

## Di121 Effective Communication

### *Lesson Di121-30 Conclusion—Living the Message*

Have you ever met anyone who said one thing and did another? Sometimes even parents will say, “Do as I say, not as I do.” A person’s words are very ineffective if their actions disagree with what they say. This final lesson considers how Jesus lived out the message he was sent to bring. He showed us the Father. Ask yourself, “Can someone tell you are a follower of Jesus by the way you live?”

Jesus spoke to the multitudes many times, and they were amazed at his words. Even unbelievers listened in awe, saying, “No one ever spoke the way this man does” (John 7:46). He healed many who were sick. He gave bread to those hungry for food, and satisfied those hungry for truth. Yet none of these things fully communicated God’s message. Jesus himself is the source of abundant life here and eternal life after this one. That was the message he lived out. The Apostle Paul later told the Corinthians, “You yourselves are our letter ... known and read by everyone” (1Cor 3:2). Like Jesus, we must live our message, so everyone can see it.

In his Gospel, John relates that after Jesus fed the 5,000, he went to a mountain to pray. He directed his disciples to take the boat across the Sea of Galilee. He left the crowd, because after this miracle they wanted to make him their earthly king. The next morning when the people found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they wondered how he had gotten there.

Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed. It is because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” They believed as many still believe today, that to please God means doing some good work. Jesus encouraged them to seek instead what was needed for eternal life; not just physical life. Then he told them how to please God.

Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” God’s “work” is to believe in his son Jesus. This is the only work that leads to eternal life. That seemed too simple for this crowd. They wanted to prove themselves before God. They also wanted Jesus to prove that he was who he claimed to be, God’s Son.

So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat’.”

They wanted to know if he could provide supernatural food for 40 years like Moses did. Their real question was, “Are you greater than Moses? You gave us ordinary bread; Moses gave them bread from heaven.”

Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. The bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

“Sir,” they said, “From now on give us this bread.” They were still thinking only of earthly food. Jesus made it clear that he was the bread from heaven and that only he could give real life. Instead of God giving them something which needed to be eaten often, God had given them once for all *someone* who would fully satisfy their deepest hunger.

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. ... For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.” God’s will is that everyone who comes to Jesus will be satisfied spiritually. He promises to accept all who come to him. Jesus has come to do God’s will; that will is to give life eternal to all who believe.

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them... I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:26-35, 40, 44-51).

The central message Jesus lived out is that he is the source of all life. To communicate this truth he concluded his message by calling himself the bread of life. His reference to eating here does not mean any ritual taking of communion as providing our salvation. It means that we accept by faith that Jesus is God’s sacrifice for sin. The Father sent the Son down from heaven. He became flesh so he could die for our sins and so that we can partake with him of eternal life.

Even to this day in the Bible lands, bread is considered the most basic source of life. The manna Israel ate was a kind of bread. That bread, though from heaven, could not give them eternal life. Jesus is the only real source of life available to us. If Jesus is your daily bread, if you are nourished by him, you will live eternally. He gave his life for our lives, so that through him we could receive eternal life. Effective communication is not done only by using words, but by living out the message we carry.

This story is **important** because it demonstrates how Jesus communicated that he was the real source of the life God wants us to experience. He did not just speak words. He lived out the message he had been sent to bring. Your message is identified with you.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that Jesus alone can give us eternal life.

Let’s **review** this lesson—

1. After the feeding of the 5,000, how did Jesus answer the people’s question, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” [Pause]

A. If you answered that Jesus told them, “Believe in the one the Father has sent,” you are correct.

2. What title did Jesus use to describe himself after feeding the 5,000? [Pause]
  - A. If you said Jesus told the crowds, “I am the bread of life,” you are right.
3. According to Jesus what was his central message to human beings? [Pause]
  - A. If you said the central message of Jesus is that he is the source of eternal life, you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to memorize the story and tell it to someone who has not heard it before. Then ask them this question, “If the central communication of the gospel is Jesus, then what should be the goal of the one who speaks in his name?” Answer: The focus of our communication should be to talk about Jesus, who he is, what he has done, and how he alone gives meaning to our lives as believers. Effective communication is not done only by using words, but by living out the message we carry.