

The Gospel of John

The Bread of Life

John 6:22-71

Christ now has a very large following with many seeking after Him, but their motives were carnal and not spiritual. They wanted their stomachs filled and their nation free, but Christ's priority was to save mankind. In the last portion of John 6, we see on display the multitudes' expectations and Christ's purpose. This takes place in the synagogue at Capernaum (vs. 59).

The Story

- To help understand the flow of the interview between the people and Christ, I think it is best to pay attention to the eight different exchanges between them.
- The First Exchange – vs. 22-27
 - The people have sought Christ after He fed them and are amazed that He is at Capernaum since He did not sail with the disciples – vs. 23-25
 - Christ points to their selfish motives and points them toward the spiritual – vs. 26-27
- The Second Exchange – vs. 28-29
 - The people inquire about works that would please God – vs. 28
 - Christ says the work of God is obeying the Gospel – vs. 29
- The Third Exchange – vs. 30-33
 - The people ask for a sign, and if the food was it – vs. 30-31
 - Christ points them to the spiritual bread and not the carnal – vs. 32-33
- The Fourth Exchange – vs. 34-40
 - The people ask for the bread of heaven – vs. 34
 - Compared to John 4:15, this shows incomplete understanding of what Christ was trying to teach them.
 - Jesus is the bread of life – vs. 35
 - The blessings of believing on Christ – vs. 36-40
- The Fifth Exchange – vs. 41-51
 - The Jews reject the idea that Christ came from Heaven – vs. 41-42
 - Christ and the Father are one – vs. 43-46
 - vs. 45 cites Isaiah 54:13
 - Christ is salvation, illustrated as bread and manna – vs. 47-51
- The Sixth Exchange – vs. 52-58
 - The Jews are thinking literally and cannot understand – vs. 52
 - Christ, speaking figuratively, emphasizes His role in our salvation – vs. 53-58
 - Matthew Henry - "The flesh and blood of the Son of man, denote the Redeemer in the nature of man; Christ and him crucified, and the redemption wrought out by him, with all the precious

benefits of redemption; pardon of sin, acceptance with God, the way to the throne of grace, the promises of the covenant, and eternal life. These are called the flesh and blood of Christ, because they are purchased by the breaking his body, and the shedding of his blood. Also, because they are meat and drink to our souls. Eating this flesh and drinking this blood mean believing in Christ. We partake of Christ and his benefits by faith. The soul that rightly knows its state and wants, finds whatever can calm the conscience, and promote true holiness, in the redeemer, God manifest in the flesh. Meditating upon the cross of Christ gives life to our repentance, love, and gratitude. We live by him, as our bodies live by our food. We live by him, as the members by the head, the branches by the root: because he lives we shall live also."

- A.C. Gaebelien – "Note the difference in John 6:53-54. In John 6:53 He speaks of those who have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood, apart from which there is no life. By faith the sinner appropriates Him, Who gave His body and shed His blood, and then receives eternal life. In John 6:54 He speaks of a continuous eating and drinking. He is the Source of eternal life. The believer feeds on Him; the eternal life the believer has must be sustained, nourished and kept by Himself, by ever feeding on His dying love. "The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2:20.) And the believer eating and drinking becomes one with Him. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth (literally: abideth) in Me and I in him." It is a wonderful discourse on His incarnation, His sacrificial, atoning death, and the blessed assurances given to those who believe on Him. Precious are the promises of this great chapter. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35.)"
- The Seventh Exchange – vs. 60-66
 - Now Christ's followers have issues – vs. 60
 - Christ also points them to the spiritual – vs. 61-63
 - Foreshadowing Judas's betrayal – vs. 64-65
 - Many of disciples forsake Him – vs. 66
- The Eighth Exchange – vs. 67-71
 - Jesus now puts a question to His inner circle – vs. 67
 - Peter speaks for the group, confirming their faith in Christ – vs. 68-69
 - Christ once again foreshadows His betrayal by Judas – vs. 70-71