

A summary of John 6:32-51.

- 1. Eating the heavenly food which is Jesus.** In the beginning of John chapter 6, the crowd was fed by Jesus with five loaves and two fish, and was satisfied. Jesus met their human needs. This was a sign but it was outward food, not food from heaven. Indeed, they needed to eat the outward food to sustain their human existence. However, in v.27, Jesus warns them not to labor for the food that perishes, referring to the loaves and the fish, the physical food. This warning sparks a reaction on the part of the crowd. In v.28, they ask Jesus what they should do to work the works of God. We must be very careful. We like to focus on the works that God does, and not on God Himself. For example, we may look at preaching the gospel as a work that needs to be done. God's way is rather that we would focus on eating Jesus. In v.32, the true bread from heaven is not manna, as some erroneously believe, but refers to Jesus Himself. Jesus points out in v.49 that the children of Israel ate the manna in the wilderness and died. The manna was indeed from heaven, but the result was death. This may mean that we may try and do a work for God out of our religious sense of duty, but the result will be death. An example of eating the heavenly food is the Lord's Table meeting. This is not a ritual but a feast where we eat the bread which is the Lord Himself as our portion and our enjoyment. This is not a work or a practice that we observe but rather an enjoyment of a person that gives us much joy and peace. One good indicator of whether we are eating Jesus or not is our attitude when we come to the Lord's Table meeting. Are we joyful and free to praise our Lord with many thanksgivings, or are we silent?
- 2. Coming to Jesus.** Coming to Jesus, in chapter 6, is very much related to the Father. There are three ways that are described in which we can come to Jesus:
 - a. Everyone who comes to Jesus has actually been already given to Jesus by the Father (v.37). Our coming to Jesus is not according to our own initiative or choosing. The Father has already given us to Jesus. Based on this, the Son receives us and will not cast us out.
 - b. Everyone who comes to Jesus has been drawn by the Father (v.44). This verse tells us that no one is able to come to Jesus unless the Father draws him or her.
 - c. Everyone who comes to Jesus has heard the word of God (the Bible) and been taught of the Father (received a revelation). Based on such a revelation, we should be filled with thanksgiving at the Lord's Table, and worship the Father for His choosing us in Christ and drawing us. The worship of the Father is not optional but necessary because it is He who is the originator of every desire that we may have towards the Lord, of every step that we take to love Him and follow Him. Again, the worship of the Father is not a ritual or something we do every Sunday, but an outflow of thanksgiving to Him for all He has planned, purposed and accomplished for us through His Son Jesus Christ.
- 3. Three positive results or blessings when we come to Jesus:**
 - a. We will never hunger again (v.35).
 - b. Jesus will never cast us out (v.37). Not one person who has been given Him by the Father will be lost.
 - c. Jesus will raise us up in the last day, at His return (v.44). Our mortal bodies will be resurrected and glorified or transfigured to

be like Jesus. Eventually, our entire being (our spirit, soul and body) will be enlivened and transformed by His divine, eternal life.

4. **The importance of believing or faith.** In vv.28-29, Jesus tells us that the work of God is to believe into Him (Jesus), who He is and what He has done for us. The Greek word for “believe” actually means “faith” or “trust.” In v.35, not being thirsty again is the result of believing. How can we not thirst again? By believing into Jesus. Believing is not just once for all, but a matter of exercising constantly to be in union with the Lord. We may use the example of the Lord’s Table again. By praising the Lord with an exercised spirit, we may enter into union with the Lord. The more we praise the Lord for His person and for what He has done, the more our faith is strengthened and grows.
5. **Jesus hungering and thirsting.** By coming to the Lord and believing into Him, we shall by no means hunger or thirst again (v.35). This is on our side. However, Jesus also hungered and thirsted. In John 4:7, Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink. He was thirsty for the sinners, typified by the woman, to come to Him. Then in v.34, Jesus told His disciples that He had food that they were not aware of. Actually His food was the believing of the Samaritan woman which was the result of her coming to Him. When we preach the gospel, and if we bring people to Jesus, He will not be thirsty. Even more, if people believe into Him, Jesus will not be hungry since that will be food to Him. This also applies to us. Maybe we believed in Jesus some years ago. How can we live today in the reality of believing into Jesus? How can we not hunger or thirst? We need to preach the gospel and bring people to Jesus. However, it is the Father who draws people and causes people to believe. Actually, based on v.36 and v.42, it is very difficult to believe. Therefore, when we go out to announce the gospel, we should just have joy and peace, regardless of whether people accept or reject what we tell them.
6. **The work of God is just to believe**(6:28-29). Signs are useful and used by God so we can know Him. However, we may still not know God, and we may merely look for signs and even follow God only because of signs. Therefore, Jesus warns us not to work for food which perishes, or even work the works of God. We may want to achieve something on our own, either physical or even spiritual. However, eternal life is not something we work for (v.28). Instead of working for it, we need to receive what God has provided for us. When we eat Jesus and take Him into us, we are satisfied with Him and we can rest in Him. We do not need to look for something other than Him.
- 7 **Hearing and understanding** (John 6:45). Hearing and understanding are so crucial. Hearing alone is not sufficient.. Many saw Jesus but did not believe (v.36). Therefore, in v.45, Jesus stresses the matter of hearing and understanding or being taught of the Father. This is a matter of revelation. The first stage is to hear (see 1 John 1:1 where hearing is mentioned first). However, hearing without understanding will not last long. Therefore, in John 6:60, many who heard did not walk with Jesus any longer. That is why many hear the word of God but leave the church life. We may see a consistent number of new people in the Lord’s day meeting every week, but surprisingly, the number of people overall may still remain the same, or even worse decrease! This means that while some hear and stay, others hear but leave. To follow the Lord is not at all easy and requires a constant exercise of hearing, understanding and coming to the Lord.