

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

Part XIX: Believing On Christ By His Discourse On The SPIRITUAL Bread Of Life, John 6:22-71

B. Trusting In Christ By His Critique Of Israel's Errant Rejection Of Himself As The Bread Of Life (John 6:48-71)

I. Introduction

- A. One of the great obstacles to faith in God and Christ is a materialistic orientation rising from worldly values.
- B. Indeed, this shows up in the errant sacramental view of the Lord's Table where some hold the elements have inherent value if ingested as in Roman Catholic transubstantiation or in Lutheran consubstantiation beliefs.
- C. John 6:48-71 in its wider context exposes and counters such errant sacramentalism for our edification:

II. Trusting In Christ By His Critique Of Israel's Errant Rejection Of Himself As The Bread Of Life.

- A. To understand John 6:48-71, we review the *wider context* of the passage beginning at John 6:22-48:
 - 1. After the crowd that was earlier miraculously fed by Jesus in John 6:1-15 had found Him across the Sea (John 6:22-25), He told them they sought Him **not** because they understood the *spiritual realities* of the feeding miracle, but because they had been **materially** fed by Him, John 6:25-26; B. K. C., N. T., p. 295.
 - 2. Jesus then told them not to labor for the *material* food that perishes, but for the *spiritual* food that endures unto eternal life, which *spiritual* food Jesus would give men resulting in *spiritual* eternal life, John 6:27.
- B. That John 6:27 statement began an extensive, revealing conversation in which Jesus and the crowd spoke past one another, with **Jesus** speaking of *spiritual* things and the **crowd** speaking of *material* things, and this **contrast CONTINUED** even into the topic of **Jesus' being the Bread of Life in John 6:48-65**:
 - 1. Jesus said He was the *spiritual* Bread of Life opposite the Old Testament *material* manna, John 6:48-49.
 - 2. Thus, as the Bread that came from heaven, Jesus would give eternal life to all who *spiritually* appropriated it, and the "Bread" He was giving was His flesh [*spiritually* to atone] for man's *spiritual* life, John 6:50-51.
 - 3. Thinking **materially**, the Jews argued over how He could give them His flesh **materially** to *eat*, Jn. 6:52.
 - 4. Answering on the *spiritual* plane, Jesus said one must appropriate Him [via His atonement] for eternal life, John 6:53-57. The fact that Jesus spoke of "drinking His blood" (John 6:54-56), what would be a major violation of the Law (Leviticus 7:27) if taken **materially**, reveals He spoke **only** on the *spiritual* plane!
 - 5. Then, Jesus repeated His claim that by ingesting His flesh and blood for eternal life, He was **not** speaking of the **material** food Israel **materially** ate in the wilderness only to die **materially**, Jn. 6:58 with 6:48-49.
 - 6. Even many of Jesus' disciples stumbled at such words by Christ, dabbling in the **material** way of thinking so as to complain that He had given them a hard saying (John 6:59-60), so Christ asked why **they** would be offended, and what would they do when He ascended back to heaven from whence He had come in indicating that He was indeed the true *spiritual* Bread of Life, John 6:61-62.
 - 7. Jesus then clarified it was the *spirit* that made one spiritually live, that the **flesh** [ingesting His material body] profited **nothing!** (John 6:63a; Note how this statement directly counters sacramentalism!) Christ added that the **words** He spoke were *spirit*, to be heeded *spiritually* [by faith] for **eternal life**, John 6:63b!
 - 8. However, the Lord repeated His former John 6:25-26 claim that He knew some who were there were not trusting in Him because they were **materially** oriented, and He even knew who would betray Him (Judas), so He **again** stated that only those who trusted in the Father trusted in Him, John 6:65 with 6:44-45.
- C. At this point in the conversation, many of Jesus' disciples, having adopted only the **material** view, stopped following Him in unbelief, so Jesus asked His remaining disciples if they would also leave, John 6:66-67.
- D. Peter replied that there was no one else to give them the words of eternal life like Jesus gave, clearly showing that Peter was a true *spiritual* believer in the Father and the Son, and he accordingly further acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, a profoundly accurate confession of faith, Jn. 6:68-69.
- E. However, Jesus replied that though He had chosen the twelve, one of them was a devil, referring to Judas who, as an actual unbeliever like many others in the crowd that day, would one day betray Him, John 6:70-71.

Lesson: Errant "sacramentalism," viewing the body and blood of Christ as inherently efficacious if one ingests them, is built on a faulty MATERIAL view where Jesus meant we were to appropriate His body in the SPIRITUAL sense of trusting in His substitutional death on the cross to atone for our sins that we might have eternal life.

Application: May we resist the material view and adopt the spiritual view of Jesus' John 6 words to trust in Him as Messiah and Son of God like Peter did and not be an unbeliever as in the cases of the crowd and of Judas Iscariot.