

Henley-in-Arden Baptist Church

“Staying Connected” 5 – Sunday 19th April 2020

Staying connected to God and each other while not meeting as church in the normal way

So, Easter Sunday last week was rather different! I hope you were able to experience something of the ‘active love of God’ for yourselves in some way over the weekend. I thought it would be good to be a bit more systematic over the coming weeks, and so we will be looking at the “I am” sayings of Jesus in John’s gospel. If we resume meeting before the series is finished, then these could continue as a ‘bonus’!

In John’s gospel, it is revealed to us who Jesus is; and by implication who God is; and what He is like. John tells us the purpose of his gospel: “... that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:31)

There is often a sequence of miracle or ‘sign’ followed by a discourse where Jesus explains things for us.

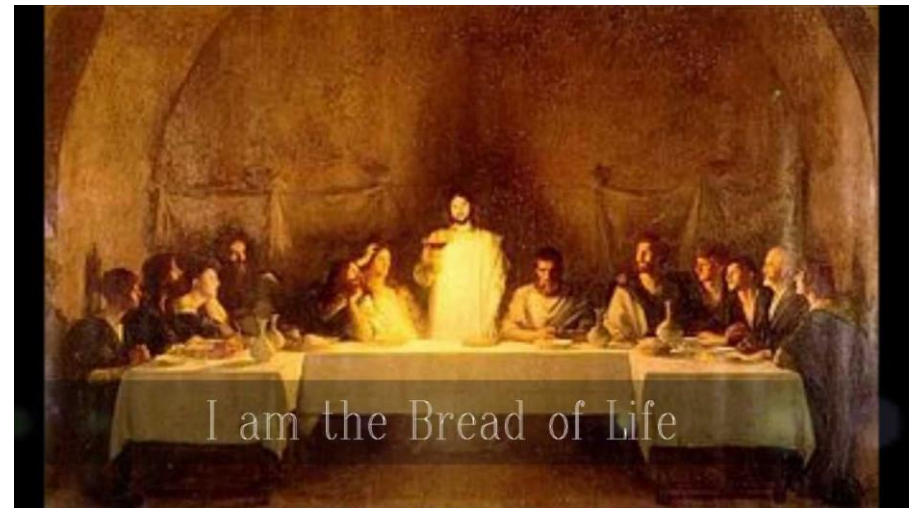
So the first of our “I am” sayings: “I am the bread of life”

John 6:35

“Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’”

This occurs in quite a long passage of teaching after Jesus has fed the 5000 (John 6:25-59)

There are very clear allusions to the OT Exodus story ‘bread of heaven’ that the first hearers would have understood. Jesus is saying that he is the true bread of heaven, and he would actually give his life for them and for the world. Belief in him for all He has accomplished for us spiritually is far better than simply physical nourishment alone.



God provides for us today both physical nourishment and spiritual nourishment – which we need more than ever; and is freely available in Christ. Let’s continue to ‘feed on him’ in prayer and bible-reading; and to follow His ways with His help.

Lord Jesus, we trust in You, the living bread. Thank You for the life You give. Help us to ‘feed on You’ and grow in faith, and the love and knowledge of Your ways.

We pray for a needy world.

At this time we pray for Your help in the ‘fight’ against the Coronavirus, and the difficult circumstances of the lives of everyone. We pray for strength and resilience for those in positions of responsibility: for health workers, for government in particular.

We pray for ourselves and all those we know who are struggling; for the bereaved, the sick, the worried and fearful. Lord be to them and us our hope, our strength. Help us to feed on You for the Life You give, and our wholesome nourishment, even in the midst of these things. Thank You for Your presence with us.

Finally, Lord, we pray as follows:

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.*

I am aware of how important ‘phoning each other is in these times of relative isolation and difficulty – please do keep that up; and encourage each other that way. And do keep praying!
Thank you for your ongoing love and fellowship expressed in these ways.

Quiz Question:

Of Jesus’ miracles, and there are many, which is the only one recorded in all four gospels?

Services on Radio and TV this Sunday include:

Radio 4 8:10am Sunday Worship
BBC1 10:00am Sunday Worship
BBC1 1:15pm Songs of Praise

And finally, please do get in touch with me at any time

May you know God’s grace and peace.

Mike

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Some good advice from Paul in Philippians:

Philippians 4:8-9

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. And the God of peace will be with you.”