

Sermon with Pastor Roosevelt Morgan
Based on John 6:56-69



You know as I was thinking and reflecting on this lesson, I was trying to think, how can you bring out a lesson like this? Think about it. That was difficult stuff, wasn't it?

Eat my flesh? That doesn't sound too inviting.

So I came up with two words to describe it for us. Two words that will take what I want to say to you as believers, the two words I came up with: one is "love" and the other is "gratefulness." Being able to be grateful. Think "gratitude."

Now as we look at the scripture, I'm going to use this verse to help bring out what I'm trying to get at. It comes from the book of Galatian Chapter 2, verse 20. "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith in the Son of God, who loves me, and gave himself for me."

"Who loves me." It's an act of love, isn't it? God gave a son – HIS son - we have to use the limit – his ONLY son. I know I have three sons: I could not give up one of them!

He gave his only son. Why did he do that? He gave him because he loved broken individuals. Think for a minute. It's difficult to love people who are not very nice, isn't it? How many would give something to people who are not very nice? "I want you to give up your life..." We don't even want to give them a cold glass of water, right? They don't have it coming! Right? Or something of that nature. They don't deserve it. Don't we say that a lot in our society? We watch people who live in the streets and are hungry...and we do nothing. Why?

(Imitating complaints) “They don’t deserve it. Get a job. Stop drinking. Stop doing this. Stop doing that. Then you wouldn’t be on the streets.”

That may be true. God could have told us that couldn’t he? “Stop sinning. When you get it right, give me a call.” He didn’t have to do that, did he? We have an ability to correct the wrongs that are in the world, and the wrongs that are inside of us. Only God, through giving us a great gift, a gift that is culled and rooted in love... “Take my son. He’ll show you. My son will show you. He will live among you. And he will give his life in your place.”

So yes, when you come to the Communion Table, remember the life of Jesus Christ, the blessed son of God, who’s given to people who weren’t that great: You and me.

Why did he do it? Because he loves us. Our only way to respond to that kind of love – we can’t pay him back, we have nothing that we can offer him, except ourselves.

We can give him our life, as a sign of our gratefulness and thankfulness. And don’t stop there. If you give Christ your life, then his life flows out of you. His mercy flows out of you. His generosity flows out of you. His kindness flows out of you. The Christ in you begins to live.

And if that lives in you, you have the spirit of God in you. And if the spirit of God is in you, guess what? Here you can be right: God has the world, doesn’t he, of eternal life. He has the words of life. Those are the words that you and I are grateful for. So when we go to that Communion Table, every time, we go with a grateful heart.

Lord, I thank you for the love. I thank you for your goodness. I thank you for your sacrifice.

Paul said it like this: “Therefore, when you go to God, say I’ve been crucified.” What does that mean? That’s a crude term, isn’t it? Crucifixion is a brutal, vicious death. One of the most cruel. We think of the Romans that brought about crucifixion. They really didn’t. They made it an art form – it was really brought about by the Assyrians. It’s one of the cruelest ways to die. Cruel. They watch you; they hang you in a way that your blood drips slowly, that you die in agony. I’m going to stop that. I don’t want to make you sad.

But anyway, Christ gave all of that...why? **Because he loves you. And if we allow that love to live in us, then we'll be able to claim that we have a part of God in us.** We can say we are the children; we are the people of faith. And you can say what Paul said: "What I was, I've been crucified. I've become new," didn't Paul say? Paul said, "become new" to those who are in Christ.

That's what we're going to celebrate. We celebrate his life. We celebrate his gratitude. We celebrate that we are thankful. We celebrate that he gave his life for us because he loves us. "Lord I wasn't worthy, but you loved me anyway. You loved me not 'because of,' you still loved me. I had nothing to offer you. I couldn't offer you good behavior. I couldn't offer you perfection because of sin. Nothing. Why did you do it?:

One word: love.

So when you look at this lesson today, when you get beyond the blood and all those terrible things...the blood is redemption. I would come to this conclusion, reading you one more verse, this is my conclusion:

"Therefore, since we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." *Hebrews 12:28*

Let us worship God today in our service at the Communion Table, just what Paul said. Every time you go, you show why you're grateful, and you're thankful. Help me to say "thank you, God."

(Congregation thanks God in response)

ALL: Amen.