

Harvest 2016 (John 6:25-35)

Bread is a staple food across the world in slightly different forms
Can anyone name a type of bread from another country?

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| India | chapattis or naan bread |
| Italy | Focaccia or Ciabatta |
| France | Fougasse - if you watched Great British bake off this week! |
| Germany | Pretzels or dark brown Pumpernickel bread |
| Polish | Bagels |
| Jamaica | flat bread called Bammy |
| China | flat bread called Bing |

All are a staple food... made with different types of flour with or without yeast with more or less things added

But a staple, a basic form of food

Why do we eat food? For enjoyment :-) and for nourishment

In this day and age, in this country we are lucky.

We fancy x y or z and we go to a local shop to buy it

Unless there is a shortage of something...

Great British Bake Off (& other cookery programmes) causes surges in demand for certain items e.g. almonds or glycerine!

If we grow things in our gardens we know the fragility or uncertainty of producing things
This year has been an excellent year for tomatoes!

And they have ripened! ... But some years LOTS of green tomato chutney!!

Some years certain crops fail... wet summer means the cereal crops grown by farmers in our country are not good

Weather, Life, circumstances, the system, can let us down... nothing is 100% reliable

A crisis hits whether that be awful weather that stops our crops growing

An oil crisis that means that our petrol stations do not have the fuel we normally just go and buy

Or we lose our job and are unemployed for a few weeks

Or.....

Crisis hits and our world can be turned upside down

Some people, even in our country, hit crisis points and do not have enough money to buy staple foods - statistic in Dec 2012 that said many of us are only 3 pay packets away from homelessness

In August this year the Guardian newspaper reported that 1/3 working families are ONE monthly pay packet away from losing their homes

Hence food banks such as our local ones in Bracknell and Crowthorne

Trussell Trust = main food bank charity in England

In 2015/16 they gave away over 1.1m food 'parcels' to people in crisis

A food parcel provides 3 days food per person with a balance of items to get through crisis

As well as a whole host of other support and care

Our food today will all go to Bracknell Food bank where Judith volunteers

Ask her for any more info and she may appreciate some help loading all our donations in to her car after the service

A crisis of one sort or another can hit any of us at any time

We do not know what is round the corner

Practical things are vital to us

Those individuals and families who have received a food parcel from Foodbank will say how vital it was to them

Our lives are bigger than just our physical needs Important as they are

How does a crisis hit us emotionally, and spiritually?

Jesus is saying in this story that I read that, as much as he acknowledges our need for food - he had just fed 5000+ people on the hill side with few fish and small loaves because he could see they were physically hungry, he also knows that we are emotionally and spiritually hungry

And He wants to feed us and nourish us in those areas of our lives

'the bread that God gives is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world'

We were thinking last week about Paul's encouragement to Timothy to take hold of 'life that is truly life'

We all have inner hopes and dreams, deep down we are all searching for contentment and peace

And we look for it in all sorts of places. Some of those satisfy us for a while but then some sort of crisis may hit and we end up in places that are far from peaceful and content

Jesus is promising us that if we search him out, if we place our trust and faith in Him - the Son of God, the He will feed and nourish our inner beings and we will find contentment and peace

'Those who come to me will never be hungry; those who believe in me will never be thirsty'

Jesus never lets us down and says that he will give the everlasting bread, He is the bread of life But we need to feed on Him. That is an active seeking, working for the food that lasts for always

Jesus told them 'I am the bread of life' the staple food which we can enjoy and be nourished by.