

Pentecost 13
August 19, 2018

John 6:51-58
282-185-389/236-327

You Are What You Eat

- I. Be careful what you eat.
- II. Consider the results of what you eat.

Dear Christian friends,

You are WHAT YOU EAT. That's SO TRUE that **many** of us have to watch what we eat. We may need to watch the **sugar** – the **salt** – the **cholesterol**. Those who are allergic to nuts have to be VERY CAREFUL about what they eat.

You are WHAT YOU EAT is also Jesus' point is these verses. We are spiritually what we EAT SPIRITUALLY. That's why Jesus tells us to 1)be careful about **what we eat** and 2)to consider the results of **what we eat**.

We're also coming to the START of a new school year for LPS – WLA – our own grade school. Bible class and Sunday School **resume** in a few weeks. You are WHAT YOU'RE TAUGHT. **What we're taught** in school goes a LONG WAY in shaping who we are – how we live – what we do with our lives. That's WHY WE NEED to 1)be careful about what **we and our children** are taught and 2)to consider the results of what we're taught. You are WHAT YOU'RE TAUGHT is why a Christian education for **children and adults** is so important.

I. Be careful what you eat.

The **Jews** in these verses liked what they HAD EATEN. The day before Jesus had miraculously fed over 5,000 of them with just **“five small barley loaves and two small fish.”** During the night Jesus had returned to Capernaum and now the crowds had CAUGHT UP with Him. **Unfortunately** they were looking for Jesus for the WRONG reasons. They wanted an EASY LIFE on earth while Jesus was offering them ETERNAL life in heaven. They wanted Jesus to provide an ABUNDANCE of **earthly bread**. Jesus instead offered them Himself as **“the Bread of Life.”** That upset the crowds but Jesus didn't BACK DOWN. They NEEDED to hear this – YOU ARE **what you eat** so be careful what you eat.

Some of these people had grown up with Jesus in **nearby** Nazareth. They knew Mary and Joseph. Yet standing there in front of them Jesus clearly and unmistakably says, **“I am the living bread that came down from heaven.”** Jesus is bluntly telling them, “You KNOW ME from Nazareth. There's MORE that you need to know about Me. I **‘came down from heaven.’** Jesus is claiming to **be God** Himself!

And Jesus IS GOD! The Bible so clearly teaches that. BE CAREFUL what you eat! **A Jesus** who is not the eternal SON OF GOD **in the flesh** is not the Jesus of the Bible. **A Jesus** who is just a wonderful teacher or **example** is NOT the Jesus we so desperately need.

Jesus took on our flesh and blood for a very specific reason. **“This bread is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life. For My flesh is real food and My blood is real drink.”** Jesus is talking about His **cross** – His bloody death on the cross. Jesus became one of us to take the place of all of us before God. **In our place** and TO OUR CREDIT Jesus lived a life **holy** and perfect **in every way**. Bearing the sin of the whole world Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross – Jesus shed His blood **to pay** for all our sins in full. BE CAREFUL what you eat! **A Jesus** who didn't die and **rise again** is not the Jesus of the Bible – is NOT the Jesus we so desperately need. WITHOUT Jesus' **bloody cross** and **empty grave** we have no forgiveness – no **peace** with God – no **real hope** of heaven.

HOW HUNGRY are you for Jesus – this “living bread” from heaven? Listen to you almighty Creator say, **“Be holy!”** and take another look at your **heart** and life. Does **“holy”** really describe EVERY

minute and area of your life last week? Listen to that call to ***“Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart – ALL your soul – ALL your mind.”*** Did God ALWAYS come first in your heart and life last week or did God sometimes get pushed farther down the line? Listen to God say, ***“the soul that sins, it shall die.”*** That’s God talking TO YOU and me about our sins. The MORE HONEST we are about our sinful hearts and lives the more we realize HOW MUCH we really need Jesus’ holy life – His sacrificial death – His triumphant resurrection from the dead. The more we FACE UP to the ugly reality that God should give us hell now and forever the HUNGRIER we will be for Jesus. **Sadly** the reverse is also true. The LESS I see my need for Jesus **the less** I WANT JESUS in my life.

How do we ***“eat”*** Jesus’ flesh and ***“drink”*** His blood? A few verses before these Jesus had said, ***“He who BELIEVES in Me will never be thirsty. He who BELIEVES has everlasting life.”*** We don’t LITERALLY eat and drink Jesus’ flesh and blood like cannibals but we SPIRITUALLY do that by believing – TRUSTING - in Jesus as our Savior.

Eating is a good picture for **saving** faith. **Simply** KNOWING there’s food in the frig doesn’t satisfy my hunger. Smelling the food – looking at it on my plate – NIBBLING on it – **doesn’t satisfy** my hunger. I need to ACTUALLY EAT the food for it to do me any good. SIMPLY knowing about Jesus – being acquainted with Jesus – admiring Jesus – is NOT ENOUGH. **We need** to actually believe – TRUST – in Jesus.

Another point. We need to KEEP eating and drinking to stay alive and **healthy**. SO TOO we need to keep believing in Jesus – to keep feeding our faith with God’s Word. The LESS we’re in God’s Word – not coming faithfully to church – not having those daily devotions – our faith grows WEAKER – we drift away from Jesus – we start eating the JUNK FOOD of **Satan’s lies** and the **world’s temptations**.

YOU ARE what you eat so be careful WHAT you eat. Our children need a **solid Christian** education. But **Christian education** is not just for children. We don’t graduate from God’s Word until God calls us home to heaven. Are you ALREADY PLANNING to use Bible class to feed your faith and grow closer to your Savior?

YOU ARE what you eat so be careful AND...

II. Consider the results of what you eat.

What does Jesus ALL OFFER us? Consider these passages. ***“Come unto Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. The blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. Lo, I am with you always.”*** Trusting in Jesus **we have** God’s forgiveness of all our sins – we enjoy a **whole new relationship** with God – we are the redeemed, beloved children of our heavenly Father.

Consider also this, ***“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread*** (i.e., believes in Me as their Savior) ***he will live forever. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood*** (i.e., trusts in Me as their Savior) ***has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”*** Jesus repeats that ***“He who feeds on this bread*** (believes in Me as their Savior) ***will live forever.”***

YOU ARE what you eat but no matter HOW WELL we eat we will one day die. We can eat right – **exercise** regularly – watch our weight, blood pressure, etc., - but the DAY IS COMING when we will die. Every day we live we are one day closer to **dying** Jesus reminded these people, ***“Your forefathers at manna*** (so miraculously provided by God!) ***and DIED.”*** In all honesty ANYONE of us could be dead before today is over. The world could end before this service does!

That’s OK too. **In fact** it would be great! If the Lord calls me home today through some FREAK ACCIDENT or **whatever** I’m ready to go. See, that’s what really happens for us Christians when we

die. The Lord is taking us HOME to heaven. We have God's promise on that. The VERY MOMENT **we Christians** die our soul immediately joins Jesus in His heavenly glory.

I've been with Christians when they die. It hurts. You shed your tears. But at the SAME TIME you almost feel like singing the **Doxology** – "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" Another soul - another **loved one** - SAFELY HOME with Jesus. We may dearly miss them but we surely wouldn't want them back here on earth. We wouldn't mind joining them in heaven but the Lord decides WHEN that will happen.

As Christians we have that comfort and MORE! On the **Last Day** Jesus will return in glory and raise our dead bodies back to life **in glory**. WHAT A DAY that will be! With a glorified body and soul free from all sin we will live forever with our **triune God** AND ALL CHRISTIANS in that **"new heaven and new earth, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, where God will have wiped every tear from our eyes and made everything new."** That's God's promise guaranteed by Jesus' own resurrection from the dead. What a reason for us to KEEP EATING **"the Bread of life"** – to stay in God's Word and stay close to our Savior!

YOU ARE what you eat and the results are what make Christian education so important. Yes, we need to know math, science, spelling, history, etc., to become RESPONSIBLE, PRODUCTIVE citizens. Yet if we see education as ONLY ABOUT **this life** we are not really teaching our children the TRUTH or what's really important. JUST AS we can eat right, exercise, etc., - and we still die – SO we can get a good education – work hard – enjoy a nice life and we STILL DIE. But if we then die WITHOUT JESUS we end up in hell forever. Nobody has yet come up with a GOOD ANSWER to Jesus' question, **"What is a man profited** (where to you come out ahead) **if you gain the hold world but lose your soul?"**

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever ...and I will raise him up at the last day." Yes, you are WHAT YOU EAT! Amen.

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