

WHO IS JESUS?

JOHN 6:48-60

JESUS IS OUR FEAST



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

How would you describe your Christian life? On a scale of 1-10, with 'one' being surviving and 'ten' being thriving, where would you place yourself? Or if 'one' was bread and water, 'five' was Culvers and 'ten' was Ruth's Chris, how would you rate your Christian life? Probably many of us are 'bread and water' Christians, surviving but not thriving. **How can we thrive and not just survive?**

A couple of weeks ago, Jesus told us, "I am the bread of life, the bread that gives and sustains spiritual life" (John 6:22-35). He was saying, "As bread, I am the basic source of your spiritual life and survival." We cannot survive spiritually without Jesus. We're thankful that Jesus is our bread.

But who wants to just survive, to be barely alive and no more? Who wants to live on bread when there's also steak available. But is there? Is it possible to get to Culvers Christianity, or even Ruth's Chris sometimes? In John 6:48-60, Jesus invites us to a feast. He says, "Thanks for eating my bread. Do you know there's also steak available?"

BACKGROUND

- Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-2)
- Jesus is our Creator (1:3)
- Jesus is our Light and Life (1:4-9)
- Jesus is our Big Brother (1:10-13)
- Jesus is our Tabernacle (1:14-17).
- Jesus is our Preacher (1:18)
- Jesus is the Messiah (1:19-28)
- Jesus is our Sacrifice (1:29)
- Jesus is our Rabbi (1:35-46)
- Jesus is our Ladder (1:46-51)
- Jesus is our Wine (2:1-12)
- Jesus is our Temple (2:13-21)
- Jesus is our Midwife (John 3:1-8)
- Jesus is our Vaccine (John 3:9-15)
- Jesus is our Gift (John 3:16)
- Jesus is our Acquittal (John 3:17-18)
- Jesus is our Expose (John 3:19-21)
- Jesus is our Bridegroom (John 3:22-30)
- Jesus is our Witness (John 3:31-26)
- Jesus is our Water (John 4:1-45)
- Jesus is our Wonder (John 4:46-53)
- Jesus is our Doctor (John 5:1-16)
- Jesus is our Judge (John 5:17-30)
- Jesus is our Bible (John 5:31-47)
- Jesus is our Multiplier (John 6:1-15)
- Jesus is our Peace (John 6:16-21)
- Jesus is our Bread (John 6:22-35)
- Jesus is our Welcome (John 6:35-47)
- Jesus is our Feast (John 6:48-60)

Jesus' bread gives life (48), is from heaven (50), stops death (50), is living (51), gives eternal life (51), is given to the world (51), is his flesh (51), is eaten (51). When Jesus invites his hearers to eat the bread of his flesh (51), **the Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"** (52). But instead of changing the menu to something more palatable, three times he invited them to eat his flesh and drink his blood (53-56). This was especially offensive to the Jews because the Old Testament prohibited drinking blood or eating meat with blood in it (John 6:60-61).



How do I get the steak?



1. JESUS' DEATH IS OUR FEAST

Jesus' birth is beautiful and important. Jesus' life is beautiful and important. Jesus' character is beautiful and important. Jesus' words are beautiful and important. Jesus' acts are beautiful and important. But all of these are starters that prepare us for the main meal of Jesus's death. We can find delicious spiritual food in Jesus' birth, life, character, and words. These can and do nourish and strengthen us. But the most delicious and delightful meal for the Christian is Christ's death and resurrection. That's what we love to feast on. That's the meat Jesus is speaking of here. That's why he uses the analogy of flesh and blood in these verses. Meat requires slaughter, blood, and death (53-56). "You can live on bread, but if you want to thrive and flourish you need this meat." Jesus gave his whole body and soul to slaughter, blood, and death. He suffered in every part of his humanity:

- His bloodied **head** suffered as his killers thumped a thorny crown deeper and deeper into his skull.
- His tear-filled **eyes** suffered by seeing the self-destructive hatred of his crucifiers faces contorted with rage.
- His exquisitely sensitive **ears** suffered by hearing the blasphemous lies, mockery, and false accusations hurled at him.
- His kind and compassionate **face** suffered as they spat upon him, punched him, and plucked out his beard.
- His gentle **mouth** suffered as they tortured his thirst with bitter gall.
- His exposed **back** suffered as they whipped him with metal and bone studded leather and then dropped a heavy cross on him to carry.
- His caring **hands** suffered as they and his well-worn feet were pierced with hammer and nails.
- Even after death his body continued to suffer, his **side** being ripped and punctured by cruel spear.
- His **honor** and dignity suffered being hung naked before laughing scolding crowds.
- His **mind** suffered the excruciating mental torture of not only his creatures turning on him but his Father turning away from him
- His **emotions** suffered excruciating tortures of the deepest dark depression and the most fearful anxiety.
- His **heart**, the core of his being, the place that had always felt perfectly loved by God, suffered the volcanic wrath of God.

This is what Jesus is talking about when he says, "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink" (55). This is spiritual steak of the highest quality.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

'R' to 'G'. If this sounds like an R-Rated horror movie to you, it's because you are missing two little words: "For me." Jesus did this for me. Jesus suffered this so I don't have to. "For me" is the seasoning that turns this meal from repulsive to delicious. The more "For me" marinade I can use, the more juicy and satisfying the meat. "For me" changes this from an R to a G - suitable for all palettes. You can't put enough "For me" on this meat.

JESUS OR ME,
JESUS FOR ME



I love looking at that food , thinking about it, talking about it, singing about it, hearing about it. Anything else I'm missing? Yes, you have to eat it!



2. WE FEED BY FAITH

Eight times in seven verses Jesus calls his hearers to eat and drink this food (53-59). Unless we eat it, we get no benefit from it, we get no life from it (53).

This is not a physical eating. Roman Catholic teaching says that in the Mass, the bread and wine turn into the literal physical body and blood of Christ. Like the Jews of Jesus day, who thought Jesus was talking about cannibalism in these verses, so Roman Catholicism mistakenly teaches these verses to mean that salvation is through eating Jesus's physical body.

This is a spiritual eating. It's an eating by faith. It's not a physical communion but a spiritual communion. Faith brings the benefit of Christ's body and blood into our souls. Faith is our mouth and our digestive system. Faith feasts on Christ body and blood even without bread and wine, but it's greatly helped by the bread and wine. You can be saved without bread and wine but not without faith in Christ.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

"I believe" digests this food, releases its vitamins and distributes them to all the parts of our soul.

- Vitamin A is **Atonement** 'covering' for my sin.
- Vitamin B is **Blood** that washes away my sin.
- Vitamin C is **Christ** the Anointed of God.
- Vitamin D is **Death** that gives me life.
- Vitamin E is **Eternity**, a meal that lasts and satisfies forever.
- Vitamin F is "**For** me" (my personal favorite).
- Vitamin G is **Grace**, Grace, God's Grace.
- Vitamin H is the **Hell** I was saved from and the **Heaven** I was saved to.
- Vitamin I is my new **Identity** as saved.
- Vitamin J is **Jesus**, Savior, for he will save his people from their sins.
- Vitamin K is **Killer**, that's me and my sins that murdered Christ.
- Vitamin L is **Lord**, the name above every name that he was given by God for his Calvary work.
- Vitamin M is the "**Me**" that died with Christ.
- Vitamin N is the **Nothing** in my hand I bring.
- Vitamin O is "**Oh** the wonder of it all"
- Vitamin P is **Perfection**, the wrath of God is perfectly satisfied.
- Vitamin Q is "**Quit** trying harder" and start trusting harder.
- Vitamin R is **Resurrection** because the grave had no hold on him.
- Vitamin S is **Substitution**, He die or me die, He die, me no die."
- Vitamin T is **Totally** forgiven
- Vitamin U is **Undeserved**.
- Vitamin V is **Victory**, "It is Finished."
- Vitamin W is **Wonderful**, never ceasing to be amazed at what Christ has done for me.
- Vitamin X is **excruciating** pain he suffered.
- Vitamin Y is "**Yes**, Yes, Yes!" what I say to the Gospel when I hear it.
- Vitamin Z is the **rest** I can enjoy in Jesus.

Have you eaten? Have you eaten by faith? Here's the way to get from barely surviving to beautifully thriving. Feast by faith on the food of Christ crucified. There's enough to fill you full every single day. Feast on Christ's death: take it, taste it, suck on it, chew it, roll it around, savor it's every flavor and seasoning for more and more life.

FAITH FEASTS ON
CHRIST CRUCIFIED



Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story > Change others' stories



SUMMARY



PRAYER: Heavenly Chef, feed my soul with the Crucified Christ so that I not only survive but thrive.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you rate your Christian life on a scale of 1-10?
2. What would spiritual thriving look like to you?
3. Which part of Jesus' suffering feeds you most and best?
4. What difference does "For me" make to your life? Your prayers, worship, service?
5. Which vitamins are you missing?
6. How can you get more spiritual vitamins?

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