

Changed By God: Eating is Believing

John 6.53-71 (10.24.10)

Grace DC Announcements

- **Fall Retreat.** A fantastic time to get away, refresh and connect with God and people within the Grace DC community. Scholarships are available. Register at <http://www.gracedc.net/fallretreat/>

Note to Discussion Leaders regarding preparation:

1. Pray and ask for God's help during preparation
2. Soak in the text(s), inviting God to work in you
3. Read through the questions below, jotting down thoughts
4. Seek out additional resources (optional)
5. Tailor the study to your group. Make adaptations as necessary.
6. Pray and thank God for his work in you during preparation.

The following are suggested texts for reflection: John 6, Jeremiah 20.1-9 (the contrast between Pashhur and Jeremiah and their attitudes toward the Word of God), Isaiah 43, 52-53, and wherever else the Spirit may take you.

Summary

1. Where does one find life?
2. What is this kind of life?
3. How do we get this kind of life?

READ John 6.53-71

REFLECT

Warm up

1. Consider a critical life choice that you've made or are being faced with. Some choices are evident, some are more difficult. What has your experience been? What role has spirituality played in those choices?

Going Deeper

3. "American Religion" demands that people be good, sincere and tolerant. What are the positive cultural implications of this belief? How is it antithetical to what Jesus is describing in John 6.53-58?
4. Re-read John 6.59-60. Many in the crowd who had been fed were more interested in having their belly's filled than their souls. If we're honest with ourselves we too often are more interested in what God can do for our bodies than our souls.
 - a. To what does Jesus re-direct their attention? See v. 61-65.
 - b. Is this a hard or offensive word for you to receive? If yes, in what ways?
 - c. What implications would accepting this word have in your life?
5. The crowds in the synagogue were moral, religious people.
 - a. How did their religion get in the way of understanding truth?
 - b. How does our own self-righteousness about our religion impede our receiving the truth?
 - c. If you don't consider yourself a religious person, how does your attitude about religion impede your receiving the truth about religion from Jesus as the one who died for the Church?

6. Re-read John 6.65-69.
 - a. What does Peter's response reveal about Peter's character?
 - b. As we think about encounters with Peter we have studied over the past few weeks, what hope does this encounter give you personally?

7. Describe a personal hero and what you admire about her or him. Then read Isaiah 52.13-53.12. How are the heroic qualities of Jesus similar to and different from qualities we generally look for in our heroes?

8. Read Isaiah 43.25. God the Father is setting himself and Jesus as God the Son in a different category from any other religious teacher or philosopher in the history of the world. Taken in the context of John 6, describe how this offends our sensibilities? On the other hand, what is the alternative?

9. Re-read John 6.70-71. This portion of Scripture was not addressed directly in the sermon, but what does it say about Jesus' view of community? What implications might that have for our community?

Re-Reflect

10. Did you reflect further last week? Share something you gained by doing so:
 - Read Psalm 69 every day this week. What stands out to you? What might God be calling you to consider? Where do you see Jesus in this passage? How does seeing Jesus in a new way challenge you to consider situations at work differently?

For Further Reflection

- Read Isaiah 52.13-53.12 every day this week. Ask the Spirit to direct your reading to one or two verses. As you meditate on them, what is God revealing to you about your heart and your view of Christ? What obstacles is he dealing with in your heart? Give him thanks and praise for being at work in your life.

Prayer

- Pray for Grace DC Meridian Hill and especially for a worship leader. See the back of this week's bulletin for more ideas about how to pray.
- Pray that God would be making your view of spirituality as that aspect of life that integrates every other aspect, and that you would consider Christianity as a meal with Jesus as the One who sits across the table from you and your community and the Church worldwide.