

JOHN #8: John 6:25-66

Jesus & the Free Food Crowd

“The Bread of Life & Coming to Christ”

- I. Backdrop: Jesus left Jerusalem and went back up to Galilee. A large group of people had been following him for 3 days and out in the wilderness he miraculously fed them (about 5,000 men+women & children) with only 5 loaves & 2 fishes! When this crowd saw (& tasted) this mighty miracle they wanted to make Jesus their King. Jesus immediately disbanded the crowd, sent his disciples across the sea of Galilee to Capernaum, & went up into a mountain to pray for the night. In the middle of the night, he walked across the sea and saved his disciples who were caught in a fierce storm. They safely arrived at Capernaum, and the next day, they went to the synagogue and Jesus began teaching. That same day, when the crowd couldn't find Jesus, they sailed across the sea trying to find him. They eventually found him and were so excited (hoping to get another free meal). However, Jesus was not about to feed their bellies again, but he was about to point them to the TRUE BREAD.
- II. Overview: We're going to see Jesus refocus these carnal lost people to the true spiritual BREAD which is HIMSELF. He's going to reveal that HE is the bread of life. Their only hope is COMING to and BELIEVING on HIM. However, he is then going to reveal the key and vital truth that no man can come to Jesus unless the Father brings them to Christ. Only those whom the Father draws will truly come to Jesus and believe on HIM, and they will never be lost. Christ will also begin to reveal to them how to truly partake of HIM, they must become partakers of his flesh and blood through FAITH in HIM and his ATONEMENT work on the cross. Jesus is beginning to reveal his sufferings and redemption. In the end, we see that although these people came all the way from across the sea to find Jesus, that ultimately the Father did not bring them to Jesus, so they will walk away from him. If you come to Jesus “just as you are”, you will forsake him “just as you are.” Their god was their belly (as Paul warns about in Philippians 3), thus they minded earthly things, and therefore, their end will be destruction. No man can come to Christ, unless they hear and learn of the Father (like Simon Peter in Matthew 16:15-18). Only the Father can draw men to Christ Jesus.

III. Outline:

A. Jesus REFOCUSES the Crowd (6:25-33):

1. Seeking Jesus for the WRONG reason.
 - a. Not even seeking Jesus because of the power of the miracle.
 - b. Just seeking him because of their BELLIES (free meal).
 - c. Jesus REBUKES THEM:
 - i. Don't labour for the meat which perishes (or you'll perish)
 - ii. Labour (push, press, seek) for the MEAT:
 - (a) Which endures to EVERLASTING LIFE!
 - (b) Which the Son of Man shall GIVE to you!
 - (c) For HIM hath God the Father SEALED!
 - * Note: You must LABOUR to RECEIVE the GIFT. This is not a works-based salvation. But this is the reality of salvation. You must push through the crowd to get to Jesus; you must STRIVE to enter in at the strait gate; you must PRESS into the kingdom of God; you must push through your pride and reputation in order to LAY HOLD on eternal life. Ultimately it's a free gift, but you must qualify to receive the gift. God does not cast his pearls before swine. We qualify through humility, repentance, dying to love of self & trust in man. LABOUR to enter into the rest. "LABOUR for the meat which the Son of man shall GIVE YOU."
 - * Note: It's all about HIM. And if HE is SEALED; then those who truly come to HIM, will also be SEALED.
2. They want to do the "works of God" (miracles & wonders).
 - a. Jesus responds: "This is the work of God, that ye might believe on HIM whom he hath sent."
 - i. God is not interested in OUR FAITHLESS DEAD WORKS (Mat 7:21-23)
 - ii. The first work God wants from us (after repentance) is to BELIEVE ON CHRIST! (Ultimately this is "the work of God" that he does within us; we cannot produce faith within ourselves; faith is a gift of God that comes from above...)
3. They're trying to tempt Jesus to PERFORM for them:
 - a. "What sign shewest thou... that we may see & believe...?"
 - i. An EVIL & ADULTEROUS generation seeks a sign (Mat 12:39)
 - ❖ No amount of signs will EVER be enough... Just like the FAITHLESS generation in the wilderness that saw miracle

after miracle and ended up dying as unbelievers in the wilderness. (Psalm 95, Deut 32:20; Heb 3:15- 4:2; Jude 5)

- ii. They think SEEING = BELIEVING.
 - (a) Faith comes by HEARING; we walk by FAITH, NOT by SIGHT!
 - (b) Signs CANNOT PRODUCE FAITH.
 - (c) Only humble hearing of the word can produce faith.
 - (d) Signs can only CONFIRM FAITH in someone that already has it. (Rom 10:17; Mark 16:20)

iii. They try to use SCRIPTURE against Jesus (to tempt him)!

❖ Just like SATAN did to Jesus in the wilderness...

- b. Jesus CORRECTS their error and gets back to the spiritual:
 - i. Correction: Moses did not give them THAT bread from heaven (even historically, he didn't give the manna, God did)...
 - (a) The Father giveth them the TRUE BREAD from heaven.
 - (b) The bread of God is HE which:
 - i) Which COMETH DOWN from heaven.
 - ii) And giveth LIFE unto the world.

B. Jesus REVEALS the Bread of Life: (6:34-40)

1. They say they want this bread that Jesus is speaking of....

2. Jesus reveals: "I am the bread of life"

- a. He that COMES to me shall never hunger!
- b. He that BELIEVES on me shall never thirst!

* Note: This verse is KEY and establishes the spiritual TRUTH that the rest of this teaching is based on. The keys to eternal life and being satisfied (hunger & thirst being met) are COMING to Jesus and BELIEVING on Jesus. He establishes right off the bat that this is what he is talking about. And at the end of his message he will reiterate that his words are SPIRIT (he's dealing with the spiritual not the physical), and that the flesh profits NOTHING. Later on he will say some extreme things about EATING his flesh and DRINKING his blood. This will offend (& confuse) carnal people that are thinking fleshy and not spiritually. He will stumble them and offend them because of their carnal minds ("the carnal mind is enmity against God..." Romans 8:7). There will be many "Christians" today that will take these words literally in the physical/flesh realm and will STUMBLE at the word being disobedient (just as this crowd did 2,000 years ago). But right off the bat we see that this is not a PHYSICAL coming to Christ, but something in the heart and spirit.

This is not a PHYSICAL DRINKING of his blood, but BELIEVING his words and redemption work in the heart and spirit.

3. They have “seen” Jesus (physically with their eyes) but they don’t believe (spiritually with their hearts).
 - * Note: Jesus is SO SPIRITUAL. And he is dealing in the spiritual throughout this discourse. We have seen in his conversation with Nicodemus & the woman at the well how he is trying to convert carnal people to the SPIRITUAL.
4. All that the Father gives Jesus will COME to HIM.
 - a. Those who come to Jesus this way he will NEVER cast out.
 - b. Christ did come to do the will of his Father that sent him.
5. The will of the Father:
 - a. All that he gives to Christ:
 - i. None will be lost.
 - ii. They will be raised up at the last day!
 - b. That everyone who SEES Christ & BELIEVES on HIM:
 - i. Will have everlasting life.
 - ii. And Christ will raise him up at the last day!
 - * Note: This seems very clear to me that EVERYONE who truly comes to faith in Jesus Christ (the right way, through the drawing of the Father); will NEVER BE LOST and will partake of the RESURRECTION OF LIFE. I don’t see any exceptions to what Jesus is revealing here. This is also inline with what he reveals in 5:24 & 10:26-30. It seems pretty clear to me, that those whom the Father entrusts to the Son (and are truly sheep), CANNOT be lost. This is the progression I see from these verses:
 1. The Father draws you to the Son.
 2. The Son receives you to himself from the Father.
 - a. You finally SEE the Son for who he truly is (spiritual revelation of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God).
 - b. You believe with ALL your heart in JESUS Christ (like Simon Peter).
 - c. He gives you everlasting life and promises he will NEVER cast you out.
 3. He will raise you up at the last day (the resurrection of LIFE).
 - * Note: Very important to realize that our faith is built on RESURRECTION! For years people only told me about going to heaven. This is only part of the truth. All through the scriptures God promised his people to be RESURRECTED (bodily) and live for ever in his kingdom. This is the HOPE Jesus came to fulfill & will fulfill.

C. Jesus REBUKES the murmuring Jews (6:41-51):

1. The Jews are murmuring because Jesus claimed to be the bread which “came down from heaven.”
 - a. This was an issue for them because they “knew” Jesus; he was “the son of Joseph” (according to their understanding) and they knew his family.
 - i. We must NEVER judge according to appearance. Jesus may have appeared to be the son of Joseph; but he wasn’t. God hides special spiritual treasures and does not manifest them openly. It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, and the honour of kings to search out a matter. These Jews made the fatal mistake of making QUICK judgment according to appearance.
 - ii. We are exhorted to TRUST in the LORD with ALL our heart, and to not lean on our own understanding. We are also exhorted to fully hear out a matter before answering it. These Jews clearly failed in both of these matters. We must beware to not judge things (or people) too quickly based on our current understanding. We must be swift to hear and slow to speak. We must be patient and seek God’s understanding and will in all matters. Those who do not, will NEVER see the truth.
 - iii. They judged based on their “knowledge”. If any man knows anything, he must acknowledge that he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. Our knowledge is in part. We must remain humble to grow and learn in the true knowledge of God.
2. Jesus REBUKES them: “Murmur not among yourselves.”
 - a. This is a command. God hates murmuring and disputing. “Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.” 1 Cor 10:10. When people murmur, they are giving GREAT PLACE to Satan; God does not take well to murmurers. We are commanded to “Do all things without murmuring and disputing: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God...” Philipians 2:14-15a
3. Reveals that NO MAN can come to JESUS (on their own or with their own motives and intentions).
 - a. Those who “come” to Jesus with their own agenda, will ultimately leave Jesus with their own agenda.
4. The only way you can come to Jesus is if the FATHER draws you.
 - a. Truth Confirmed in the OT: “And they shall be all taught of God.” (Isaiah 54:13).

- i. One of the truths of the New Covenant is that those who truly become partakers of this covenant will ALL KNOW GOD (Jeremiah 31:33-34). The only way to come to truly KNOW God for yourself, is you must be directly TAUGHT BY GOD HIMSELF.
- b. Jesus explains practically how a person is “drawn” by the Father:
 - i. You must hear from the Father. Just like Simon Peter was sensitive in his spirit to hear from God: to hear his still small voice that was calling him out of sin and into righteousness; a person must hear the call of God to repent and turn to HIM.
 - ii. You must learn from the Father. The Father puts the fear of the Lord in you so that you can depart from evil and begin to hear him teach you his ways. He wants to teach you how to be true in the earthly realm to HIM and his kingdom.
 - iii. Those who “hear” and “learn” from the Father are the ones that the Father is “drawing” to Jesus and ultimately will come to Christ (come to true faith in Christ)
- 5. Hearing the Father is not the same as seeing the Father. Only in Christ and through Christ can we see the Father. At this point in time (when Jesus was speaking to the crowd) the only man that had ever seen the Father, was Jesus Christ.
- 6. Christ brings them back to the importance of FAITH! True Faith is what leads to everlasting life.
- 7. Jesus is the TRUE BREAD of LIFE:
 - a. The Israelite fathers ate physical bread that came down from heaven (entered their mouths and bellies); and yet, they are DEAD! (both physically, but really Jesus is referring to the fact they are spiritually dead; they were unbelievers that died out in the wilderness).
 - b. So clearly, PHYSICAL eating of PHYSICAL bread (even if it comes from heaven itself) CANNOT lead to eternal life.
 - * Note: These points that Jesus is making are very important to not fall into the trap that many “Christians” have fallen into over the past 2,000 years of taking this upcoming passage literally in the physical realm. Taking it as if partaking of Christ is done through PHYSICALLY eating something that goes into our bellies. This is clearly ERROR and NOT WHAT JESUS was teaching. Jesus is about to greatly OFFEND these people because they are thinking in the PHYSICAL REALM. So he is purposely going to speak in STRONG parabolic language to

hide these beautiful truths about his redemption and his body from these carnal murmurers.

- c. Jesus is the true living bread from heaven and we must “eat” of him in order to live for ever (Jesus is clearly not speaking PHYSICAL LITERAL; but SPIRITUAL LITERAL)
 - i. Yes, he will give his actual flesh; but no one is going to ever actually physically eat his flesh. This is not cannibalism.

D. Jesus REPULSES the Jews through his strong metaphors (6:52-58):

- * Note: Before we enter this passage that has caused much confusion and error amongst those that claim the name of Christ, let us get some big picture perspective. All through John, Jesus is revealing SPIRITUAL truths through metaphors (his disciples call them “proverbs” in 16:29. Jesus says he is “THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD”. This is true. But he is not a physical light lighting up the world (that’s the sun). Jesus says he is “THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP”. This is true. But he is not a physical door that you go through to enter a physical sheepfold. Jesus says that he is “THE TRUE VINE” and that we are “THE BRANCHES”. So again, these statements are true, but not in a literal physical sense. So clearly when Jesus reveals that he is the “BREAD OF LIFE” and that we must eat his flesh and drink his blood, he is not speaking in a literal physical sense. This does not line up with all of his revelation throughout this book. Those who turn it into that are unlearned and unstable.
- * Note: Another important thing we must note, is that if John (as the author retelling these stories) really intended people to connect this “bread of life” sermon with a “eucharist” we eat or with the “Lord’s supper”, then he would have most definitely showed Jesus in the upper room giving out the bread and the wine and saying “Eat, this is my body...”. And “Drink... this is my blood”; but what is so important to realize, is that John is the only of the gospel writers that DOES NOT include this aspect of the upper room in his gospel. This really is striking because John gives WAY MORE details and revelation of the upper room experience than all of the other 3 gospel combined! And yet, he is the only one that omits the whole bread and wine story of their last supper together. As I stated before, If John wanted his readers to associate this teaching in John 6 with the “eucharist”/“communion”/“Lord’s supper” (whatever people want to call it) then he would have most definitely included the latter later in this book. But he did not include it; which lends more proof to prove that this has nothing to do with a physical wafer and cup.

- 1. The Jews are STRIVING among themselves with the truth of Christ.

- a. Let us never find ourselves striving with the word of God because it does not fit our natural understanding/reasoning.
 - b. Let us remain humble to allow the word of God to subdue us and transform us from being carnal to spiritual.
- 2. Jesus continues further into his metaphor to offend the unbelievers even more:
 - a. In order have life (eternal life), & to be raised up at the last day, you must:
 - i. Eat the flesh of the Son of man.
 - ii. Drink his blood.
 - b. His flesh is MEAT indeed & his blood is DRINK indeed!
 - * Note: It's important to note that Jesus is speaking to JEWS in the SYNAGOGUE. In the Old Testament, there were 2 special types of offerings that often accompanied most other offerings and sacrifices: the MEAT offering and the DRINK offering. The Jews had offered these offerings over and over for 1,500+ years. All the offerings and sacrifices (& ordinances & service) of the OT were SHADOWS and TYPES of what was to come. They were not the TRUE offerings. According to Colossians 2 & Hebrews 9-10, CHRIST was the true fulfillment of all these things. So when Jesus says his flesh is MEAT indeed, and his blood is DRINK indeed, there is no doubt a subtle allusion to the fact that his body and blood would be the true fulfillment of the meat and drink offerings from the OT.
 - i. If you do these things you will dwell IN CHRIST and he will dwell in YOU. (We know this must be spiritual. It is Christ's Spirit and his words that dwell in us (not his body & blood) and our new man (spirit) is what dwells in him. He will reveal clearly that he is speaking spiritually in the next few verses.)
- 3. Jesus gives clear indication that he is speaking spiritually:
 - a. As:
 - i. The living Father hath sent him
 - (a) How did the Father send Jesus? Did a body come down from out of heaven? No. The Word came down from heaven. The Holy Ghost came down from heaven.
 - ii. And as I live by the Father
 - (a) How was Jesus living by the Father? Was he physically eating the Father to survive? No. He was feeding off the Father's words and the Father's Spirit. (Matthew 4:4)
 - iii. So he that eaten me shall live by me.

- (a) Yes, we need to eat and partake of Christ! But clearly this is not PHYSICAL. We eat and partake of Christ the same way Christ was sent down from above and the same way he lived by the Father: words & Spirit.
 - b. This is that bread which came down from heaven! (His body didn't come from heaven).
 - i. Not as the fathers ate manna (physically) and are DEAD!
 - ii. If you eat of Christ's bread, you shall live for ever.
 - * Note: One last important point I want to bring out here. Remember at the beginning of this passage Jesus said that COMING to him would satisfy our HUNGER, and BELIEVING on him would satisfy our THIRST. And then later he equates eating with his BODY and drinking with his BLOOD. So if we piece these things together, what we see is the following:
 - * COMING to Jesus is tied to the BODY (eating).
 - * BELIEVING on Jesus is tied to the BLOOD (drinking).
 - * When you consider the truths that Paul reveals in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 & 12:13 along with what Jesus reveals in Matthew 18:19-20 and piece all this together, what it seems like Jesus is revealing is the following:
 - * We EAT CHRIST's FLESH/BODY by COMING to HIM. And the way we practically COME to HIM and PARTAKE of HIS BODY is by ASSEMBLING/GATHERING with other believers. We are the body of Christ. So COMING (gathering) together where Jesus dwells (in the midst of us) is how we satisfy our hunger and truly come to partake of his body so that we might truly see Jesus for who he is.
 - * We DRINK CHRIST's BLOOD by BELIEVING on HIM. And the way this happens is by us DRINKING IN (hearing & receiving) HIS WORDS & SPIRIT. Blood is what makes us humanity; his words & Spirit are what allow us to be partakers of the divine nature. This only happens through HEARING and BELIEVING his words. This is how we receive his Spirit and our spiritual thirst is satisfied.
- E. Jesus REVEALS clearly that his WORDS are spirit & life (6:59-66):
- 1. Jesus is speaking in the synagogue in Capernaum.
 - 2. Not only are the crowd and the Jews offended, but even most of his own disciples are offended!
 - a. "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?"
 - i. It's only HARD if you're carnal, selfish, & a transgressor. ("The way of transgressors is hard" Proverbs 13:15)
 - ii. You can't HEAR it if you're carnally minded. Only those who are SPIRITUAL can hear (1 Corinthians 2:11-15 & Rom 8:5-8)

3. Jesus challenges them and then gives the final word to clear up the matter for those who truly have hearts and ears to hear:
 - a. Doth this offend you? (Let us never be offended by the words of Jesus Christ no matter how offensive they might be to the flesh)
 - b. What if they see him ascend back to where he was before? (So clearly this can't be physical eating; he's going back to heaven. You better not be offended by Jesus because he's the ONE from above and he's going back above to receive ALL POWER.)
 - c. It is the SPIRIT that quickeneth (he lays it out clearly).
 - d. The flesh profiteth nothing (he's not speaking physical eating & drinking).
 - e. The words that I speak unto you are spirit and they are life! (Case closed).
 - * How do you receive Christ's Spirit? It's not by praying only. Although we should pray and ask for God to pour out his Spirit. But ultimately, we receive Christ's Spirit through receiving his WORDS (his gospel; see Acts 10:34-44)
4. Christ knew from the beginning who did not believe AND who should betray him.
 - a. We might think someone is a believer and then they fall away and we wonder what happened...
 - b. But Christ is NEVER fooled. He knows what is in man (2:24-25)
5. He reiterates possibly the MOST important point of this message as his final words to the CROWD: "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."
 - a. NOBODY can just come to Christ on their own.
 - b. Jesus is not open 24/7 for all people all of their life for salvation.
 - c. God is a SPIRIT and unless he draws you (in heart & spirit) you can pray a million prayers, go to the altar a million times and know every "plan of salvation" that man has devised and still die and go to hell.
 - d. Salvation & the new birth are SPIRITUAL experiences that we CANNOT MAKE happen. All we can do is just yield and respond to and obey the leading and call and work and word of the Lord.
 - * Just like a woman cannot produce a child in her own power, but must yield to and receive seed from a man and pray that her egg is fertile, so too it is with salvation & the new birth...
6. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." They appeared to be his disciples, but in the end, their permanent departure proved that they were unbelievers!