

John 6. 51 – 58 (19 August 2018)

The gift of life, the gift of this moment, the gift of Christ Crucified for us, the gift of Christ's body and his blood. Our searching for life, our searching for meaning all comes together in the body and blood of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus tells us ... this is my body (his strong, healthy, active body) given for us who are weak, unhealthy, unfit to receive; he gives us, in the gift of a moment, bread for life. We may not chose to accept the gift, but Christ's gift will be with us into eternity.

I am the bread of life, he tells us, its the solemn truth, if you don't eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no life in you; but those who do? They have eternal life.

To the Jews at this time this must have been blasphemous, the drinking of blood is strictly forbidden, Kosher meat is drained of its blood before it is consumed. In fact it still causes consternation today and many do not like the prayer of Humble Access because it echoes these words, "Grant us therefore gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear son and to drink his blood", people shun the prayer for something more acceptable to them.

Yet if we are to live in him, to be forgiven, cleansed, revived and restored and he in us, His Holy Spirit bringing life to our drained and weary bodies and if we are to be sanctified by his death for us, then are we not to be part of him?

For those disciples who continued to believe and have faith and trust in the Lord joined him at the Last Supper, he enlightened them; he broke the bread he explained to those present **this** is my body, which is given for you. (Feed my people) Do this to remember me.

They sat at supper, still not **all** convinced of Jesus divinity because one was about to betray him, yet the rest who had stayed now knew that the man Jesus had within him something of the Divine too.

Then, after supper he took the cup of wine “Drink this all of you, for this is my blood of the new covenant”. The covenant “To love one another as I have loved you”! (Quench the thirst of my people). He is making a contract with His disciples that they continue this ritual to remember Jesus and to continue with that covenant. To live, in His Spirit, loving as he had loved them. This is still the covenant that we make today as we partake in that supper; that we will love others as Christ has loved us.

We cannot eat and drink this bread and this wine without faith; God is not fooled by empty actions; we know this, St Paul elaborates on this for us. Eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ without good faith and without the Holy Spirit brings nothing. No, we never fool God. But, when we receive in faith and with thanksgiving, it is then we receive that transformation into the body of Christ. Following on from this chapter today to vs. 63 & 64 Jesus says, It’s the spirit that gives life, the flesh is no help. He is preparing them for what is to come; his ending; for the time when His physical

body is bound and broken; when his life is drained from him and his blood is drained from his body, and he is laid in a borrowed tomb.....

2000 years on every time we come together and celebrate communion, we take part in that same covenant with the body and the blood of our Lord, we renew our faith in Him, we are filled once again with the Spirit, the Spirit that gives life, our searching is over, our meaning is fulfilled in that moment, that we humble ourselves before God, and we receive his body and his blood.

It is the gift of life, the gift of a moment, the precious gift for all eternity. We are urged to use it, to enjoy it and to pass it on. But for many reasons we go out from here on a Sunday and we forget, maybe because we are too busy, because we are tired, or anxious about things, we leave here and instantly our minds forget what we have been part of, what that covenant means. Yet! In this transient moment that we have been part of, we are filled with the life of Christ, the Holy Spirit of our Lord God, we have partaken of his body and his blood! It is a moment of time, filled with potential for us to live in our society with the body of Christ; because he is the giver of this gift.

The gift, that in a moment can awaken the Spirit, was received by you at your Baptism, and, if allowed, can inspire infinite potential for Love, infinite potential for power, the fire of the Holy Spirit awoken within you, can reach out to others in the world, so others too may live and love as Christ in this world.

This world needs this; now more than **ever** this world needs Christ's Love to be powerful amongst us, the world needs his body and his blood. Believe and trust in his covenant with us!

In sharing in His Body and His Blood, we receive his constant Love. That love that can get to the root of all that is wrong in this world, all that troubles our minds, our emotions, and our bodies. Only His Love can heal. Only His Love can touch those parts of us that hurt and ease them. Only his Love can bring strength to our weakness and bring us that stillness within.

In receiving His Body and His Blood we can have faith that we are forgiven and restored and that new hope is given for tomorrow, we know that he bears our sorrow, shares our joys, that he will not leave you or forsake you; even though you may forsake him he will always receive you home.

The gift of this moment is, His Body and His Blood; we need search no more because, when we accept this gift, in that moment, we choose life and light; we choose life to the full in all its vibrancy and beauty.

So before you leave, if you find your mind is too busy or you are anxious, or your mood is not feeling all it should be, or if your body feels troubled in anyway, then come to the Lord in prayer and find rest for your soul, spend a few moments with the Lord before you leave today. The Healing Team will be available in the Beauchamp Chapel during the distribution of Communion.