

Life in His Name – Part 16
The Bread of Life – John 6:41-71
Crosspoint – Michael Allen – May 28th, 2023

Intro:

John 6:41-71 ESV

So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on 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 whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.” After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

We are all separated from God due to the consequences of our sin, because of our desires to live in our own kingdoms of comfort. Yet God doesn't call us to *behavior modification*. We're first called to God, into a relationship, into the very presence of Jesus. And we have work to do, but the starting line of our work is a relationship with our creator.

You are called to have your soul filled with the *very presence* of Jesus.

- D.A. Carson: *“The grumbling was not only insulting, but dangerous: it presupposed that divine revelation could be sorted out by talking the matter over, and thus diverted attention from the grace of God.”*
- This group of people who are opposed to the message of Jesus are told “no one can come to [Jesus] without the drawing of the Father.” But Jesus is also telling us about *how God draws you into Jesus’ presence*. That’s the *entire* point of this Gospel being written.

John 6:53-58 ESV

So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on 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 whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”

- Jesus hasn’t suddenly whiplashed the conversation into being taken literally after the clear metaphor and symbolism of the previous few weeks. He’s very clearly discussing spiritual life, and Jesus is not saying that the thing that you are eating through the recognition of communion is somehow magically transmuted into the actual body and blood of Jesus. What he’s asking for is to be filled with his very presence. Taking communion doesn’t save you, and doesn’t magically bring Jesus into your body.
- W.B. Westcott: *“To ‘eat’ and to ‘drink’ is to take to oneself by a voluntary act that which is without, and then to assimilate it and make it part of oneself. It is, as it were, faith regarded in its converse action. Faith throws the believer upon and into its object. This spiritual eating and drinking brings the object of faith into the believer.”*
- It’s okay to admit that this is a hard and even confusing teaching. But that doesn’t mean it is untrue. These are his disciples, the group of people who were following him to learn from him. They’ve heard something new, and it’s making them uncomfortable. When Jesus reforms us and shapes us into His image, it will be uncomfortable. It will be hard.

John 6:66 ESV

After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

John 6:68-69 ESV

Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

Which response will you have?

Jesus is calling you to be filled with His *very presence*. Will you answer the call? Or will you leave?