The Bread of Life

The Lord Jesus Christ called Himself “the bread of life.” The 1st 21 verses of John 6 are a preliminary preparing us for this “Bread of life” discourse.

Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:33-44, Luke 9:12-17 and John 6:1-14 record the Lord’s miraculous feeding of 5,000 men, which if we include women and children exceeded 15,000.

There are 3 miracles, which are recorded in John 6:1-21: (1) Feeding of 5,000 (Jn. 6:1-14). (2) Jesus walks on the water (Jn. 6:15-21). (3) Boat arrives immediately at the shore (Jn. 6:21).

John 6:1-10, “After these things (The Lord disclosing to the Jews in chapter 5 His authority of life, judgment and resurrection, which are all prerogatives of deity; religious leaders in the nation of Israel reject Christ’s authority) His Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). A large crowd followed (“was continually following”: Iterative imperfect) Him, because they saw (“were continually observing”: Iterative imperfect) the signs, which He was performing (“was continually performing”: Iterative imperfect) on those who were sick. Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples. Now the Passover (2nd Passover mentioned; 1st Passover mentioned in Jn. 2:13, 23, thus 1 year before crucifixion), the feast of the Jews, was near. Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, ‘Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?’ (Lord’s testing Philip’s faith, cf. Gen. 22:1-18; Jm. 1:2, 13-15; 1 Pt. 1:7) This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. Philip answered Him, ‘Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.’ (1 denarii: 1 month’s wages, thus this is 8 months wages) One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, ‘There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?’ (Barley loaves recall Elisha’s feeding of 100 men with 20 barley loaves in 2 K. 4:42-44) Jesus said, ‘Have the people sit down.’ Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.”

Mark 6:40 tells us that the people were seated in groups of 50 and 100.

John 6:11, “Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted.”

The imperfect tense of the verb didomi in Mark 6:41 indicates that the loaves were multiplying in the Lord’s hands.

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John 6:12-14, “When they were filled, He said to His disciples, ‘Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost.’ So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten. Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, ‘This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.’”

The crowd was recalling Deut 18:15, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.”

John 6:15-21, “So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea (Mt. 14:25; Mk. 6:48: 4th watch-between 3 and 6 am) and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. But He said to them, ‘It is I; do not be afraid.’ So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.”

The Lord’s “bread of life” discourse appears in John 6:22-69. In our Lord’s “bread of life” discourse the crowd, which was fed by our Lord the previous day wanted to make Him king simply because He fed them and not because they thought He was the Messiah.

The miracle our Lord performed in the feeding of the 5,000 was to demonstrate that He was God and therefore, the Messiah and worthy of their trust but they refused the witness of the miracle that attested to the fact that He was indeed God.

Our Lord’s “bread of life” discourse teaches that the eternal Word of God became a human being in order to give eternal life to those who would believe in Him.

The Lord Jesus Christ who is the eternal, incarnate Word God came into the world in order that He might give eternal life to men and He did this so that men could enjoy and experience fellowship with God.

1 John 1:1, “Who has always existed from eternity past, who we have heard, who we have witnessed with our eyes, who we observed, even our hands touched concerning the Word who is the life (of God).”

1 John 1:2, “that is, this One who is the life (of God) was revealed (by the Holy Spirit) and we have witnessed and we testify and we are proclaiming (from God) at this particular time for the benefit of all of you this One who is the eternal life (of God), who indeed by virtue of His divine nature has always
existed face to face with the Father and was revealed (by the Holy Spirit) for the benefit of all of us.”

1 John 1:3, “Who, we have witnessed and we have heard, we also are proclaiming (from God) at this particular time for the benefit of all of you in order that all of you without exception might also continue to experience fellowship and this fellowship is as an eternal spiritual truth with the Father and with His Son, Jesus who is the Christ.”

1 John 5:11-12, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”

1 John 5:20, “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

The apostle John states emphatically in these passage that he saw eternal life in a Person, Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, we have the intangible (eternal life) merging with the tangible (Person of Christ). Eternal life was revealed in the Person of Christ. It was manifested in the words and works of Jesus Christ.

The miracle of feeding the 5,000 in John 6:1-21 was a supernatural work that attested to the fact that He was the incarnate Son of God and therefore, the eternal life of God in human form. The words that our Lord spoke in His “bread of Life” discourse clearly indicated that He spoke the words of eternal life.

John 6:22-26, “The next day (after the miracle of feeding the 5,000) the crowd that stood on the other side of the sea (of Galilee) saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples had gone away alone. There came other small boats from Tiberias (located in the southwest corner of the Sea of Galilee) near to the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum (located in the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee) seeking Jesus. When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, ‘Rabbi, (a term of respect but yet far short of addressing Him as kurios, “Lord,” a term for deity), when (not how, the answer to how would mean the unthinkable, meaning He arrived supernaturally) did You get here?’ Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.’”

The crowd did not understand the significance of the signs that Jesus was performing, which demonstrated that He was God and therefore, the Messiah.
The crowd was preoccupied with the flesh and pleasing it, thus their lust for physical food caused them to be blinded to the spiritual food the Lord was offering to them and that would give them eternal life.

Philippians 3:17-19, “Brothers, all of you continue being joint-imitators of me and continue observing carefully those who are living in this manner just as all of you continue having us as an example because many, about whom I often told all of you, but I now say even weeping, are living as the enemies of the cross of the Christ whose destiny is certain destruction, whose god is the stomach, and whose glory will certainly result in their shame, those who are continually occupied with earthly matters.”

John 6:27, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”

The crowd in John 6:27 locked onto the word “work” rather than “give” because they thought they had to work for their salvation but the Lord clearly states that the “work” of God is that they would “believe” in Him as Savior. They were taught in the Old Testament that man does not live on bread alone but from every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Deut 8:1-3, “All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your forefathers. You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.”

John 6:27, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”

The Lord is not saying to stop working for the food, which perishes and start working for the food, which endures, to eternal life since it makes it sound like our Lord’s audience was to work for their salvation.

We have here in John 6:27 a figure of speech called an ellipsis of repetition where the verb zeteo, “seek” in the adversative clause is omitted and is to be supplied from the previous verse, which is John 6:26.

John 6:28, “Therefore they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’”
According to Pharisaic tradition, one entered the kingdom of God by works consisting of observing the traditions of the Pharisees.

**Rom 10:1-3**, “Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.”

The crowd was seeking to enter the kingdom through works according to the Pharisaic teaching but the Lord taught them that entrance into the kingdom was not by performing works but rather by making a simple non-meritorious decision to trust Him as Savior.

**John 6:29**, “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”

Notice how Jesus shifts the emphasis from the work of man to the work of God. The incarnation of the Son of God is the work of God that provides men with eternal life. The responsibility of mankind is to accept the gift of the incarnate Son of God by trusting Him as Savior.

“Believe” is the 2nd person plural present active subjunctive form of the verb *pisteuo* (πιστεύω), which in context means to “trust, place complete confidence in” the Person of Christ in order to receive the gift of eternal life.

The Christian does “not” receive the gift of eternal life because of his own merits or works but rather he receives the gift of eternal life because of the merits of the object of his faith, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Gal 2:16**, “nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”

Salvation is a gift and is not something you work for.

**Eph 2:8-9**, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

**Titus 3:5**, “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.”

**Rom 6:23**, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

**John 6:30**, “So they said to Him, ‘What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?’”
Divine order is believe and see: John 11:40, “Jesus said to her (Martha, sister of Lazarus), ‘Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?’”

The crowd is demonstrating here its rejection of the witness of the miracles that attest to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. Seeing is not believing rather believing is being sure without seeing.

Heb 11:1, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Heb 11:6, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

John 6:31-33, “Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘HE GAVE THEM BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.’” (Ps. 78:24:Exodus generation) Jesus then said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven (manna was a type of the “True Bread”), but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.’”

This is the 1st of 5 references the Lord makes regarding His deity here when He states that He is the bread that has come down from out of heaven (cf. Jn. 6:38, 50, 51, 58).

John 6:34-35, “Then they said to Him, ‘Lord, always give us this bread.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread (genitive of apposition: “which is”)_life; he who comes to Me (in faith) will no never (ouk me) hunger, and he who believes in Me will no never (ouk me) thirst.”

The crowd wanted life and Jesus wanted to give life. What then was the problem? The problem is that the crowd’s concept or interpretation of life was that it consisted of possession an abundance of food, shelter and clothing. Life for the crowd was bound in the temporal and materialism. On the other hand the Lord’s concept of life was a relationship and fellowship with God.

John 6:36-39, “But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly no never (ouk me) cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 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.’”

This passage teaches eternal security.

Rom 8:38-39, “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor
height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

John 6:40, “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes (right now-descriptive present) in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”

John 6:41-51 records the problems that Jews had with the Person of Christ. John 6:52-59 records the problems that the Jews had with the purpose of Christ.

John 6:41, “Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, ‘I am the bread that came down out of heaven.’”

These Jews are following in the footsteps of the ancestors, namely, the Exodus generation.

Ex 15:22-24, “Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah. So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, ‘What shall we drink?’”

Num 11:1, “Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the LORD; and when the LORD heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.”

Num 14:1-2, “Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!"

John 6:42, “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"?’”

The statement “I have come down out of heaven” offended the Jews because they knew that our Lord by saying this was stating He was indeed equal to the Father and therefore God!

John 10:30, “I and the Father are one.”

Seven times in our Lord’s “Bread of Life” discourse does our Lord state that He had “come down from out of heaven,” which indicates that He was making the claim of being God.

The Jews had an erroneous conception of the Messiah. They failed to see that the Messiah would be God in the flesh.

Isa 7:14, “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel (literally, “God with us”).”
Isa 9:6, “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”

The Jews were looking for a political ruler to throw off the yoke of Rome. They erroneously thought that He would come spectacularly, which He will at the 2nd Advent. But they failed to understand that He would not appear the 1st time as Solomon. The Lord came to deliver Israel from a much greater problem than Rome and that is He came to deliver Israel from her sins.

Isa 53:1-12, “Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.”

The veil was over the heart of these Jews that our Lord was speaking to in John 6.

2 Cor 3:12-16, “Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the
sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

John 6:43-44, “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.’

The Father draws a human being to Himself through the Person and work of Christ. The attractiveness of the Person of Christ is what draws men to God. He attracts men to Himself through the love that He and the Son demonstrated at the cross.

John 12:31-32, “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.”

God’s love is the means by which God draws men to Himself. The cross of Christ is the greatest manifestation of the love of God, which draws all men to Christ. The Lord drew Old Testament Israel to Himself with His love.

Jer 31:2-3, “Thus says the LORD, ‘the people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness -- Israel, when it went to find its rest.’ The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, ‘I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.’”

Hos 11:1-4, “When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son. The more they called them, the more they went from them; They kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning incense to idols. Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; But they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love, and I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws; And I bent down and fed them.”

Some men are attracted to Christ and His cross whereas others stumble over Christ and His cross and others consider it ridiculous.

1 Cor 1:23-24, “but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

John 6:45, “It is written in the prophets, ‘AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.’ (Quoting Isaiah 54:13, Jer. 31:33-34) Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”

You learn from the Father through the Holy Spirit who teaches you through the communication of the Word of God. The Jews were not willing to come to the
Lord in faith therefore; they did not find rest for their souls and were not released from the burden of the legalistic teaching of the Pharisees.

**Matt 11:28-30,** “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

The Jews did not express faith in Christ because they refused to hear and obey His words.

**Rom 10:17,** “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

**John 6:46-49,** “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes (articular present substantival participle form of the verb *pisteuo*: “the one who at this moment believes”) has (gnomic present of the verb *echo*: “possesses, as an eternal spiritual truth”) eternal life. I am the bread of (genitive of apposition: “which is”)_life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.’”

The word “manna” means, “What is it?” (Ex. 16:15). The Lord Jesus was a mystery to those who saw Him. The manna came at night from heaven and the Lord Jesus came to this earth that is darkened by sin. The manna was small, which speaks of our Lord’s humility, and it was round, which speaks of His eternity and it was white, which speaks of His purity. Lastly, it was sweet tasting according to Psalm 34:8 and it met completely the needs of the people.

**John 6:50,** “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.”

The Lord is stating His superiority to the manna. He was the source of the manna in the Old Testament since He is *Jehovah Elohim*. It cost God nothing to give the manna from heaven but it cost God everything to give His Son.

**John 6:51,** “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.”

The Scriptures state that the Lord died for the entire world.

**John 3:16,** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

**1 John 2:2,** “and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

He is said to have died for the nation of Israel.

**John 11:50-52,** “nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish. Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he
prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad."

He is said to have gave His life for the sheep.

John 10:14-15, “I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep."

The Lord said He gave His life for His friends.

John 15:12-13, “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”

The Lord Jesus is superior to the manna, which Moses and the Exodus generation received because He is the source of the manna.

“The living bread” is subjective and the “bread of life” is objective. As the believer appropriates the Lord Jesus, the Lord becomes the believer’s life. He can become life to the believer, because He is the “living bread.”

Col 3:3-4, “For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

Gal 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

2 Cor 4:10-11, “always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

John 6:52, “Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, ‘How can this man give us His flesh to eat?’”

The Jews misunderstood that Jesus is speaking in figurative language here or spiritual terms as He did many times during His 3 ½ year ministry: (1) “Destroy this temple” (Jn. 2:19-22). (2) “Born again” (Jn. 3:1-6). (3) “Living water” (Jn. 4:10-15).

The reason why they didn’t catch His figurative language here was because the Jews were consumed with the temporal and refused to accept the witness of our Lord’s miracles, which attested to the fact that He was the Son of God.

John 6:53, “So Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat (constative aorist of esthio: “have eaten”) the flesh of the Son of Man and drink (constative aorist of pino: “have drunk”) His blood, you have no (gnomic present of echo: “you do not possess as an eternal spiritual truth”) life in yourselves.”
John 6:53 is figurative language for expressing faith alone in Christ alone, which is expressed through obedience to the Gospel message for salvation. The fact that this passage refers to the point of salvation is indicated by the constative aorist tense of the verbs esthio, “to eat” and pino, “to drink,” which refers to the once and for all action of believing in Jesus Christ for salvation.

Faith is the only non-meritorious system of perception; therefore, our Lord employs the concepts of eating and drinking since they are non-meritorious functions.

John 5:24-26, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself.”

John 11:25, “Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies.”

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

John 6:54-56, “He who eats (descriptive articular present participle form of esthio: “The one who at the present moment is eating”) My flesh and drinks (descriptive present of pino: “at the present moment drinking”) My blood has (gnomic present of echo: “as an eternal spiritual truth, possesses”) 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.”

This statement in John 6:54-56 is figurative language for experiencing intimate fellowship with the Lord (“abides in Me”) after salvation.

The fact that John 6:54-56 is speaking of experiencing fellowship with God after salvation is indicated by the descriptive present tenses of the verb trogo, “to eat,” and pino, “to drink” and the technical expression “abides in Me,” which also appears in our Lord’s Vine and Branches metaphor in John 15:1-8.

The believer who expresses faith in the Word of God experiences fellowship with God after salvation. Eating and drinking together is expressive of mutual participation and of fellowship in the highest sense.

You cannot separate the Person of Christ from the Word of Christ since the Word of Christ is an extension of the Person of Christ.

John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
You must compare what our Lord says in John 6:53-54 in order to not only see that our Lord is speaking in figurative language but also to understand the correlation between the Person and Words of Christ with eternal life and with the Holy Spirit.

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

You must compare John 6:53-54 with John 6:63 to understand that in order to appropriate the life of Christ and experience fellowship with God, one must express faith in the Word of Christ and the figurative language of “eating My flesh and drinking My blood” is employed by our Lord in order to teach this spiritual principle.

Also, notice that our Lord states that the eating His flesh in the literal sense would profit His audience nothing. Eternal life is received by obeying the Word of Christ for salvation and is experienced after salvation again through obedience to the Word of Christ.

The Greek word for “life” that appears in our Lord’s “bread of life” discourse in John 6:22-69 is the noun *zoe* (ζωή), which refers to a particular quality of life, namely the very life of God that has no beginning and no end and transcends time, matter and space.

Eternal life is received as a gift through faith alone in Christ alone and is appropriated after salvation by the believer who obeys the Spirit of life who reveals the will of the Father through the communication of the Word of life. The believer experiences eternal life in time and thus experiences fellowship with God in time by obeying the will of the Father of life, which is revealed to the believer by the Spirit of life through the communication of the Word of life.

Eternal life is an attribute of all 3 members of the Trinity: (1) God the Father (Jo. 5:26; 6:57; 1 Th. 1:9). (2) Son of God (Jn. 5:26, 6:35 Phlp. 2:16; 1 Jo. 1:1) (3) Holy Spirit (Jn. 6:63; Rm. 8:2).

Therefore, all 3 members of the Trinity are involved in the mechanics of experiencing fellowship with God: (1) The Father of life has provided the believer the Spirit of life and the Word of life as the means of experiencing fellowship with Him. (2) The Word of the Son is eternal life. (3) The Spirit of life inspires the Word of life.

The Holy Spirit through the communication of the Gospel reveals the Father’s will to the unbeliever that he must believe in His Son in order to receive eternal life.

The Holy Spirit through the communication of the Word of God reveals the Father’s will to the believer after salvation that he is to become like Christ. The believer who is obedient to the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit.
through the communication of the Word of God will live in eternal life and thus experience fellowship with God.

Obeying the Word of life is equivalent to obeying the Spirit of life since it is the Spirit who inspired the Scriptures and makes them understandable to the believer.

2 Peter 1:20-21, “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

John 16:13-16 states that the Spirit’s ministry is to take the doctrines of Christ and make them understandable to us so that we can apply them.

John 14:26, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

John 15:26, “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, {that is} the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.”

John 16:13-15, “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.”

1 Cor 2:1-16, “And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of
the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.”

Since our Lord states that the “words” He spoke were “Spirit” and were “life,” we can see that being filled with or more accurately influenced by means of the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 as well as walking by the Spirit in Galatians 5:16 is synonymous with having the word of Christ richly dwell in you in Colossians 3:16 and exhibiting the Word of life in Philippians 2:16.

To be filled by means of the Spirit and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in your heart are synonymous terms since they both produce the same results.

A comparison of Ephesians 5:18-21 and Colossians 3:16-17 along with John 16:13-15 clearly indicates that this is the case.

Ephesians 5:18 emphasizes the Spirit’s importance to our relationship with God. Colossians 3:16 emphasizes the Word of God’s importance.

Eph 5:18-21, “And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”

Col 3:16-17, “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

Since being influenced by the Spirit and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in you produce the same results, they are one in the same. This is further substantiated by our Lord’s words in John 6:63 where the Lord stated, the “words” He spoke are “Spirit” and are “life.”

Sometimes in Scripture the importance of the Spirit’s role in fellowship is emphasized and sometimes the importance of the Word’s role in fellowship is emphasized.
In our Lord’s “Bread of life” discourse, John 6:63 emphasizes the importance of both the Word of Christ and the Spirit’s role in relation to eternal life and fellowship are emphasized.

The apostle Paul states in Philippians 2:14-16 that the believer demonstrates that he is a student of God the Holy Spirit by exhibiting the Word of life.

Philippians 2:14-16, “Continue performing all activities without murmurs resulting from doubts so that you might demonstrate yourselves to be uncensurable and uncontaminated, students of God (the Holy Spirit), virtuous in the midst of a corrupt and depraved generation. Among whom you yourselves continue appearing as luminaries in the cosmos by all of you continuing to exhibit the Word of life as a boast for me on the day of Christ.”

In the same way that the Word of Christ cannot be separated from the Person of Christ so the Spirit of Christ cannot be separated from the Person of Christ or the Word of Christ since the Word of Christ is an extension of the Person of Christ.

The believer must obey the Spirit who reveals the Father’s will to the believer through the communication of the Word of God in order to take advantage of his eternal relationship with the Triune God and thus to enjoy and experience fellowship with God.

Gal 6:8, “For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”

Rom 8:1-17, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to
the flesh -- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by
the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all
who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have
not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a
spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit
Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. and if children,
heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with
Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”

John 6:54-56, “The one who at the present moment is eating My flesh and
is drinking My blood as an eternal spiritual truth, possesses eternal life, and I
will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is
d true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in
him.”

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

So if we compare John 6:54-56 with John 6:63, eating the Lord’s flesh and
drinking His blood is tantamount to eating His words, which are but an extension
of His Person.

Matt 4:4, “It is written, "MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE,
BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF
GOD.””

John 5:24, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes
Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has
passed out of death into life.”

John 6:57-60, “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. 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.”” These things He said in the synagogue as He
taught in Capernaum. Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this
said, ‘This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?’”

The Jews stumbled at this statement because of the prohibition to not eat human
flesh (Gen. 9:3-4; Lev. 17:10-16; 19:26) but they failed to discern that He was
using figurative language to convey spiritual realities.

The reason why they failed to understand that the Lord was speaking in
figurative language was because the mind of the crowd was on physical food and
were occupied with earthly things and filling their stomachs rather than heavenly
matters.

Matt 6:31-34, “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What
will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly
seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these
things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

John 6:64, “But there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him. And He was saying, ‘For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.’ As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, ‘You do not want to go away also, do you?’ Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.’”

So here we have the rejection of our Lord’s teaching because He did not fulfill their expectations and conception of the Messiah. They were looking for their physical needs to be satisfied and they were looking for a political ruler to throw off the yoke of Rome.

They also were preoccupied with materialism. The crowd’s concept of life was that it consisted in an abundance of food, shelter and clothing rather than a relationship and fellowship with God.

They failed to see that the Messiah was to be God in human flesh, therefore, they were taken back by our Lord’s statement that He came down from out of heaven. His miracles, which were many, attested to the fact that His words were true that He indeed came down from out of heaven, but the crowd and the Jewish leaders rejected Him anyway.

The crowd listened to the lies of Satan and his cosmic system rather than the truth. The Lord taught a parable to His disciples regarding this rejection of the Word of God in the parable of the Seed and the Sower or more accurately, the parable of Seed and the Soils.

Luke 8:4-15, “When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great.’ As He said these things, He would call out, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’ His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant. And He said, ‘To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY
MAY NOT UNDERSTAND. Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. The seed, which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.”

The “bread of life” discourse in John 6:22-69 teaches the importance of obeying the Word of God in order to enjoy and experience fellowship with God. Since the Word of God is food for the soul and sustains and prospers the soul. True life does not consist in an abundance of “things” but rather a relationship and fellowship with the Triune God.