

### A. John 6:41-58 – Words for the complaining crowds

1. John 6:41 – *Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.”* The grumbling of His audience proved they rejected Jesus’ claim to be God’s gracious “bread” provision from heaven. This is a reminiscent **parallel** to the complaining Israelites from the Exodus generation. Exodus 16:2, 7-9, 12
2. John 6:42 – *They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’”* To **justify** their unbelief, they went a step further and declared Jesus to be a mere human, the son of Joseph and Mary, with no right to claim a direct connection with heaven.
  - a. This is the same group that begged for sign; they would have loved a **show**. They would have loved to have their bellies filled with barley loaves and fish.
  - b. But they did not want to accept Jesus as the Messiah. They did not believe they were sinners who were separated from God. Like the Israelites of old, they thought they could **merit** salvation. They did not see their need of a savior. Romans 10:2-4
3. John 6:43 – *Jesus answered and said to them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.”* Their grumbling proved how focused they were on their own personal needs and **selfish** desires. They were blind to their need for eternal salvation. Historically this issue has stopped multitudes from coming to Christ in faith.
4. John 6:44a – *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him...”* No one is ever saved nor comes to Christ without God first drawing them. However, it is important to understand that to draw is not the same as to **force**. Let’s look at what the Bible says on this subject. How does God draw people to Himself?
  - a. God draws people to Himself through the **inborn** knowledge of God that every human has. Romans 1:19 says, *“Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”* Ecclesiastes 3:11
  - b. God draws people to Himself through **general** revelation. Creation is preaching a never-ending message about God. That message is heard in every language. It is designed by God to seize man’s attention. If anyone responds to creation’s message, God will respond with even more light. Psalm 19:1-4, Acts 17:25-27, Romans 1:20, James 4:8
  - c. God draws people to Christ by means of His **Law**. The Law is used by God as a school master (tutor) to lead sinners to Christ for forgiveness. Romans 3:19, Galatians 3:23-26
  - d. God draws people to Christ by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in the world to **convict** the world of three issues: the sin of not believing in Christ, the quality of righteousness needed to go to heaven, and the impending judgement of God. This work prepares the world for trusting in Christ alone. John 3:17-21
  - e. God draws people to Christ by means of faithful **ambassadors**. We are His emissaries to go and preach the gospel to the lost. Mark 16:15, 1 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Ephesians 6:19-20
  - f. God draws people to Christ using the seemingly foolish method of **preaching**. Through the process of preaching, God amazingly opens minds and draws people to Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:21, Romans 10:17-18
  - g. God draws people to Christ via the power of God’s **Word**. Romans 10:17 shows how faith comes by hearing and hearing by means of the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12
  - h. God draws people to Christ by means of the **gospel** message. The gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe. John 12:32, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:18
5. John 6:44b – *“...and I will raise him up on the last day.”* Jesus was saying here what He said before, that in the future, on the last day, Christ will raise up all who have come to Him based on the Father’s drawing. This was meant to be a message of **hope**. The person frightened about eternity would see this as good news. John 12:32
6. John 6:45a – *“It is written in the prophets, ‘and they shall all be taught of God...’”* This Old Testament quote from Isaiah 54:13 implies that all people will be taught by the Father. This seems to refer to the Father’s general call to **all** humanity through His multifaceted work of drawing as mentioned in the statements above.
7. John 6:45b – *“...Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”* The Father draws every person, but only those who heed to Him and **recognize** their need come to Christ for salvation.
8. John 6:46 – *“Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.”* Although the Father draws all people, no person, other than Jesus Christ, has seen the Father. Since He alone came from the Father and has seen the Father, He alone can effectively **reveal** the Father’s work and essence to us. John 1:18, 1 John 5:20

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9. John 6:47 – “*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.*” If Jesus, who never lies, began His sentence with, “*Truly, truly,*” the declaration that follows must be authoritative and crucial. You can **know** with certainty that whoever believes in Christ instantly and eternally possesses eternal life as God’s free gift. John 5:24, 20:21; 1 John 5:13
10. John 6:48 – “*I am the bread of life.*” You see? If you have believed in Christ, you have eaten the bread of life and you have become eternal. There is no one else in the universe who can impart eternal life. To trust in Him is to **eat** the bread of life. 1 John 5:12
11. John 6:49 – “*Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.*” The **entire** generation that ate the manna day after day in the wilderness eventually died. Jesus now contrasted that story with a one-time eating of the bread of life, Jesus Christ. Christ, as the bread from heaven, brings endless satisfaction and eternal life to all who believe.
12. John 6:50 – “*This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die .*” Jesus is vastly different from the Old Testament manna. That bread sustained Israel only one day at a time, whereas believing in Christ **instantly**, insures you will live forever. The bread from heaven eliminates your spiritual hunger forever.
13. John 6:51a – “*I am the living bread that came down out of heaven...*” The repetition of the phrases “*bread of life*” or “*living bread*” in verses 35, 41, 48, and 51, was certainly meant as a **prelude** to the difficult statements Jesus was about to make. Being God’s one and only essential provision for our salvation makes His next analogy truthful though challenging.
14. John 6:51b – “*...if anyone eats of this bread [Jesus Christ] , he will live forever...*” The aorist active subjunctive of the Greek word *eats* ESTHIO indicates a one-time desired action. The grammar stresses that in order to live forever the person ought to **eat** the Bread of Life just once, for all time. John 1:4, 1 John 5:11
- In the book of John, eating and drinking are occasionally used as metaphors for **faith**. Proverbs 9:1-6
  - The truth is that if anyone believes in Christ, he or she by faith heartily ingests Christ, and **God** guarantees him or her eternal life from that moment onward. Why would the Lord equate faith with eating?
  - When we eat, we are exercising great **faith**. Most of the time we do not know if what we are eating harbors some venom, disease, poison or other fatal substance. When we confidently consume our meals, we are trusting both the food and those who made it.
  - This food fact makes this a great analogy to our faith in Christ. When we trust what He has accomplished for us on the cross to be **sufficient** for our eternal salvation, we, by faith, take Him. We trust in Him. John 1:12, 2 Timothy 1:12
15. John 6:51c – “*... and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh .*” Jesus stated that He would give His **flesh**, or His life, as a sacrifice in the place of us, as a substitute for everyone in the world. Jesus became the bread, or food, that gives us life. John 1:29, Romans 5:8
16. John 6:52 – “*Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”*” Sadly, these people could not understand the non-literal way Jesus was comparing eating bread with trusting in Him. Clearly, Jesus said these things this way on purpose. Ultimately, this was Jesus’ way of making them come to a **decision**.
17. John 6:53 – “*So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no **life** in yourselves.*” Whether they liked it or not, whether they understood it or not, this was a crucial and trustworthy fact. 1 John 1:2, 5:12
- Jesus wanted them to get off the **fence** and to believe in Him or not. Therefore, He wisely used a revolting analogy of eating His flesh and drinking His blood to speak of fully trusting in Him. Jeremiah 15:16
  - This sounded like cannibalism to His audience, just as it sounds that way to us today. But Jesus was encouraging them to trust in Him **fully**, like as if He was food and drink at a meal. Normally they did not think twice about eating bread and drinking a beverage at a meal. In the same way, they should fully trust Him as if He were their essential food.
  - Despite what some religious groups believe, in this context, Jesus was not referring to **communion** or the communion elements of bread and wine.
18. John 6:54 – “*He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day .*” Eating in this verse means that someone has believed the message and has made it their very **own**. When a person believes in Christ, they receive eternal life and the promise of a future bodily resurrection as a totally free gift.
19. John 6:55 – “*For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.*” These were very hard words to hear, but Jesus continued the metaphorical use of eating and drinking linking it to His flesh and blood. This was not only

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to get them to **shift** their thinking from the physical to the spiritual, but to also elicit a response to either believe or to not believe in Him.

20. John 6:56 – “ *He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him .*” This verse promises that if someone does indeed trust in Christ, they will be **one** with Him in a reciprocal and sheltered relationship.
21. John 6:57a – “ *As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father...*” Jesus knew that His life as a human was because His life-giving Father willed it to be this way. He was fully submitted to the Father’s will in every way. Christ **chose** not to maintain His own existence, instead He humbly depended on the Father for protection and sustenance.
22. John 6:57b – “ *...so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me.*” Jesus was saying that just as He lived dependently on the Father’s provisions, all who would trust in Him would likewise be **sustained** by Christ’s life.
23. John 6:58a – “ *This is the bread which came down out of heaven...*” Speaking of Himself, Jesus reminded His audience once again that He was true bread. He was the life-giving bread God sent down from heaven to **save** the world from eternal, spiritual starvation.
24. John 6:58b – “ *...not as the fathers ate and died...*” The major difference between Christ and the manna God sent from heaven in the wilderness was that all who ate the manna eventually **died**, but those who believe in Christ receive more than a temporary fix. Listen to the next phrase.

John 6:58c – “ *...he who eats this bread will live forever...*” Jesus again showed that He was God’s choice of true spiritual sustenance. If anyone trusted in Him for salvation, they would receive the free gift of **eternal** life.