



Sermon, June 26, 2016  
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Coburg and Junction City United Methodist Churches

Sermon Series: Come Meet Jesus  
**“Flesh and Bread, Spirit and Blood”**

*Main Point: Jesus speaks symbolically, pointing out that there is a deeper meaning to what he says, just as there is a deeper dimension to life. Because the religious leaders seek only outer realities, they cannot understand the inner life and reality of which Jesus speaks.*

**Scripture Reading**

**John 6: 22-35**

22 The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there. They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. 23 Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” 26 Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.” 28 Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” 30 So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? 31 Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” 32 Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34 They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” 35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

**Song (JC) “You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”**

**UMH # 629**

**Comments**

**Come Meet Jesus: “Flesh and Bread”**

- What is the most difficult part of this section of scripture?
- What is most clear to you?
- Key insight: “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who

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gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.’ They said to him, ‘Sir, give us this bread always.’” There is an exact parallel here to what the Samaritan woman (St. Photina) replies to Jesus. She says “Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

- Jesus then replies to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.
- Jesus addresses the deep human longing for something more, something greater in life. St. Augustine states in the beginning of his *Confessions*, “You have formed us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” There is an inner emptiness that only God can fill, and Jesus came that we might be filled.

### Scripture Reading

### John 6:35-51

35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; 38 for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

41 Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” 42 They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” 43 Jesus answered them, “Do not complain among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by 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 Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

### Comments

### Come Meet Jesus: “Flesh and Bread and Spirit”

- What is the most difficult part of this section of scripture?
- What is most clear to you?

## “Flesh and Bread, Spirit and Blood”

- **Key insight:** Jesus says, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” Jesus’s fleshly body is a carrier of the heavenly, the spiritual. Believing in him and connecting into his deeper reality is true life. The flesh he gives for the life of the world is a sacrifice, not flesh to eat literally. He gives himself to the world so that we move beyond being rooted in strictly and entirely materialistic concerns and ways of living. There is a higher reality, a higher way of being, of living that he has access to and wants us to have access to as well. He carries that within his fleshly self just as we do. But he will offer that fleshly self in sacrifice, so to speak, to crack open our awareness into a higher awareness.

### Scripture Reading

### John 6:52-65

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” 53 So 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. 54 Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; 55 for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. 56 Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. 57 Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” 59 He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. 60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” 61 But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. 65 And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

### Comments      Come Meet Jesus: “Flesh and Bread, Spirit and Blood”

- **What is the most difficult part of this section of scripture?**
- **What is most clear to you?**
- **Key insight:** Jesus speaks symbolically, pointing out that there is a deeper meaning to what he says, just as there is a deeper dimension to life. Because the religious leaders seek only outer realities, they cannot understand the inner life and reality of which Jesus speaks.
- **Jesus says, “It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” This is a paradox,**

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because he just spoken about “eating his flesh.” What he is talking here is taking in his words and eating them, living on them, finding in them this key to satisfy the deep hunger and thirst we have for God. Don’t we have the saying, “Now we are getting to the meat of the issue?” This is the the same idea, Jesus is saying we are getting to the meat of the matter of what he offers: true inner sustenance.

- C.S. Lewis gave us the following insight: Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition, when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased. (Michael Horton, Editor, The Agony of Deceit, 1990, Moody Press, p. 49.)
- Or pleased too easily by shallow pleasures and empty calories, but not by that which truly satisfies. Just as there are foods that are sweet to eat but have no nutritional value, there are life philosophies that sound sweet and pleasing, but ultimately they do not help us grow in the depths of our being. Jesus’ teachings bring that growth, but it will shake us up, and make us think, and look at ourselves, our lives, our priorities, and who we are. And it will continue the full length of our lives. So, hang in there. The adventure never ends. Until we rest in God.