

**August 23**  
**"Living Food", *Daily Disciple*, page 244**



[Psalm 1:1-2](#)

[John 6:53-55](#)

Digging Deeper: Finding out, discussion and sharing

1. The first word in Psalm 1:1 is “blessed” or “happy.” Discuss what you think people are looking for in making a happy life.
2. In our metaphor of “living food,” one thing we did not mention our devotional thoughts is the idea of “healthy” food. Is there some spiritual food that might not be healthy to our souls? What might that be, and how would you recognize it?
3. What is your greatest “delight” in food? What is your favorite recipe?
4. Do you have a taste or experience of spiritual food that brings you as much delight?
5. Recall the manna experience of Israel in the desert. How does this help us in the gospel of John to understand Jesus’ self-designation as “the bread of life?”
6. I find it fascinating that by “dying” food itself can give life. Do you see a parallel between Jesus’ own dying and giving of life?
7. What other good images or metaphors can you think of that describe Scripture as food that can nourish our souls?
8. Why is this idea of “living food” such a *precious spiritual truth*?
9. Do you think that too many individuals never make the connection between Jesus as living food and the health of their own souls?
10. What have you found helpful in your own Christian life that keeps this truth before your consciousness everyday?
11. Is John 6:53-55 a reference to communion?
12. “Eternal life” in John’s gospel is a present possession, in other words, eternal life is not reserved for just the hereafter. Given this perspective by John, what connection does “eternal life” have with Jesus and communion?
13. Look up the passages in John where Jesus is the bread of life.
14. How can the flesh of Jesus be true food?
15. How can the blood of Jesus be true drink?
16. Why is the word “living” important for Christians when thinking of food?
17. Food for the soul. This is going further than Chicken Soup for the Soul. Come up with a list of “food” that is absolutely necessary for spiritual health and vitality. What is included in the spiritual diet?
18. Example: you might begin your list with something like “reading and meditating on the sayings of Jesus in the gospels everyday.” Etc. share your spiritual diet with each other.

## LIVING FOOD

### **Spiritual health & vitality**

Living food is a misnomer. Technically, all food we eat is dead. It has been harvested, wrested from the live giving nutrients of the soil, and then chopped, beaten, boiled, baked, steamed or frozen. Not too many living things I am aware of could stand that treatment and still live! To think of Jesus as offering himself as “living food” is consistent with his unusual take and perspective on everyday things. For example, Jesus offers living water, represents himself as offering manna from above, and ultimately, refers to himself as being bread and wine. It is this constant self-reference to food that Jesus sees himself offering life-giving sustenance to the soul. Jesus came to give life, and give it abundantly. That life cannot be experienced apart from Jesus, knowing that he is the source of spiritual health and vitality.

### **Scripture & Sacred Writings as food**

The source of spiritual health and vitality is in Jesus, the Word of God. The biblical writers present various metaphors for Christians to perceive and utilize the Word of God for their spiritual sustenance. In [Psalm 19:10](#) God’s revelation is compared to the sweet, dripping honey falling off of the honeycomb. The sweetness is a testimony to the pleasure God desires that his people derive from partaking of it. Two things need to happen for this desire to be completed full circle, i.e., God’s desire for us to grow spiritually and our desire to partake of the divine food: first, we need to see God’s revelation fundamentally in relationship terms, not propositional terms. And second, we need to ask the Spirit of God to change our spiritual taste buds so we can desire such food.

### **Presence of Jesus**

In order for us to partake of such divine food and receive spiritual health and vitality, we must truly see ourselves in the presence of Jesus being fed by him. An awareness of the presence of Jesus transforms everything. In [Hebrews 4:12](#), we find out that indeed the Word of God is living and active. To envision the presence of Jesus with us and beside us every moment transforms such as a sacred moment. Moment by moment we are in his presence, and just as his original disciples, we too desire to learn what it means to be a disciple and we are willing to learn. The presence of Jesus is “living food” to our soul because that is where he resides. The apostle John indicates that both the Father and the Son live in us. It is this divine presence in us that is one of the many particular blessings that the Christian enjoys that is not shared by the non-Christian. Because this presence of Jesus is so palpable, it is manifested in a unique and powerful way in the common meal among Christians when they gather to commemorate his death, burial and resurrection.

### **Communion as food to the soul**

We all are family gathered around the communion table. Jesus is our honored guest. He plays a dual role... he is both provider and the meal itself! As guest he demonstrates the ultimate example of hospitality. As food he offers the ultimate example of sustenance. Remember that the apostle mentioned to the Corinthians Christians that some of them were spiritually weak and sick because they had neglected this spiritual feast: see [1 Corinthians 11:30](#). Our scripture in John indicates that without this food for the soul, there will be no life in us!