

Living Grace-Fully: The Lord's Supper
January 29, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." (John 6:52-58 NIV)

Jesus has been our "bread of life" since the day he was born in a manger. It is probably no coincidence that He was born in such a way. We serve a God of details who placed the Savior of the world in a manger, a box used to feed animals. It was perhaps a further sign of the symbolism of Jesus as the food for all creation. The nourishment found in following Jesus' way of life is the kind that will feed us for a lifetime. The question to consider is how hungry are you for His kind of bread?

Digging Deeper

The Lord's Supper enables us to live grace-fully because it provides...

Real NOURISHMENT.

- By receiving Communion we are, figuratively speaking, eating of Jesus' flesh and drinking of His blood. This kind of spiritual diet provides the nourishment we need to quench our thirsty souls and satisfy our hunger for a more fulfilling life. When you take communion do you think of it as spiritual food? Does it make you feel closer to God? In what ways?

Real PRESENCE.

- John 6:56 (NIV) "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them." Communion is a reminder that Christ died for our sins. That he rose from the dead. That He is risen and remains in us through the Holy Spirit. Do you spend time in prayer after sitting down from Communion? This is the perfect time to draw near and commune with the Lord. If you don't, try spending just a minute in quiet prayer to allow space for His presence to be felt.

Real LIFE.

- John 6:51 (NIV): "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." By saying 'whoever eats this bread' Jesus is telling us that He is food for everyone and all who believe in Him will receive the gift of eternal life. How does this promise comfort you in difficult times?
- Is it hard to gain an eternal perspective when life isn't going according to your plans?

Conclusion

The true purpose of receiving Communion, or The Lord's Supper, is experienced more deeply when we pause to thoroughly absorb the words we read in John 6. We believe when we take part in this commemoration of His sacrifice for us that God is infusing His Spirit into the elements we are receiving. So when we take Communion, in this way Christ becomes a part of us. Think about the words you hear when you receive the sacrament, "the body of Christ broken for you" and "the blood of Christ shed for you." Broken and shed, for us! As we approach the Lord's table, we show reverence, recognizing it is a symbol of what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross. Thank you, Jesus!