

The Character of Jesus 32
John 6:22 - 71
Spiritual Food

- **Characteristic: Lifting understanding out of the physical**
 - (22 – 25) The crowd could not figure out how Jesus had reached Capernaum, since Jesus had walked across on the water. So, they asked.
 - (26 – 29) Jesus did not answer the question, but rather told them that they were just looking for more free food. Jesus admonished them to arrive at an application of the previous night’s food illustration and to believe “into” Him, which is different than “in” Him.
 - (30 – 33) In response to Jesus’ challenge, they asked for a sign, and suggested something like the manna in the wilderness (clearly still focused on food). Jesus reminded them that the source of the power was God, not the prophet; Moses did not give manna. Again, Jesus prompts them to make a spiritual application.
 - (34 – 40) They had heard and observed Jesus, yet did not believe. Jesus stated clearly that He came down from heaven, that He would not reject anyone who came to Him, and that He had the ability to protect those who came.
 - (41 – 45) The audience should have been drawn to Jesus by the Scriptures. Instead, they focused on earthly things and failed to see the promises therein. Those who had the right mindset about the Old Testament were guaranteed to respond because Jesus would match the expectations prompted by the prophets.
 - (46 – 50) Jesus clearly claims to have lived previously in heaven. The objective is life, to be understood both as eternal life and “real” life in different places. The manna illustration attempts to lift their thinking from the physical to the spiritual.
 - (51 – 59) Jesus extends the metaphor, perhaps to drive the shallow thinkers away while giving the spiritually minded something to chew on (see v 66). The eating His flesh and drinking His blood image is like the “into” versus “in” idea. This is more than an association, but a connection or merging.
 - (60 – 66) Despite the loss of a substantial number of followers, Jesus pushed the point further. He repeats that He had been in heaven before coming to earth more clearly. And, that some (specifically Judas in v 71) of those who remained did so for the wrong reasons.
 - (67 – 71) Peter’s response was logical. Despite not understanding everything, he had figured out that this stuff was from God and had a connection to eternal life. Therefore, Jesus must be the Messiah. Jesus noted for future reference that He had purposely chosen one who had the wrong mindset (probably the conquering hero expectation).
- **Application: Lifting understanding out of the physical**
 - Some people arrive with conventional (mostly physical) expectations. How do we challenge them to think deeper, spiritually?
 - Do we emphasize the goal of believing into Jesus rather than believing in Jesus?
 - The power belongs to God and is managed by Him. Do church-goers sometimes give the praise to the conduit rather than the source?
 - The facts that Jesus was in heaven before coming to earth, that He will accept anyone, and that He can protect anyone are essential understandings. How are we doing?

- Expectations of the Scriptures color our understanding. Do we look for (1) how godly character plays out in a broken world, (2) how to fix our spiritual mistakes, and (3) the evidence of the prophets?
- Are we teaching the outlook that meaningful, valuable (real) life starts now and does not end, or do we settle for just heaven?
- Do we shy away from strongly spiritual concepts for fear of lower attendance?
- Do we ask people for logical conclusions as far as they can go, or let them off easy?