

PENTECOST 13 (2018)
John 6

The eyes of all look to you, O Lord; you give them their food at the proper time. You open Your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. Amen!

Our manna, our Bread of Life for today:

John 6:51–69 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” **53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. 56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not as the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” 59 Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.**

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?”

61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is of no avail. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, “This is why I told you

that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

66After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

In the Name of Jesus.

“this is the essence of a genuinely Christian life, to acknowledge that we are sinners and to pray for grace.” From the LARGE Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther; who fed on the flesh of the Son of Man and drank of His Blood and acknowledged Luther was a sinner and prayed for Heaven to throw Luther a bone. And Jesus will raise Luther up on the Last Day.

It is in Luther’s ‘Brief Exhortation to Confession.’ In it, Luther urges the baptized, the taught, those fed with the Bread of Life, to take full advantage of heaven on earth, the pardon the Holy One speaks among unholy men even BY unholy men: reception of pardon from the man sent by the Spirit to absolve you of your sins!

YET....There are reasons—some good!—that acknowledging to your minister that you are a sinner and needing a throwed bone is not your THING. The Spirit will survive! But there is a THING that belongs to all Christians. The FULL quote from Luther: besides confessing sins and seeking pardon from your minister, Luther continues:

⁸ To begin with, I have said that in addition to the confession which we are discussing here there are two other kinds, which have an even greater right to be called the Christians' common confession. I refer to the practice of confessing to God alone or to our neighbor alone, begging for forgiveness. These two kinds are expressed in the Lord's Prayer when we say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," etc.

⁹ Indeed, the whole Lord's Prayer is nothing else than such a confession. For what is our prayer but a confession that we neither have nor do what we ought and a plea for grace and a happy conscience? This kind of confession should and must take place incessantly as long as we live. For this is the essence of a genuinely Christian life, to acknowledge that we are sinners and to pray for grace.¹

Your poor pastor has no other way to BEGIN to feed y'all, Christ's sheep and lambs and brothers and sisters and disciples: with the banquet of John 6! Believe me! One advantage of having for a minister Reverend Doctor Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder is that I have indeed read just about all there can be written about what the Lord could mean by 'eating His Flesh, feeding on Him, drinking His Blood,' and so on.

Is it just a way of speaking of 'faith in the Word?' Or is it more directly about the Lord's Supper, Christ's BODY and Blood? And what about the clear THREAT of, 'UNLESS y'all eat of the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink of His Blood, y'all do NOT have Life in you'?!

¹ Tappert, T. G. (Ed.). (1959). [*The Book of Concord the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*](#). (p. 458). Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press.

Should we be worried over the FREQUENCY of our reception of the Lord's Supper? Praying? Bible reading? Going to 'Church?'

There's a reason there's an Intensive Care Unit at the hospital! It's because some po' folk need more intensive care!

And there is only ONE REASON I have found that the world is plagued and blessed with the Lutheran Church, amidst all the waves and winds and darkness and jabbering...

And that is because there are those, according to the Word of God made Flesh, who've had enough sweets and treats and are famished regarding God. And to have pity on those few, the Holy Spirit sent Doctor Martin Luther into this world—about as lousy a sinner as you could ever find! Whose portly self clearly enjoyed the food of this world—and yet who died with the words on his lips, 'Wir sind Bettler!' 'We are beggars!' His prayer for grace!

Our Lutheran Confessions declare to the world and its puny powers that the Holy Spirit of Jesus works faith through the Word and Sacraments 'where and when it pleases HIM!'

WECANNOTBEINAHAPPIERPLACE!

The Word was made Flesh—without our input!

And those fed with the Bread of Life—God!—those who are born from above—not of blood, nor by the will of man, nor the will of the flesh—are born ‘OF GOD’.

All those titles the Good Shepherd gives Himself are happy revelations—HERE! Right HERE! Among US! Can you believe it?!—

Flesh and Blood revelation that when Philip asked, ‘Show us the Father and we will be satisfied,’ the Master told His dear disciples, ‘Do not be afraid! You lack nothing of Heaven, of God, of My Father. For you have seen ME!’

Bread of Life; Living Bread from Heaven; true food, true drink; that which a man feeds on and lives and that’s THAT! He IS the Source of our Being, the One Who holds the sun, moon and stars in His palm; Who holds each of our cells and atoms together, without effort; Who has each hair numbered, COUNTED!—and Who, with a Breath, changes
E...V...E...R...Y...T...H...I...N...G!

“³⁰ When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. ²”

With THAT BREATH, This One Man has changed everything—God don’t hate men! Has no reason! Men can call on

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 19:30). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

God as their Father, as THEIR God, all about THEM! In fact, the Man Who is most definitely NOT Moses even puts on His threatening face—He's so cute when He tries to act like Moses! Poor Jesus!—

UNLESS y'all eat of the flesh of the Son of Man y'all have no Life in you!

Yes! Unless you and I breathe, my dear ones, we will not live! So, let's get up every morning and make our lungs work!

And unless our hearts beat regularly, we're done for! So, let's make sure we kick-start our heart somehow, each day, and keep it going....

Even I CAN only be so foolish for so long! If we cannot keep the sun above us and shining, as we grow from it and live in its light; if we cannot keep our metabolism churning, and yet our flesh and blood depends on it—

What a JOKE it is to dream that the GOD Who has come to us in our Flesh, and Who comes to us still and has no reason to stay away from us says the Gospel!—let's stuff some extra oxygen in our pockets so we can keep breathing later today! Let's somehow GORGE ourselves on God and His gifts, lest WE somehow run OUT of God!

There's an insert in your bulletin. It's Section Three of the Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther: Daily Prayers. How does your poor Lutheran pastor lay before you the Bread of Life spread out in the Small Catechism, without turning Jesus Christ into Moses, faith into our work?

It's the cross the Lutheran is called on to bear! Luther cannot imagine a Christian going through the day without a celebration of his baptism, the confession of the God of our Baptism, and the Prayer Jesus gave us. A lake from which a bug could sip, or in which an elephant could swim!

And so, it is part of your pastor's calling to call out to you this feeding, this eating and drinking, this acknowledgment that we are all sinners and yet have words guaranteed by heaven to call down God's undeserved favor on us!

Besides all the other THINGS with which we dream we sustain ourselves, or feed our children—there is a danger that what gets short shrift is true food and drink that brings a life that cannot dry out!

What I DO know is that loving brothers and sisters have called me to repentance in the past; for they have heard from me that I make of the Small Catechism and Daily Prayers a new set of Commandments which we must perform without fail or be doomed! Obsession; compulsion; disorder; good candidate for the

ICU of the Lutheran Church and Y'ALL'S intercessions to heaven!

And yet, I cannot be more faithful to the True Shepherd Who has the Words of eternal life, than to lay before you His true Flesh and Blood: Word, Baptism, Eucharist, Church, Prayer, Creed, Confession, People of God!—and invite you to feast and live forever!

Let's wrap up with Luther. He spoke of a starving beggar who is called off the street and away from starvation inside a nice house, to a great spread of the most delicious supper, and then urged in every way to eat and drink his fill again and again, be saved from death and live!

And Luther asked then: will that man be grateful to his elbow, and thank his ARM for moving the food and drink so well to his mouth? Who could be so warped as to give credit to the mouth that chews the food, rather than the GIVER of the food, the HOST who invited—even THE FOOD ITSELF?! That is where his heart and life and thanksgiving would rest!

Your Bread of Life is all that too, dear sheep of the Good Shepherd! And MORE!

He is the Host Who calls us; He is the Giver of the Feast; and He is the FOOD ITSELF!

Which we eat and drink without any worry about US making it all work out! Any more than we keep the sun shining above, our lungs moving air in and out, the creature we are living, as our Creator wills, where and when it pleases Him, in the Name of Jesus! Amen.