



The Bread of Heaven for the Hunger of Earth

John 6:48-59

I would like you to consider with me the way we use the act of eating as a metaphor in today's world. I'll describe the situation and see if we can guess the metaphor. I think it will be easy to catch on with this.

- To own up to being wrong is to *swallow your* _____.
- To own up to being wrong is also to *eat* _____.
- To say something and later proven wrong is to have to *eat your* _____.

- To hear news difficult to accept is to find it *hard to* _____.
- Be gullible in believing a lie, is to *swallow it hook,* _____.

This isn't just our language and culture, others do it too. In Brazil, to *swallow a frog* is to endure something without protest, and in China to *drink the northwest wind* is to go hungry or live in poverty.

So, we shouldn't be surprised that Jesus also used metaphors of eating and drinking to describe spiritual truths. Today, we'll look at what may be Jesus' most shocking metaphor: to eat his body and drink his blood!

This morning we'll look at what Jesus said about being the Bread of Life and eating his body and drinking his blood. In doing so, I want to share three practical ways to do this and live the kind of life Jesus has for us. It's a life that is for the here and now, with all its ups and downs, and for all eternity, and can be summed

up in three words: receive, remain, and remember. Let's look at these.

First, I want to give some backdrop (context) for Jesus' words. John 6 is reshaping the story of Israel around Jesus as the fulfillment of it!

In the Moses Story:

Passover and exodus are initiated.

Israel is led through the Red sea.

Miracle feeding of manna

Manna was bread from heaven.

Grumbling of Israel

Israel desired to turn back to Egypt

**In the Jesus Story
in John 6:**

It is Passover [a new exodus] (4).

Jesus walks upon the sea (16-21).

Jesus feeds the 5,000 (1-13).

Jesus is the true bread from heaven (22-59).

Grumbling of the Jews (41)

People turned back from following Jesus (60-71).

Moses speaks of a future prophet (Deut. 18:15).

Jesus proclaimed as ***the*** Prophet Moses spoke about (14).

Moses leads people to the promised land.

Jesus leads people to eternal life.

So, what does this mean- to eat His flesh and drink His blood?

First, this refers to our receiving Christ.

The Gospel of John first speaks about this in 1:12.

References to “eating” of Christ in verses 48-53 can refer to a “one-time eating” [Greek aorist tense of φαγω, *phago*).

In other words, just as we take our first bite of food, so we take our first bite of the Bread of Life in receiving Christ!

Second, this refers to our remaining in Christ.

There are two significant changes that take place in verses 54-59:

- 1) The verb has changed from eating to feeding. This is the Greek verb τρώγω, *trogo* and refers to chewing on or gnawing on something and is more graphic and intense than the verb in 48-53.
- 2) The verb has changed from a one-time eating to a continual feeding upon.

Jesus refers to remaining in Him as “abiding” in verse 56.

This is walking with Jesus day in and day out! To eat of Jesus’ body is also to receive of His body (His people)!

Third, this refers to our remembering Christ. Jesus says, *This is my body; this is my blood.*

Let’s come to the table with Christ’ invitation to receive Him, remain in Him, and remember Him.