

Christ Our Life Giver

John 6:41-58

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Introduction: I used to think that it was just modern man who does not like the idea of objective truth. We call it post modernism today. It is the notion that there is nothing that is absolutely true. There is nothing that is absolutely right or wrong. Everything is placed on a sliding scale and each individual can have their own truth or their own right or wrong.

When applied to history, for example it allows historians to write history the way they think it was or should have been. What is true for them and what is right for them. Under this philosophy, revisionist history is perfectly valid in the minds of post-modernists.

Math and Engineering do not fare well under post-modernist philosophy because they just can't get the universe to change its absolute version of physics, but Christianity is perfect. Religion is the perfect breeding ground for post modern thinking. The surprise however is this....men have always been this way when it comes to God. Here are just a few of the examples from Scripture.

Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Matthew 15:3-9 ³ And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?" ⁴ "For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.' ⁵ "But you say, 'Whoever says to *his* father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given *to God*," ⁶ he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And *by this* you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition. ⁷ "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: ⁸ 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. ⁹ 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

John 18:37-38 ³⁷ Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in Him.

Acts 17:22-25 ²² So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. ²³ "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by

human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;

And then....there is the account of the crowd in John Six. Jesus, who is the God of Creation and therefore the owner, designer and sustainer of the entire universe has just made the most sweeping claims imaginable to the crowd. Using the metaphor of bread, He has taught them that earthly bread only sustains our earthly and temporary life, but God gives eternal bread that gives eternal life.

Just the day before Jesus had fed this crowd with earthly bread and fish. Now he offers them heavenly or eternal bread that will give them eternal life. The hunger of the inner man, the spirit of man is never, ever satisfied by the things of this world. The rich are never satisfied with their wealth and pleasure seekers experience the law of diminishing returns and are never fully satisfied with life. The crowd responds by saying....

John 6:34 ³⁴ Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread."

On the surface of things this is good right? Jesus has brought the crowd to the place of wanting the eternal bread that gives eternal life. So Jesus offers them this bread and He offers the same bread to you today by saying,

John 6:35-40 ³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. ³⁶ "But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. ³⁷ "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

Let's pick up the story and the reaction of the crowd to Jesus' claims to be THE ONLY POSSIBLE WAY OF SALVATION...

John 6:41-58 ⁴¹ Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." ⁴² They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?" ⁴³ Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ "It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. ⁴⁶ "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ "I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." ⁵² Then the Jews *began* to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?" ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever."

Men still argue with Christ about this claim even in the church that bears His name. Many churches want Jesus to be part of their religion. They want His name recognition....sort of like "AT&T Park" or "Sleep Train Arena." But Christ's claims to be the sole or only way back to God are not acceptable to humanity or to religion. That is why we have religion! If someone is going to come along and just nullify it with six words, that is cause for grumbling. But the gospel message of Jesus Himself and the apostles who followed is ONLY Christ. It is therefore summarily rejected by mankind and has been since the time that Jesus walked on the earth.

Our text today records Jesus' response to their rejection. Jesus answers this vital question....

**If men by default, reject the notion of only one way to heaven through trust in Jesus Christ, then how do we explain the existence....in the world.....
.....of people that do embrace Christ Alone?**

Why Humans Reject Christ

John 6:41-42 ⁴¹ Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." ⁴² They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"

Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven.": Nothing annoys modern man like an objective truth claim. Even in Jesus' day....They were alright with the concept of some sort of spiritual bread. Something they could work for or earn. Something that they could decide on or provide. They only begin to grumble when Jesus says, "**I am** the bread that came down out of heaven." Many today say "all roads lead to God," but Jesus said the exact opposite every time He had the chance and so did His apostolic preachers.

John 14:6 ⁶ Jesus said to him, "**I am** the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

John 3:18 ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Acts 4:12 ¹² "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven '?: Along with the claim of ONE WAY...human reject the claim that He is the Creator God. That He stepped out of heaven and into the body of a human being. That The One True and Living God took on the very nature of His own creature and became a man in order to become a savior for men. BUT....again....Jesus says that is exactly what happened.

John 8:56-59 ⁵⁶ "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad." ⁵⁷ So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." ⁵⁹ Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

John 10:27-33 ²⁷ "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ "I and the Father **are one.**" ³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. ³² Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" ³³ The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out *to be* God."

Why Any Humans Trust in Christ

John 6:43-45 ⁴³ Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ "It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.

Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.: If rejection of Christ is the default nature of men...and it is....then how come some people believe what Jesus said about Himself and trust Him with their eternal lives? Are believers just better people than most? Are we smarter or more spiritually attuned? Were we morally superior so we were able to believe the truth when we heard it? NO...NO....and NO!!!

Ephesians 2:1-5 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 ²⁶ For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷ but God has chosen the

foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no man may boast before God.

Titus 3:3-6 ³ For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

"It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me: Dear people...why do so many "Christians" still grumble with God about this? Yes...we accept that Jesus is the bread and He is the only way, but will not accept Christ's account of how we came to trust Him. We want some credit...the slightest thing will do. God must have foreseen that we would be believe." "He must have known that we would be good or at least better than many." "He gave us the ability to chose Him and we had the desire and good sense to do so." BUT...like everything else men say and think in this Scripture....God says something radically different.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 ³⁰ But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, ³¹ so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

1 Peter 1:3-4 ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

Why Humans should Trust in Christ

John 6:46-51 ⁴⁶ "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ "I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

"Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father: The Father has not come down and appeared to men...it is not even like Moses who saw God's mercy. Only Jesus has ever seen God in all His Glory. Nevertheless, it is The Father who brings people to faith in The Son. If you are trusting Christ this morning you do not have to wonder how that happened. The Father in Heaven "caused" you to behold and trust His Son. If you do not trust Christ you should ask the

Father to reveal the Him to you. Stop trying to find Him on your own. You are not smart enough or good enough or religious enough!

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ "I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.": What a man needs to believe about Christ is simple. He is God the Son which means that like any son He shares the nature of His Father. What the Father is Jesus is as well. He came down out of heaven on a rescue mission to save you. He is not asking you to be better, more moral, more religious or anything else. He is asking you to trust that Christ Jesus came down out of heaven to take pay for your sins and to live a righteous life on your behalf. God is willing to accept the righteous life of Christ on your behalf when you trust Jesus Alone for your eternal life.

2 Corinthians 5:21 ²¹ He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

In What Way Should Humans Trust in Christ

John 6:52-59 ⁵² Then the Jews *began* to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?" ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹ These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Then the Jews *began* to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?": Jesus has been clearly comparing physical bread which satisfies physical hunger with spiritual bread which satisfies spiritual hunger. Just when you think the crowd is beginning to understand this they come up with a question like this.

BUT...I guess we should not be surprised by this. Jesus has been saying that men are physical beings and are going to seek satisfaction for all their deepest longings from their physical world. Even though He has clearly spoken to them of spiritual life and satisfactions their minds are only able to process the physical...what they know about.

The fact that the most perfect preacher who ever lived could not get them to see this is proof of what Jesus has said in this sermon. "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..." For you and me, this alone should convince us that God is responsible for bringing us to the place where we can see Christ and trust in Him. If you have trouble seeing Christ or trusting in Him you need only to pray and ask the Father to bring you to that place. Jesus has always said that you may come and not be cast out.

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.: This is the point where most minds begin to chose up sides. Is Christ calling for cannibalism here? Is this the first teaching on communion as the Catholic Church would assert? Is there any way to know for sure?

Since feeding this crowd with the fishes and loaves the day before, Jesus has been trying to get them to understand that the things of this world will only satisfy the desires of this world. This life is a recurring cycle of unsatisfied hunger and thirst. The physical world can and does sustain physical life, but we are spiritual and only God Himself can give and sustain spiritual life. "Why am I here? Who am I really? Why was I born? What is the meaning of life?" We all know that bread and water will not answer these questions.

Jesus has been using physical needs to teach men about spiritual needs. Spiritual needs are just as real as physical ones only they cannot be satisfied by the physical world. So Jesus speaks metaphorically of Himself as bread that can satisfy the spiritual need of men. We know this is a metaphor for several reasons.

No one ever ate the flesh of Jesus or drank His blood....not even the disciples at the last supper. His statement here was never literally fulfilled. If it is literal than none of the disciples or apostles was ever given eternal life.

Jesus Himself just said that Eternal life comes from trust [Faith] in Him....not from literally eating Christ's flesh.

John 6:47 ⁴⁷ "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

Jesus repeats the explanation that His words are not literal when He says

John 6:63 ⁶³ "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

CONCLUSION: So...Jesus Himself insists that He is speaking of Himself as the Spiritual solution to the spiritual need of men and women for spiritual life. He is the only provision of spiritual food that will give you spiritual life. The eating and the drinking are therefore totally and without any doubt metaphor. In the same way that you depend on your bread and water to give you physical life....in that same absolute way....you must depend on me to give you Spiritual Life. He is using the physical to illustrate the spiritual and everything that happened after this confirms this to be true.

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.: By way of illustration....Let me ask you a very serious question now. If you were deathly ill and were certain you were going to die and you went to a doctor who said, "You are going to die because you are not getting the nourishment and water you need to live! There is no doubt about it whatsoever!" If you will eat this healthy bread and drink this health giving

water you will recover and live.” Would you do this? Most of us desire healthy food and drink. We want to live and we want our children to live.

Jesus is taking this inborn human quest for physical life and teaching us about spiritual life. Jesus can and will do for your eternal soul what healthy bread and water will do for your earthly life. Do not confuse the two! Do not seek the physical remedy for the spiritual need. The bread he offers is NOT physical. Jesus is not instituting a “Sacrament” In fact, men are forbidden by God Himself to eat one another and drink their blood. Again...Jesus told the crowd this was a metaphor for Spiritual Eternal Life.

John 6:58 ⁵⁸ "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." NOT SOMETHING YOU ACTUALLY EAT!!! God gave the Manna, but they still died because it was physical food for their fleshly bodies. Jesus goes on to say in just a couple of verses....

John 6:63 ⁶³ "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

How you came to faith in Christ is important. For at least four reasons:

- God thought it was important enough to tell you repeatedly that it is His doing.
- It will keep you from thinking more highly of yourselves than you ought to think
- It will keep you from thinking condemningly of others
- It will exalt Christ as the ONLY Lord, ONLY Way back to God....The ONLY SAVIOR.

The Scripture speaks explicitly about the danger of trusting anything other than Jesus.

Romans 3:21-27 ²¹ But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁷ Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.

Romans 4:4-8 ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as [*grace*], but as what is due. ⁵ But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. ⁸ "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."