

JESUS IS #15 the One with Words of Eternal Life

Bible Reading: John 6:47-71

“Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life” (John 6:68)

I. Introduction

- Triumph in Galilee – Miracles, great multitude following
- From feeding of 5000 to 12 disciples

II. Responses to Jesus’ claim as the bread of life (John 6:47-65)

- “I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die” (John 6:48-50)
- “*I am the bread of life*,” is the 1st of 7 “I am” sayings in John... Jesus is the “bread of life” in that he nourishes people spiritually & satisfies the deep spiritual longings of their souls. In that sense, those who trust in him *shall not hunger*; i.e., their spiritual longing to know God will be satisfied. ESV.
- “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.” (John 6:51)
 - ‘Jesus is not only the living bread in contrast to perishable food; he is the life-giving bread, delivering those who receive him from the power of death, which even the manna could not achieve for those who ate it.’ – F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John*
 - “The ‘bread’ is defined as ‘flesh’...almost certainly by reason of [John’s] insistence that the Word became *flesh* (Jn. 1:14)” (pp. 93-4) “The ‘bread’ is the flesh of the Incarnate One [Jesus] which he is to give on behalf of the life of the world, i.e., he is to die that the world may live...The emphasis of the passage falls not on Christ’s death *for sin* but on his death for life: ‘my flesh... for the life of the world’.” [George Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 93]
 - *How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man & drink his blood* (6:52-53) can’t be intended literally; no one ever did that. Jesus is speaking in terms of physical items in this world to teach about spiritual realities. To “eat” Jesus’ flesh spiritually means trusting or believing in him, esp. in his death for mankind’s sins. To “drink his blood” means trusting in his atoning death, represented by the shedding of his blood ESV
- “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 eats Me, he also shall live because of Me” (6:56-57)
 - “He who is eating my flesh and is drinking my blood is having eternal life...He who keeps on eating my flesh and drinking my blood in me is continually abiding and I in him.” (Wuest)
 - ‘Jesus here defines what is meant by eating his flesh and drinking his blood. This language denotes that faith-union by which a mutual indwelling, a ‘coinherence,’ of Jesus and his people is established’. – F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John*
 - ‘The Son who derives his own life from the Father has authority to impart that life to those who believe in him’ – F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John*
 - This word is hard; who can hear it? (6:60)
- No one can come to me unless it has been given to him from the Father (6:65)
 - As a result of this many of his disciples withdrew, & didn’t walk with him anymore (6:66).
- Responses to the truth
 - Misunderstand the truth
 - Opposition
 - Blindness

- Wanting the experience but not the commitment

Some People Want the Experience But Not the Expectation - These people were following Jesus because He had satisfied their fleshly appetites, v. 1-15. They wanted more of the same, v. 34. In fact, they wanted Jesus to prove that He was greater than Moses, v. 22-31. They were looking for something that satisfied their flesh and that made them feel good about themselves. They wanted an experience! They wanted to be following the next king. They wanted the miracles & the sensational. But, when Jesus began to talk about His expectations and issued a call for commitment, they turned away from Him and walked away. Why? They wanted to be carried away in the excitement of the moment with no commitment. – Alan Carr

III. The Lord's descending and ascending

- Incarnation – “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven” (John 6:51a)
 - “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us...” (John 1:14)
- Crucifixion – “...the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh” (John 6:51b)
 - Jesus gave his life as a sacrifice for the whole world
 - “If anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever...” (John 6:51)
- Ascension – “...behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before” (John 6:62).
 - ‘...his being ‘lifted up’ on the cross is viewed in this Gospel as the first stage in his ‘ascending where he was before’ – F.F. Bruce.

IV. It is the Spirit who gives life (John 6:63)

- It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing (6:63)
 - He breathed on them and said to them “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22)
 - The Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).
- The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life (John 6:63)
 - The Holy Spirit works powerfully in & thro’ the *words* that Jesus speaks, & those words *are spirit & life* --they work in the unseen spiritual realm & awaken genuine spiritual life. ESV
 - ‘One way of feeding on Christ is to cherish and obey his words; they are spiritual, life-giving food’ – F.F. Bruce

V. Simon Peter's Response

- Jesus therefore said to the twelve, Do you also want to go away?
 - What is our response to Jesus? One of the best definitions I have ever heard of what a Christian really is was this: "One who cannot walk away!" – Alan Carr
- Response of Simon Peter
 - Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life” (6:68)
- You are the Holy One of God (John 6:69)
 - “We have believed and still believe and have come to know and still know...that You are the Holy One of God.” (Jn. 6:69 Wuest translation, based on the perfect tense of the verbs.)
 - ‘The Holy One of God’ appears as a messianic designation in Mark 1:24 (on the lips of a demon-possessed person, significantly enough).
 - This is John’s counterpart to the Caesarea Philippi incident in the Synoptic accounts (Mark 8:27-30 and parallels) – F.F. Bruce