and often grossly overcharged the people in order to comfortably line their own pockets. They were hated for their corrupt power and for their willingness to work as bloodsuckers for the Romans. Nevertheless, as Jesus passed the tax office, he invited Levi to follow him.

While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the "sinners" and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Mark 2:15-17

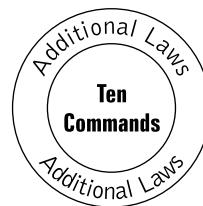
Jesus could only help those who recognized their own sinfulness. That has always been the first step to acceptance with God.

WORKING ON THE SABBATH

Jesus' constant rebukes must have been galling to the Pharisees. They were losing face. Hoping to catch Jesus in some act of blatant sin, they began to keep a close eye on him.

Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Mark 3:1,2

According to the Law, no one was to work on the Sabbath. To do such work was to break God's Law and that would be sin. In the Pharisees' minds, *work* included such things as performing the service of a doctor. The Law didn't say it was wrong to heal on this day, but the Pharisees had encircled the Ten Commandments with their own list of rules, and those precepts had taken on the authority of Scripture. So they watched to see if Jesus would heal the man, if he would work on the Sabbath. But Jesus was fully aware of the purpose for which God had given the Law. Knowing the Pharisees' scheme to entrap him, Christ could have avoided a confrontation but he didn't back off.



Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone." Mark 3:3

You can see Jesus slowly turn and gaze at those who had plotted to accuse him. The moment is frozen ...

Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" Mark 3:4

There he went again, asking loaded questions! The Pharisees were in a huff—seething with anger and resentment. As the religious answer-men, their credibility was being tarnished.

But they remained silent.

He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

Mark 3:4-5

PLOTTING

Jesus had done it. He had worked on the Sabbath! The Pharisees' had caught him in the act.

Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Mark 3:6

Normally such an alliance would have been unthinkable. The Herodians were a political party that supported the rule of Herod and the Romans. On the other hand, the Pharisees despised the Romans—but they hated Jesus even more. If they were going to kill him, they would need Rome's help.

The religious leaders had rejected Jesus. As far as they were concerned, he could not be THE PROMISED DELIVERER.

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES

Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him ...

Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve—designating them apostles ...

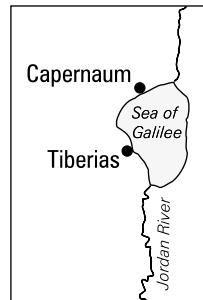
Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James, son of Zebedee and his brother..., John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder); Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and..., Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Mark 3:7,8,13-19

From those who followed him, Jesus selected twelve disciples with whom he would spend extra time. They were a mixed lot comprised of a Rome-employed tax collector on one end of the social spectrum and, on the other end, a zealot pledged to overthrow the Romans. Among the remaining were an assortment of fishermen. Only God could have maintained peace between these rugged men! Regardless of their background, these twelve were all committed to following Jesus through thick and thin. That is, all but one.

5 THE BREAD OF LIFE

Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Feast was near.



When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?"

John 6:1-5

Jesus was asking questions again.

He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

Philip answered him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

John 6:6-9

Like a small boy hinting to his father, you can't help wondering if Andrew was hoping that Jesus could do something.

Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

John 6:10,11

The biblical account is stated so matter-of-factly that you almost miss what happened. Jesus had just fed a massive crowd with a boy's lunch. This is not a lesson in exponential multiplication. Jesus divided the bread and fish among his twelve disciples, and they apportioned it to five thousand men—the women and children would have been in addition to this number. This was reproduction of an unheard of

magnitude, and Jesus wasn't being miserly. They had enough leftovers for each disciple to take a basketful home.

After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

John 6:14

MAKE JESUS A KING

The men who had benefited from this miracle were so impressed that they decided they would forcibly install Jesus as their king. But Jesus wasn't interested in starting an earthly kingdom, though there would be a time for that in the future. For now he was seeking to rule peoples' hearts.

Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

John 6:15,25,26

WRONG MOTIVES

Well, there you have it. Jesus could see that the people only wanted him to be king so that they could get free food. They weren't interested in the fact that these miracles revealed that he was THE PROMISED SAVIOR. Jesus said ...

"Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

John 6:27

The food they ate could only sustain life for a moment. Sooner or later, they would all die. Therefore, Jesus said their all-consuming goal in life should be to pursue that which would give them eternal life.

Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

John 6:28,29

The people wanted to know what sort of *work* they would have to do to earn everlasting life. Jesus said that they only needed to *believe*; they only needed to *trust* in him to be their Savior. That was all. It seemed so simple.

So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you?” *John 6:30,31*

What was that? They were asking Jesus for a sign to prove that he was THE ANOINTED ONE of whom all the prophets wrote, as if feeding the five thousand with a boy's lunch wasn't enough?! What they were really asking for was another free meal, another loaf of bread.

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth,...it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

“Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.”

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” *John 6:32-35*