

Eat it all today

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In [last week's gospel](#) reading and this one, a picture of a beleaguered Jesus emerges: he can't go anywhere without being mobbed. The crowds hunt him down; they even demand to know when he got where he is, as if they have the right to see his itinerary. Everyone has heard about the miraculous food—"Five Thousand Fed From Five Loaves!"—and everyone wants more. Maybe that's why there are two very similar stories of bread multiplication in the New Testament—maybe we want more too.

Find the important man and attach yourself to him, and you'll be all right. In the people's memory, Moses is the go-to man: the intimacy with God Israel enjoys has been an institution for centuries, and they are proud of that intimacy. If it was good enough for Moses, it's good enough for them. We too make statues of our important figures and impute to them powers they did not possess in life. Jesus points this out: it wasn't Moses who gave the people's forebears manna in the wilderness. God did that.

It was not Moses. It wasn't the church or the tradition. Not, Jesus seems to be saying, even he himself. It is not the *medium* of the experience that we seek; it is the experience of God itself. The living, breathing experience of God—as real as the physical feeling of food in the stomach. Maybe you had the experience of the living God yesterday. But don't imagine that you will have the same experience today. Today is a new day. Let it be new.

Oh, how we hate this! We do some wonderful thing in church, and so resolve to do it again. So next year, we have the Second Annual Wonderful Thing. Now it's a tradition, so we have a Third Annual Wonderful Thing, and a fourth. Soon there is a standing Wonderful Thing Committee, with its own budget line. We couldn't stop it if we tried.

Not everything needs to be repeated, or even can be. Yes, there is a hunger for tradition in us that militates against the new. But faith looks forward.

Food perishes. The Hebrews of the Exodus couldn't hold onto their manna for a rainy day—they had to eat it all on the day they found it, or it would rot. Use the gifts of God you receive today. Go out on a limb and use them up, and expect to be sustained again tomorrow, perhaps in a completely different way. Maybe all this emphasis on bread this summer is just that—a recognition of its *dailyness*, our daily need of it. You don't bake all the bread you're going to need for the year on the same day; you bake every couple of days, just a few loaves at a time. You don't have one experience of God to last you for a lifetime; you enter into the relationship with God every day, again and again.

There are lots of different kinds of bread.

Feather-light No-knead Dinner Rolls

2 cups boiling water
1/2 cup butter
1/3 cup sugar
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup cold milk
2 (.25 ounce) packages active dry yeast
5 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 eggs

Melt butter in hot water. Add sugar and salt and stir. Add cold milk and yeast. Stir to dissolve yeast. Add 3 cups flour and mix. Add eggs and 2 1/2 - 3 cups more flour. Mix, cover and let rise until dough doubles in size. Punch down and let rise 30 more minutes or until doubled.

Make walnut-sized balls of dough. Place about 2 inches apart in well-buttered 9 x 13" pan or two 8" round cake pans. Bake in a preheated oven for 20-25 minute at 400 degrees F. Brush top of rolls with butter while hot. Serve right away. Good cold, too; just good in a different way.