

What Sustains Us?

John 4:27-38

27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"

34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. 35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! 36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." NKJV

As Jesus finishes the conversation with the woman, the disciples arrive from the city with food. They are surprised that Jesus would talk with this Samaritan woman but no one asks Him about it.

They arrive in time to hear Jesus confess to be the Messiah to this woman. Now they knew it, but they also knew that Jesus was forbidding them from telling others that He was the Messiah. So they were no doubt a little confused. Then all of a sudden this woman leaves her waterpot that she had brought and runs back into the city. She is going there to tell others about the Messiah.

At this point one of the disciples, no doubt the most practical of the group, offers Jesus the food they have brought. It is then that Jesus refuses the food and starts talking about meat to eat that do not know about. I can hear one of the disciple, maybe doubting Thomas, say, "Here He goes again. We can never make head nor tails of some of the things He says."

Let us take a look at this spiritual food that Jesus was more concerned with than physical food.

- I. I have food to eat of which you do not know.
 - A. When they left Him, He was weary and hungry but now He refuses the food.
 - 1. Just like the woman who came to the well for water and then left her waterpot and ran back into the city.
 - B. But there is more than a physical hunger that Jesus is dealing with.
 - 1. His greatest desire, hunger, is to do the will of the Father who had sent Him.
 - C. Jesus once before spoke of this in Matt 4 where, as Jesus was hungry.

1. Having fasted for 40 days, Satan came to Him and told Him that if He were really the Son of God He could command the stones to become bread and eat.
2. But Jesus said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" NKJV

D. Now this is a quote from Deut 8

1. Deut 8:1-3 "Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers. 2 And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3 So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. NKJV
2. What God is telling them here is that it was by the command of the Lord that the bread came every morning. That the manna that fed them there in the wilderness was at the command of God the Word of the Lord.
3. Even some Christians think that what we have we have by luck or hard work, but look at what James tells us.
 - a. James 1:16-18 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. NKJV
4. Look at what Paul tells us.
 - a. Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. NKJV
5. Jesus tells us the same thing in other places.
 - a. Luke 12:29-34 29 "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. 32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there

your heart will be also. NKJV

6. Paul sums it up like this.
 - a. Heb 13:5-6 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" NKJV
 - E. It was a the desire that Jesus had to do the Father's will that was His greatest desire, greater even than that for food.
 1. Hunger goes all the way from a slight discomfort to feelings so strong so as to cause people, in extreme situations, to do the unspeakable.
 2. And there is such a sense of satisfaction when we have eaten a good meal. A sense of peace and fulfilment. Isn't that why we center so many good things around a meal.
 3. Jesus is telling us that when we are following the Word of God and doing the Father's will, that we too can have that sense of peace and fulfilment. That there is a satisfaction of the soul that goes beyond the satisfaction of the body.
 - F. It was that sense of direction that keep Jesus on track.
 1. Even at the age of 12 He told His earthly parents in Luke 2:49, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" NKJV
 2. Later during the temptation, Jesus deflected every advance of Satan with the Word of the Lord God.
 - a. It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
 - b. It is written, You shall not temp the Lord your God.
 - c. It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God and only Him shall you serve.
 - d. Each of these kept Jesus straight on His course for the cross.
 3. Later in the garden when Satan again tempted Him we hear Him pray, "never the less not My will but Your will be done."
 4. Later when Peter would defend Him with the sword, Jesus answered by saying, "The cup which the Father has given me, shall I not drink it."
 - G. Yes, Jesus food was to do the will of the Father.
- II. My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

- A. In all that Jesus did, He never lost sight of the goal, to finish His Father's work.
1. John 5:36 But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish — the very works that I do — bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. NKJV
 2. John 17:4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. NKJV
 3. John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. NKJV
 4. Heb 12:1-2 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. NKJV

What is our food? What is it that sustains us?

Is it more money in the bank? Is it a great vacation? Is it some new toy? Is it a good time of pleasure?

Why is it that many Christian's never accomplish much in their lives for Jesus, either internally or externally? Maybe it is that they are still filling themselves up on what this world has to offer and have never dined at the table of the Lord. Maybe it is that they are content to have a satisfied body and a malnourished soul.

I do not know what God has for you to do, but I know that God has a will for everyone. And that you will never have the full feeling until you find it and finish it for God.

Service should be willing service

When the Spartans marched into battle they advanced with cheerful songs, willing to fight; but when the Persians entered the conflict, you could hear, as the regiments came on, the crack of whips by which the officers drove the cowards to the fray. You need not wonder that a few Spartans were more than a match for thousands of Persians, that in fact they were like lions in the midst of sheep. So let it be with the Church; never should she need to be forced to reluctant action, but full of irrepressible life, she should long for conflict against everything which is contrary to God. (C. H. Spurgeon.)