

**Series Title:** *“John’s Gospel of Jesus: God in Flesh”*

**Today’s Title:**

***“Banqueting on the Master’s Menu”***

Scripture Reading: John 4:31-38

Text: John 4:32

**Introduction:** (Illustration from Tan #2050)

When Spurgeon was riding home one evening after a heavy day’s work and feeling very wearied and depressed, the verse – “My grace is sufficient for thee” came to him. He immediately compared himself to a little fish in the Thames River, apprehensive lest, drinking so many pints of water in the river each day, it might drink the Thames dry, and hearing father Thames say to it, “Drink away little fish, my stream it sufficient for thee.”

Then he thought of a little mouse in the granaries of Joseph in Egypt, afraid lest it might – by daily consumption of the corn it needed – exhaust the supplies and starve to death; when Joseph came along and, sensing its fear, said, “Cheer up, little mouse, my granaries are sufficient for thee.”

Or again, he thought of himself as a man climbing some high mountain to reach its lofty summit, and dreading lest he might exhaust all the oxygen in the atmosphere, when the Creator Himself said, “Breathe away, O man, and fill thy lungs ever; my atmosphere is sufficient for thee.”

“Then,” he told his congregation, “for the first time in my life, I experienced what Abraham felt when he fell upon his face and laughed.” Joyful experience.

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- Maude Royden

*“When you have nothing left but God, then for the first time you become aware that God is enough.”*

**Premise:** *No food satisfies so deeply as from the Father’s hand*

**Outline:**

**I. Contrasting Values**

**II. Consummate Veneration**

**III. Continuing Validation**

**I. CONTRASTING VALUES**

vv.31-33

**A. Mind set on the flesh vs mind set on the Spirit**

c/w Romans 8:1-11

1. Mind set on the flesh is always under condemnation
2. Mind set on the flesh cannot please God
3. Mind set on the flesh can never find fulfillment
4. Mind set on the flesh is death and anxiety
5. Mind set on the flesh is hostile against God
6. Mind set on the flesh is insubordinate to God's ways
7. Mind set on the flesh does not belong to God

**B. Mind set on convention vs mind set on discovery**

*"Rabbi, eat."*

Note: Rather than discovering how Jesus sustained himself in a hot, dry and busy day of intense ministry, the disciples' solution was of the most conventional common sense. "Here, eat something!"

- A.W. Pink

*"A little earlier in the day, the disciples had left their Master sitting on the well, wearied from the long journey. Accordingly, they had procured some food, and had returned to Him with it. But He evidenced no desire for it. Instead of finding Christ weary and faint, they discovered Him to be full of renewed energy. He had received refreshment which they knew not of. This they could not understand, and so they begged Him to eat of that which they had brought Him. Their request was a kindly one. Their appeal to Him was well meant. But it was merely the amiability of the flesh. The 'milk of human kindness' must not be mistaken for the fruit of the Spirit. Sentimentality is not spirituality."*

- Frederick Louis Godet

*“Since the beginning of His ministry, Jesus had perhaps had no joy such as this which He had just experienced. This joy had revived Him, even physically. “You say to me: eat! But I am satisfied; I have had, in your absence, a feast of which you have no suspicion.” .... “You have your repast; I have mine.””*

- Matthew Henry

*“He had so little appetite for his dinner that they were ready to think he had dined already. Those that make religion their business will, when any of its affairs are to be attended, prefer them before their food; as Abraham’s servant, that would not eat till he had told his errand, and Samuel, that would not sit down till David was anointed....*

*“He made his work his meat and drink. The work he had done in instructing the woman, the work he had to do among the Samaritans, the prospect he now had of doing good to many, this was meat and drink to him; it was the greatest pleasure and satisfaction imaginable. Never was a hungry man, or an epicure, expect a plentiful feast with so much desire, nor feed upon its dainties with so much delight, as our Lord Jesus expected and improved an opportunity of doing good to souls.”*

**C. Mind set on majority opinion vs mind set on God’s hand**

*“So the disciples said to one another....”*

c/w Numbers 13:25 - 14:12 esp. 13:30

**II. CONSUMMATE VENERATION**

v.34 *“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”*

**A. Intimate fellowship with our Redeemer feeds the soul**

- Jonathan Edwards, *A God-Entranced Vision of All Things*, p.14

*“The enjoyment of God is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the*

*company of earthly friends, are but shadows; but God is the*  
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*substance. These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun.  
These are but streams. But God is the ocean. Therefore it be-  
comes us to spend this life only as a journey toward heaven, as  
it becomes us to make the seeking of our highest end and  
proper good, the whole work of our lives; to which we should  
subordinate all other concerns of life. Why should we labor  
for, or set our hearts on, any thing else, but that which is our  
proper end, and true happiness?"*

**B. Mutual fruitfulness invigorates the spirit**

(Illustration from Tan #1771)

During the Korean a South Korean Christian, a civilian, was arrested by the communists and ordered shot. But when the young communist leader learned that the prisoner was in charge of an orphanage caring for small children, he decided to spare him and kill his son instead. So they shot the 19 year-old boy in the presence of his father.

Later the fortunes of war changed, and the young communist leader was captured by the United Nations forces, tried, and condemned to death. But before the sentence could be carried out, the Christian whose boy had been killed pleaded for the life of the killer. He declared that he was young, that he really did not know what he was doing. "Give him to me," said the father, "and I'll train him."

The United Nations forces granted the request, and the father took the murderer of his boy into his own home and cared for him. In later years the former communist leader became a Christian pastor.

c/w Luke 23:32-34

**C. Persistent vision strengthens endurance**

- Hymn by Isaac Watts #620

***How can I sink with such a prop  
As my eternal God,  
Who bears the earth's huge pillars up,  
And spreads the heavens abroad?***

*How can I die while Jesus lives,*

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*Who rose and left the dead?  
Pardon and grace my soul receives  
From my exalted Head.*

*All that I am, and all I have,  
Shall be forever thine;  
Whate'er my duty bids me give,  
My cheerful hands resign.*

*Yet if I might make some reserve,  
And duty did not call,  
I love my God with zeal so great,  
That I should give him all.*

### **III. CONTINUING VALIDATION**

i.e. validation of our very existence on this earth as disciples  
of Jesus Christ

vv.35-38

#### **A. Physical food reminds us of eternal harvest**

- John Calvin

*“He means not only that it takes the first place with Him, but that there is nothing He likes better or in which He is more cheerfully or eagerly employed. Just as David, to magnify God’s Law, says not only that it was precious to him but sweeter than honey. To follow Christ, therefore, we must both give ourselves up diligently to God and be so willing to obey His commands that the labor is not at all irksome or grievous.*

*To do his will. By adding these words, Christ explains fully what is the will of the Father to which He is devoted. It is that He shall fulfill the office laid upon Him. Thus, every man should pay heed to his calling, so that he may not think God has laid it on him when he has undertaken it rashly and from self-will. Moreover the nature of Christ’s office is well known – to advance the Kingdom of God, to restore lost souls to life, to spread the light of the Gospel and in short to bring salvation*

to the world. The importance of these things made Him forget  
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meat and drink when He was tired and hungry. From this we  
receive no common comfort. It tells us that Christ was so  
anxious for men's salvation that the height of pleasure for Him  
was to attend to it; for we cannot doubt that He has the same  
attitude towards us today."

**B. Reaper and harvester rejoice together in mutual labor**

c/w I Corinthians 1:10-17, 3:1-9

**C. Reapers are divinely commissioned**

v.38 "I sent you to reap...."

c/w John 15:8-17

**Conclusion:** (Illustration from *Mystical Verse*, pp.57-58)  
- Poem by Gerhard Tersteegen ["Satisfied"]

***Draw me to Thee, till far within Thy rest,  
In stillness of Thy peace, Thy voice I hear -  
For ever quieted upon Thy breast,  
So loved, so near.***

***By mystery of Thy touch my spirit thrilled,  
O Magnet all Divine;  
The hunger of my soul for ever stilled,  
For Thou art mine.***

***For me, O Lord, the world is all too small,  
For I have seen Thy face,  
Where Thine eternal love irradiates all  
Within Thy secret place.  
And therefore from all others, from all else,  
Draw Thou my soul to Thee...  
...Yea – Thou hast broken the enchanter's spells,  
And I am free.***

***Now in the haven of untroubled rest  
I land at last,  
The hunger, and the thirst, and weary quest***

*For ever past.*

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*There, Lord, to lose, in bliss of Thine embrace  
The recreant will;  
There, in the radiance of Thy blessed Face,  
Be hushed and still;  
There, speechless at Thy pierced Feet  
See none and nought beside,  
And know but this – that Thou art sweet,  
That I am satisfied.*

**Premise:** *No food satisfies so deeply as from the Father's hand*