

Greetings, we are in the sixth chapter of John. In our last lesson Jesus had just introduced the idea of his upcoming 'vicarious atonement'. In Verse 51 he said, "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Yes, the bread which I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

His statement also added another dimension to his teaching that his words, were bread that lead to eternal life and you must believe in those words, in essence you must believe in him for eternal life. Then the teaching progressed to where the listener had to eat of this bread, which is to say make it part of our life. Jesus must be the energy source for our spiritual life as bread is necessary to fuel our physical life.

So far in Jesus teaching on the Bread of Life we have these truths: 1- God the Father is the source of all blessings both spiritual and physical. 2- God the Father draws all people to Jesus. 3- Jesus said our faith is a work, a righteous work. 4- Jesus is the Bread from the Father; both his words and his body are that Bread. 5- Jesus is from heaven. 6- Those that the Father gives to Jesus he will never throw out. 7- Jesus will raise believers up on the last day. 8- Nobody has seen the Father but the Son. 9- Jesus will give his body for the life of the world (atoning sacrifice).

Vs.52: "The Jews therefore contended with one another, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

The inherent human quality of revulsion at the thought of eating human flesh is seen here and nobody at any age would never have to be taught this let alone entertain the thought of it. When meat was added to our menu after the flood Noah had to be told by God not to eat meat if the blood of that creature is still in it. This has been God's law for man in all of the dispensations of time.

The life of the creature is in the blood, and God gave it to us to make attonement for sins upon the alter. From the beginning up to the time of Noah mankind were vegetarians.

Likewise in the Law of Moses it was commanded and to the Christian believer in Acts 15:28-29 it was numbered among the several items that were bound on the gentiles. James the Lord's brother said, "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell."

The crowd in the synogogue argued about what Christ told them. Most of them were only thinking in physical terms, and the thought of eating someone's body was repulsive to them. There were a few who believed what Jesus was saying but the majority of them did not.

Vs.53: "Jesus therefore said to them, "Verily, verily, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you don't have life in yourselves."

Jesus now compounds the objections of the questioners and disbeleivers by repeating his privious statement and adding to it, "Verily, Verily" meaning, what I'm saying to you is absolute truth, plus, "And drink my blood."

Again what Jesus is saying is that we must believe in him to have eternal life and that is the primary take-away from this discussion. Jesus would not make his people break the law of Moses by consuming human blood. So what he is saying is obviously figurative language illustrating something else.

Now if you combine what was said about blood in Lev.17, with what Jesus just now said this idea comes across; Jesus wants us to eat his flesh and drink his blood, which is to have full belief in his life as the Son of God, and that he is sinless and that his words and his teachings lead us to heaven.

God through Moses said in regard to vicarious atonements, the life of the creature is in the blood and God gives it to us upon the alter for atonement for our souls by reason of the life (animals can't sin so by reason of their life they are sinless and are acceptable as a temporary substitute for death, for the guilty party until a better sacrifice comes.)

The life of Christ is the only human soul who was without sin, and by reason of that aspect of his life, makes him the perfect soul to be able- to die in our place to take our sins away. His perfect blood is on the alter of heaven. If we don't partake in what he says, there is no life in us. Unless we eat and drink, we will not receive the bennefits of the nurishment it provides, which are; mercy, grace, atonement, salvation, his righteousness and his Spirit which changes us to be like him.

So, in simple terms I think the motherly proverb that says, "You are what you eat" applies here, if we feast upon our Lord, we will be like him. We know that Jesus didn't litterally mean for us to eat his flesh and drink his blood, because 2,000 years and billions of believers later,

there wouldn't be anything left for us to eat today, so again he speaks figuratively. So when legalists play their schemantic word games with you when they demand that your words at the Lord's Supper say that the bread really is his body, don't cast your pearls before swine, just look at them with pity and hopefully one day they'll understand this.

Vs.54:"He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

This verse when combined with the previous verse is a conditional statement; in order to participate in the resurrection of life, we must eat his flesh and drink his blood. Keep in mind also, types were not taught or even widely known of in the time of the Old Law and that those objects which were types of what was to come they didn't realize their significance, it wasn't until Holy Spirit was given were believers able to understand the teaching about types. So here too what Jesus is teaching is about is our faith in him, and now knowing about what types are and how to identify them, it is easy to recognize that his teaching about eating his body and drinking his blood is a type of Lord's Supper.

Only those who believe in him as their Savior will participate in the bread and the fruit of the vine of the Lord's Supper, eating his flesh and blood on Sundays, can expect to be a part of the resurrection of life. Believers believe this, 1 Cor. 10:16-17 "The cup of blessing which we bless, isn't it a sharing of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, isn't it a sharing of the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf of bread, we, who are many, are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf of bread."

Unless the people in the synagogue believe in Jesus, they won't be able to partake of the blessings which are about to-

be purchased by his blood, passion, and violent death on the cross.

Vs.55: "For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

The Greek word for 'indeed' is Alethos: which means true/truly or verily. So Jesus is saying, " My flesh is truly food and my blood is truly drink." This is said in the same sense as when he said in verse 32, "I am the True Bread.", or in John 15:1 where he said, "I am the True Vine." The 'true' statements separate what he is saying from the common.

Jesus isn't bread bought off the shelf at the bakery, nor is he a common weed vine. Jesus is holy.

The words, teachings and ideas he gives us are holy. So when he says, "My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink", he is speaking that they are holy, and not corporeal and not the common. Those who will believe in the Lord and feast upon what he is saying will be the 'true worshippers' that Jesus speaks of in John 4:23-24. His holy blood sanctifies us and makes us holy as well. And we now honor and obey his command to partake of the Lord's Supper, remembering his sacrifice on the cross by the partaking of his flesh and his blood, the bread and the fruit of the vine.

Here is something else to think about concerning our Lord's love and concern for us. In Genesis 22 when Yahweh commands Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, Isaac asked his father where the lamb was and Abraham said the LORD would provide the lamb. And when Abraham extended his hand with the knife in it to slay his son, the Angel of the LORD, Jesus, called out from heaven for Abraham not to harm the lad, -

and provided the father and son with a suitable substitute, a ram that was caught by its horns in a thicket next them. The same Holy Being that called out to Abraham would himself become THE Suitable Substitute for all time on the cross, and for us, even though he expects us to eat his flesh and drink his blood he provided another substitute for us in the emblems of the Lord's Supper with bread and fruit of the vine rather than his real flesh and blood.

For centuries the Israelites were commanded to offer daily sacrifices and Sabbath sacrifices and Festival sacrifices in the temple. The daily sacrifices were offered in the morning and in the evening. The priest would sacrifice by fire; a spotless year old lamb, a meal offering made of fine flour and oil, and the drink offering of wine (shechar/sikera; an inebriate Num.28:7), which was all offered on the alter, then repeated in the evening. Do you see the type/antitype? The lamb/Christ, the bread/his body, the fruit of the vine/the blood of Christ. Being so surrounded by, and participating in these religious activities so often one wonders why the crowd contending with the Lord in the synagogue didn't make the connection with his words.

Vs.56: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me, and I in him."

This is one of the ways we participate in the divine nature Peter mentions in 2 Pet. 1:4, "Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

When we learn of Christ and obey his commands to: believe, repent, confess and be baptized into him,

we eat and drink of the Lord, we are in fellowship with him, his Spirit resides in us. When we come together as the church, the true believers, worshiping the Christ and the Father in Christian love, in fellowship, in holy communion participating in the Lord's Supper; he is supplying us with the spiritual nutrients that sustain our souls and will prepare us for eternity, and he lives in us and we in him.

We become the Living Temple of God individually and collectively, each as a living stone together with all the other living stones to make up the living temple of God.

1Co 3:16 Don't you know that you are a temple of God, and that God's Spirit lives in you? 1Co 6:19 Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,

Eph 2:18-22 For through him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

Our obedient faith to the Lord is how we live in him and he in us.

Vs.57: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he who feeds on me, he will also live because of me."

Again, eating and drinking the of the Lord is a metaphor for believing and obeying everything the Lord tells us. God who is eternal and all powerful and all knowing, is the one who is in control of all that happens on earth and is the one who

sets the times, places and events according to his will. God the Father saw that the time was just right to send his son to redeem mankind from their sins. Here we can see a similarity between relationships. God the living Father and Jesus have fellowship with one another, Jesus existed with the Father before creation, and God, Jesus' Father, gave Jesus life as a human being, he was born of a virgin, was sent from the Father, as both God and man, (being Immanuel; God with us), and was given everything to say to his people from the Father, to give them the 'true living bread' which are; the 'true words of life' to feast upon. We have fellowship and life with the Lord when we believe and follow Jesus and his teachings.

Vs.58: "This is the bread which came down out of heaven—not as our fathers ate the manna, and died. He who eats this bread will live forever."

You can see great redundancy in what he is saying to them and so you can only conclude that it is a very important lesson for them and for us too to try to understand. Of course the bread he speaks of in vs. 58 is himself, he came down from heaven and is the antitype for the manna. The manna was miraculous as to how it got there and by whom it came, it came down from heaven for food from the Father.

The manna sustained them while they were wandering in the desert for forty years with no other food to eat, it sustained their physical life for the day, and it had no benefit for eternal life; God was trying to get them to trust and believe in him that he would provide for them all they need for life and that is what Jesus is trying to establish here too that he is the True Bread for the soul that gives eternal life to those who believe.

Invitation