

Eat My Flesh

Even though we take Holy Communion often, the notion of "eating my flesh" still sounds abrasive. "Eat my flesh and drink my blood," suggests an all-in-attitude to me. We are so tempted to pick and choose the parts of Jesus that appeals to us or that we can accept. "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me,'" - Matthew 16:24.

John 6:47-58

- This is an obvious reference to Holy Communion.
- Jews went to great lengths to eat in a kosher manner, exerting great effort to avoid eating any blood.
- Jonathan Martin, "The secrets of the universe are bound up in the Eucharist. Everything about who God is, what God is, what God is like, what creation is like, is all bound up in The Table. All of these mysteries are bound up in this sacred, mysterious meal."
- J.R.R. Tolkien, "Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one grand thing to love on the earth, the Blessed Sacrament. There you will find romance, glory, honor, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves upon the earth."
- The Table is offered to all. Everyone who says, "yes," to God is eligible.
- Karl Barth, "Holy Communion is offered to all, as surely as the living Jesus Christ is for all, as surely as all of us are not divided in Him, but belong together as brothers and sisters, all of us poor sinners, all of us rich in His mercy. Amen."

1 Corinthians 11:27-32

- It is not a matter of "who" comes to The Table, but "how" one approaches The Table.
- In Church, which is in fact the Lord's body, we are prone to prefer one above the other, the wealthy and elite above others. We are prone to deem others as inferior Christians to ourselves. We are prone to self-interest, instead of following the way of Christ in preferring others above ourselves. We approach our faith as a buffet of choices, and are not afraid to cut the line to make sure we get the delicacies we desire, with no regard to how our actions affect others.
- "Some are sick and dying" as a result, "not regarding the Lord's body."
- The greatest scandal of the Gospels was that Jesus was eating and drinking with the wrong people.
- **Wrong-headed religion teaches that if holy people touch what is profane or common, they become unclean. In Christ, Jesus touches those that are profane or common and makes them holy!**
- Instead of being afraid to touch something unholy for fear of being soiled we rather must believe that our holiness, which comes from Christ's touch of our life, might touch the profane and common, making it (them) holy as well.
- The germs are reversed.
- Sin, addiction, disease, pain, abuse and torment is forgiven and healed by eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood.
- There is forgiveness and healing in Christ's body and blood.
- Isaiah prophesied, "Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places

smooth; The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see [it] together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." - Isaiah 40:4-5

- HOW we approach The Table means everything. Don't let this be a meaningless ritual. God of Miracles. Expect God to meet you at The Table.

Forgiven and Healed

- When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven you.**" 6 And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this [Man] speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "**Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? 9 "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, '[Your] sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?** 10 "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the paralytic, 11 "**I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.**" 12 Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw [anything] like this!" - Mark 2:5-12
- He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows (**pain**) and acquainted with grief (**sickness**). And we hid, as it were, [our] faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our grief (**sickness**) And carried our sorrows (**pains**); Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He [was] wounded for our transgressions, [He was] bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace [was] upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. - Isaiah 53:3-5

Holy Communion

- "Hungry" played as background music.
- Pray over bread and wine before they are passed to congregation
- Declare over the bread, "The body of Christ, broken for you." Have the congregation say aloud, "**By His stripes we are healed.**"
- Declare over the wine, "The blood of Christ, shed for you." Congregation, "**We are forgiven and cleansed.**"
- Sing, "Hungry" together
- "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thessalonians 5:23

Eat My Flesh Study Guide

Read John 6:47-58

- What does it mean to eat Jesus' flesh and to drink his blood?
- How do people pick-and-choose what the parts of Jesus that appeals to them or that they can accept?
- How does "eat my flesh and drink my blood," suggest an all-in-attitude concerning following Christ?
- In Matthew 16:24, Jesus said, "If anyone desire to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." How does this statement relate to the flesh eating and blood drinking statement?

Read John 6:60-69

- What is hard about Jesus' statement?
- What is offensive about Jesus' statement?
- Why did people stop following Jesus at this moment?
- Why do people stop following Jesus today?
- Do you understand all of Jesus' teaching? What do you do when you don't understand Jesus' words?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

- What seems to have been happening in the communion service?
- What is the main source of division in the church? (selfishness instead of giving preference to others)
- Partaking of Holy Communion seems to fulfill Jesus statement concerning eating his flesh and drinking his blood.
- How do we partake in an unworthy manner?
- What does it mean to properly discern the Lord's body?
- How should we approach the Lord's Table?