



Jesus Helps Believers Understand John 6:47-59

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world (John 6:51—KJV).

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 (John 6:51—NASB).

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 (John 6:51—NRSV).

Those who have read the New Testament understand the words of Jesus better than those who first heard Him teach. After hearing Jesus teach about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, many jumped to the conclusion that Jesus expected them to eat His flesh and drink His blood, which violated the Jewish Law, so they refused to follow Him any longer. On the other hand, His disciples had heard Jesus teach for so long and had seen so many of His miraculous signs that they continued with Jesus and expected Him to teach them what He meant in the future. Later, they learned that Jesus gave the world His flesh and blood when He died sacrificially on the cross to take away the sin of the world (see John 1:29). They also learned to participate regularly in the Lord's Supper, that Jesus instituted, to commemorate His death for them and remind them of His forgiveness of their sins. During the communion service, Jesus' followers eat bread and drink wine representing His body and blood, which He gave to take away their sin. The disciples did not always understand all that Jesus taught each day, but they knew Jesus' words gave them new life, meaning, and the promise of living with God forever after their bodies died. As we read the Bible, we will come to passages we do not understand, but we can think back upon what we do understand and know to be true with the hope of understanding new truths in the future.

Thinking Further

1. Jesus said He was the bread of life. How often do you suppose believers are to eat the bread of life?
2. Where did the bread of life come from and what is its purpose?
3. What do you think Jesus meant when He said His followers needed to eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood?
4. What will happen to Jesus' followers on the last day?
5. What does it mean to abide in Jesus?