

THERE'S LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

John 6:54-71

"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Many Disciples Turn Away

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

This passage of Scripture and the dialogue that Jesus had with His disciples is what had taken place just after Jesus had fed the 5000 with the 5 loaves of bread and the two fish that a young boy had. Leading up to that Jesus had asked the disciples where they could buy bread for all the people and the disciples were undoubtedly shocked at the mere consideration of taking on such a monumental task. Not only does the narrative speak of there being 5000 men but obviously there were children present and likely women also. Suffice it to say that not only was there at least 5000 people but there was no humanly way possible to feed that size of a crowd on the spur of the moment.

While it takes time and planning and the gathering of resources and the putting it all together to feed a large group of people, as we've learned in this ministry, Jesus is always ready and willing to

provide us with the "true bread from heaven" as He is "the Bread of Life." Jesus of course was speaking spiritually as He distinguished between the two. First, after the feeding of the 5000, Jesus had to hurry and get out of there because the people are said to have wanted to make Jesus king. It was not time though for Jesus to rule on earth as king, even though He is already the King of kings and Lord of Lords! Then John's narrative tells us that Jesus went up to a mountain to pray and by evening the disciples had hopped into a boat and had headed across the Sea of Galilee, which was also called the Sea of Tiberias, which was named that by Herod Antipas, who was the son of Herod the Great, and he had named it after the Roman emperor Tiberius. Later we are told in this story that Jesus did, what is know to us now, His famous walking on the water. Here we have Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God doing numerous miracles and He walked ON the Sea of Galilee and the sea gets named after a Roman ruler. What a shame. Nevertheless, whether man recognizes it or not, "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein." (**Psalm 24:1**)

Once again, I want to emphasize what the Apostle John states as being the reason for the writing of what is called the book of John or the gospel according to John, or when talking to another Christian we may just call it John. John says, "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." (**John 20:30-31**) That you may be that 1. Jesus is the Christ 2. That He is the Son of God 3. That you may have life in His name (or really, that you may have life in Him).

For a contrast to the purpose of John writing his gospel of Christ Jesus, look with me to what Jesus tells the people on the shore once He gets to Capernaum. In **chapter 6 verse 25**, some of the crowd had caught up with him and they said to Jesus, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Yet Jesus did not satisfy their curiosity, as to how He got from one side of the sea to the other-without any evidence of Him getting in a boat and they didn't have helicopters or Land Rovers back then. Listen, or read with me what Jesus says to them, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.**" (**John 6:26-27**) Does that sound familiar to you from Scripture, the seeking of God and not the earthly things? The Sermon on the Mount? Who knows what **Matthew 6:33** says? It is Jesus speaking, "**But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**" Prior to that, Jesus told them to not WORRY about what you will eat, drink,

or wear but to seek Jesus and His Righteousness and He WILL take care of you.

When Jesus said what He said to the people who caught up with Him in Capernaum or to the crowd that listened to Him give His sermon on the Mount, was Jesus saying to not go get a job or to not work towards planting any crops so that they will have food in due time? No, Jesus, who knew what was in the hearts of men (and women), knew that with the people who had been fed by the initial 5 loaves and two fish, that they were not following after Jesus because He was and is the Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world, to all who will believe on Him. Jesus knew that they were following Him because He fed them. Another example, of which there are many in the gospels, where Jesus knew what was in the heart of man was a man that came up to Him after His first miracle where He turned the water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. The man asked Jesus to come with him and heal his son as he was about to die. Jesus' response, at first thought, could be considered to be rude and inconsiderate. In **John 4:48**, Jesus said to the man, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." Wow! Jesus, as He got going in ministry seemed to be healing people left and right and many times seemingly not distinguishing between the genuine followers and believers from the ones who just wanted something from Jesus. But Jesus knew what was in that man's heart. Likewise, Jesus knew why those people followed Him to Capernaum. It wasn't because they knew that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. We can see that for ourselves in how they addressed Jesus when they found Him. They addressed Him as Rabbi. That would be like us encountering Jesus and calling Him Professor or Pastor or Reverend. Once again, there is all of us, who NEED JESUS and then there is Jesus, who John said was the Word that was with God and is God. There's LIFE in Christ Jesus!

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us [He tabernacled among us], and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The fullness of God's grace was manifested to us in what Jesus tells us in **John 3:16-17**, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Jesus was in the beginning with God and He is God and He is the beginning of the building of His temple. He is the Chief Cornerstone, He is the head of His church, He is of the Father of the beginning and fulfilling of what we are, the family of God!

So Jesus told the people that He knew what was in their hearts, that they were following Him because He fed them and they were filled. It was the following day and undoubtedly the people were thinking, "I need some breakfast, I'm getting hungry." Then Jesus says, in **John**

6:27, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him" to which they replied, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus' response? "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." Ok, one may think, in reading this narrative, that the people just need to believe. Believe what? Believe in Him whom God sent. The people then asked Jesus what miracle was He going to do to prove that He is the Christ. They then stated that Moses fed the Israelites in the desert with manna from heaven. It was almost as if they were saying, "ok that was a cute parlor trick and sleight of hand when you fed the 5000 now let's see a real miracle." That example for sure should tell us that no one is going to believe on Christ simply because they are being fed food. 1000 people could come to the park on Sunday, knowing there will be food after our church service yet how many of them will afterwards put their faith in Christ because their stomachs were filled?

First off, Jesus clarifies that it wasn't Moses that fed the Israelites manna from heaven in the desert but that it was the God of heaven that fed the Israelites their food, that they called manna (which was actually a derogatory term meaning what is this?). That manna is one of many types in the Old Testament which was symbolic of what was to come. The manna from heaven therefore was symbolic of the True Manna from heaven and that is-Jesus who is the Christ, the Son of the Almighty God. Speaking of God Almighty, as a reminder, El Shaddai in the Old Testament is translated as Almighty and it is pointed out by Biblical scholars that a better word for Shaddai is Sufficient or All Sufficient. God Sufficient. Jesus IS All Sufficient. Jesus said, "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness [seek first God Sufficient and His Righteousness], and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:31-34)

In our passage of Scripture, after Jesus straightened out their understanding of what that manna was He clarifies what the manna truly was and is. Jesus used the phrase "most assuredly" two times, meaning "you can take this to the bank, guaranteed, absolute truth here." The first was in pointing out their true motive in following after Him, and then the second was in clarifying what that manna really was and is. "The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." Hang on to your hats folks you haven't heard it all. You know, one of those things you hear where you say, "Now I've heard it all." First, Jesus gives us one of the seven I AM statements of His that are recorded in the

book of John. This is actually His first I AM statement where He says, "I AM the Bread of Life." The other six are, "I AM the light of the world", "I AM the door of the sheep", "I AM the Good Shepherd", "I AM the Resurrection and the Life", "I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life", and then "I AM the True Vine". All of those are in the book of John.

Then, here it is, the statement of Jesus' that caused many to quit following Him to which they were not only baffled by His claims but they were undoubtedly quite offended. Jesus further explains the comparison between Himself and the manna but also that stark contrast between the two, as He continues by saying, "I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness [there's the comparison], and are dead [there's the contrast]. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. [There's LIFE in Christ Jesus!] If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." What that can remind us of, is that not only are we believing on Christ but we are also in need of receiving Christ as He is the Bread of Life. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (**John 1:12-13**) The Holy Spirit leads us to the believing that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, that died on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself, and then raising from the dead on the third day, giving us forgiveness of our sins against God, that then reconciles us back to God the Father, so that we may have a restored fellowship with God, and then we too will also overcome death and be raised from the dead. It is therefore necessary for us to receive Christ, to receive the Spirit of Christ and then He becomes our spiritual food that leads us in His wisdom and then He Righteousness, and Sanctification, and then Redemption. So "He/She who glories, let him/her glory in the Lord." (**1 Corinthians 1:30-31**)

The comparing of Jesus being our Bread of Life is similar to what the Israelites were told, to "cling to Him [God], for He is your life and the length of your days" (**Deuteronomy 30:20**) and as God told Abraham, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." (**Genesis 15:1**) Jesus, is our life, He is our exceedingly great reward as He is the Bread of Life as He is the Word of God. That is where we come to the understanding that God, in Christ Jesus, ministers to us with His Word, the Holy Bible. Hopefully each of us are spending time with God in His Word as it is a source of our food, the Word of God which is Jesus who is the Bread of Life. Nevertheless, without receiving Christ, meaning having the Spirit of Christ (the Holy Spirit) indwelling us, the words in the Bible can be just that, a bunch of words.

In our passage of Scripture in John 6, Jesus continues by saying to the people, **"But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe."** They recognized Jesus as being a great teacher and maybe even a skilled magician but they hadn't recognized Him as to what was the point of John's gospel, that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing [they] may have life in His name." What threw them into a rage and further into disbelief is Jesus continuing by saying, **"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."** "These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum." Can you imagine, putting yourself in their place, sitting in the synagogue expecting someone to read in Isaiah or Jeremiah or something and then looking forward to going out to dinner with the family. Then Jesus comes in and starts talking about the people needing to eat His flesh and drink His blood.

It then says, "Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it? When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, **"Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe."** For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, **"Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."** It is only by the Holy Spirit that this truth is revealed to us. A side note to this is that I have heard multiple stories of people accepting Christ shortly before their death. It is most certainly not up to us to decide who we think is going to heaven or who is going to hell. It is up to God alone to lead someone to the truth so that we **"shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"** (**John 8:32**), so that one may have LIFE in Christ Jesus! Nevertheless, it must be said, we are not guaranteed tomorrow for tomorrow may be too late. Is Jesus calling you? Is He leading you to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." **"Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."** (**Romans 10:11**)

When we put our trust in Christ He will lead us according to His will and purpose as He is still presently working, just as Jesus made it known, when He made it a point to heal on the Sabbath day. Likewise, we work in putting all of what we have together for our time of

fellowship, worship, and the food for as He is still working so must we. We must still honor the Sabbath but the work that we are doing is what we hope and trust in what God is doing leading people to repentance, encouraging one another in the faith, helping us all to overcome in the faith that we have in Christ Jesus-and all who put their trust in Him will not be put to shame and for us live in the newness of the LIFE that we have in Christ Jesus!

The world may try and shame us. The world may try and drag us back into the darkness where they reside. In Christ alone we will overcome for He is our Bread of Life, which is life eternal! "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (**Proverbs 3:5-6**) When we believe on Jesus and receive Him we become His for we were bought at a great price, the blood of Jesus, we are no longer our own. (**1 Cor. 6:19-20**) We are His children for all of eternity. We also need to constantly be reminded though (I know I do), that we are to "love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven." (**Matthew 5:44-45**) God is still at work bringing His people into "believ[ing] that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." There are many things that just plain won't make sense to us in the coming days. The world is getting darker and many will fall from their faith and there will be an "increase of wickedness, [and] the love of most will grow cold" (**Matthew 24:12**) as Jesus put it. We have to have it in our hearts and minds just as what Peter said to Jesus after Jesus asked His closest disciples if they were going to leave Him too. Peter says, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." I've had some lengthy and heated discussions with the Lord at times, "Lord forgive me", but He always wins. All of His ways are perfect we (including me) have to trust Him that He is God Sufficient and that He has all that we need as He is our Bread of Life. There's LIFE in Christ Jesus!

The bad news is that the bread we partake in, the food we eat will still lead to our eventual death, that is the death of our physical beings. The good news is that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God who is the Bread that came down from heaven and tabernacled amongst us and is the True Bread of Life the Bread from heaven that all who partake of that Bread will surely not die a second death. That is good news in deed! Glory to God! There is indeed LIFE in Christ Jesus!