

March 5, 2023

Jesus' I Am Sayings – Lesson 7 “I am the bread of life” (continued)

Recap

Jesus fed feeds the multitudes (5000 men + women & children), causing them to believe that he is “the Prophet who is to come into the world”

Jesus leaves when he sees that the people would try to make him king

The crowds chase him down and demand more signs, seeking to compare him to Moses, who also “gave them bread”

Jesus counters that they have their analogy wrong: he is not to be compared to Moses, but to the bread

The Meaning of Jesus as the Bread of Life

Is Jesus endorsing actual cannibalism?

Luke 22:19 – And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

John 6:47 – Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

John 6:54 – Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Jesus draws an equivalence between believing in Him and this (figurative) feeding upon his flesh

The essentially symbolic nature of 'bread of life' and related expressions in this discourse is disclosed by the mingling of metaphorical and non-metaphorical elements. Jesus is the bread of life, but it is the person who comes to him who does not hunger, not the person who eats him; similarly, it is the person who believes in him who does not thirst, not the person who drinks him.

Thus, when the language becomes more rigorously metaphorical in vv. 49ff., and we read of eating Jesus' flesh and drinking his blood, the meaning of the metaphors has already been established. – D.A. Carson, **The Gospel According to John**

To partake in Christ's body and blood is to trust in this saving work and atoning sacrifice as the only means of obtaining eternal life

The Effects of Jesus as the Bread of Life

1. Eternal Life

Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Eternal life is something that we can simply zoom past as we read, but we have to realize what a miraculous thing this is: mankind, mired in sin and death, has been given the chance to enter into eternal life

John's whole mission in writing his gospel and epistles is that his readers may believe and that, in so doing, they may have eternal life (1 John 5:13, John 20:31)

2. Union with Christ

v. 56 – Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.

μένω – ménō – Abide, remain, stand,
endure, continue

Abiding in this verse, and throughout
Scripture is depicted in two ways:

We abide in Christ

We abide in Christ as we abide in God's
Word

Jesus Christ is the manifestation of
the Word of God (John 1:1)

We abide in God's Word by both observing
it and keeping it

John 15:9-10 – As the Father has
loved me, so have I loved you. Abide
in my love. If you keep my
commandments, you will abide in
my love, just as I have kept my
Father's commandments and abide
in his love.

Christ abides in us

The resurrected Christ, who overcame
every temptation and defeated death itself
abides in every person who believes in him!

Moreover, we are anointed with the same
anointing with which he was anointed: the
Holy Spirit!

John 14:17 – If you love me, you will keep
my commands. And I will ask the Father,
and he will give you another Counselor to
be with you forever. He is the Spirit of truth.
The world is unable to receive him because
it doesn't see him or know him. But you do
know him, because he **remains** with you
and will be in you.

**Our abiding in Christ assures us; Christ
abiding in us empowers us.**

3. Delight in Christ

Isaiah 55:1-2 – 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.

The three-fold blessing of partaking in the bread of life:

This bread is free to all who would receive it

This bread is satisfying

This bread is delightful

Isaiah's (and Christ's) argument: stop working for substandard provisions; trust in God for eternal provision that will delight and satisfy you forever!

There will still be bread in heaven, even after the need for it to sustain our lives is long past

4. Communion with the Saints

Companion – “One who breaks bread with another”

1 Corinthians 10:17 – Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

Acts 2:42 – And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

One thing that facilitates this figurative breaking of bread is *literal* breaking of bread.