

**Cannibals**  
Next Steps  
November 1, 2020  
John 6:48-58

**OPENING PRAYER:**

Lord Jesus, let us always remember to give you thanks and praise every time we come together and share in the bread and cup. Let us always remember the depth of your commitment to us. Let us never take for granted the price you paid so we might receive the fullness of your grace. Amen.

**BREAKING THE ICE:**

- What did you agree or disagree with in the sermon this week?
- What is your favorite meal? Favorite place to eat? What makes it special?
- What is one of the most memorable communion services you have ever experienced?

**WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:<sup>1</sup>**

A historical criticism of Christians is that we were cannibals, because we take communion and in that act we eat Jesus' body and drink his blood. This lesson centers on the scriptures of Holy Communion. Read Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:7-23. If you have time, consider reading John's version (John 6:48-58) which is very different.

- What is different about these three gospel lessons? What is similar?
- Which Gospel do you prefer? Why?
- How much do you think the disciples understood when Jesus spoke about his body and blood?
- What profound new meaning does Jesus give to the Passover bread and to the Passover cup?
- If you were there, how would you have reacted to the news about Jesus' unnamed betrayer?
- With which disciple do you identify? Why?

**To Go DEEPER:**

- The names for communion: Holy Communion, Eucharist, Great Thanksgiving, the Mass, the Lord's Supper, Heavenly Banquet. Each name lends insight into the many meanings/ understandings of this sacrament. What do they say to you?
- Why is it important for Christians to observe Communion? What does the Lord's Supper mean to you?
- How deeply do you know God's forgiveness of your sins? Why do many Christians struggle with guilt if Jesus provides the forgiveness of sins?

**MORE TO PONDER:**

*In the Emmaus Resurrection story, we have a powerful and moving picture of Jesus coming alongside two of his disciples on the road (and notice that they are not of the inner circle of the apostles). He walks with them; he is concerned about their sadness, and he continues to be their teacher as he was in life. He responds to their desire for his continued company - 'stay with us' - and joins them for a meal. In the familiar gesture of taking, blessing and breaking bread at last their eyes are opened, and they recognize their companion on the road. Then they can recognize also that he had kindled their hearts in his teaching on the Scriptures, in the way he helped them to see afresh the familiar stories of patriarchs and prophets and the history of their people. I find this a marvelous parable for the Christian life. While most of us will have times set aside for prayer, for coming together in worship and fellowship, perhaps for solitude or for study, most of it happens 'on the road' ...As he travels with us, he makes himself known in word and sacrament - in the opening of the Scriptures, and the breaking of bread.*

---Helen Julian, *The Road to Emmaus*

- What strikes you about this passage?
- Where do you experience Christ?
- Where is your favorite 'on the road' to encounter God?

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *The Serendipity Bible* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1998)

- Share an 'on the road' story from your past.

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**

Our sins are forgiven, our sicknesses healed. We should be thankful, pray constantly, understand the gospel, realize the truth, rely on the Lord for everything. The grace of Jesus is higher than the sky. The sins of believers are forgiven, we receive peace and joy. We are free and happy forever. Amen.

--excerpt from Kim-Kwong Chan and Alan Hunter, *Prayer and Thoughts of Chinese Christians*