



*"If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

Matthew 4

*"Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ...If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"*

Matthew 7

I find an interesting connection between the fourth and seventh chapters of Matthew. In the former, Jesus is tempted by Satan to turn the stones that surround him amidst his wilderness fast into bread. In the latter, Jesus assures us that God will never give his children stones in the place of bread.

The immediate context of chapter seven is discernment – directing us to discern the ways of God's Kingdom. In short, our Heavenly Father promises never to give us stones. Our responsibility, then, is to trust that the stones that plague our lives are truly bread from Heaven.

In chapter four, Satan tells Jesus to turn the stones to bread. He exploits Scripture hoping to lead the Son away from the Father – essentially petrifying the bread of life. Jesus in turn tells Satan that the stones are bread, for the Father is using them to draw him to feast upon the wonders of divine fellowship.

Time and time again God has brought things into my life that are hard – miserably hard. I am tempted to toss them, skip them, kick them, or just walk around them, all the while complaining that God would allow such stones in my life. How great it could be to stop, trust, draw near, and worship. "Father, this sure looks like a stone, it sure feels like a stone, but I trust you, please show me how this could be bread."

I am equally tempted toward stealing the sweet bread of God, tucking it in my shirt, and scurrying off into the world, only to find that apart for the intimate presence of the Father it has turned to stone. Every warm loaf from Heaven's breath has the potential for desolate petrification. Every cold stone from the world's indifference has the potential for savory nourishment.

The difference? The direction. Draw near to the Father...stay...trust...feast.

*"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food."*

Isaiah 55



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