



# Charting the Course:

a devotion by Chuck Hall

## How Is Your Appetite?

As I was growing up in rural south Georgia, we were accustomed to eating a few delicacies not known to city boys. Among the strangest were 'coon, 'possum, 'gator tail, tripe, chit'lins, and mountain oysters (gulp!). The one thing I never ate was blood pudding. Maybe it was because we were Baptists.

Every Hebrew growing up in Jesus' day knew that the law forbade the eating of blood (Lev. 17) and, certainly, the blood and flesh of people. That was why, when Jesus said, *"Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you...."* (John 6:53), the Jews were offended. Some found that statement so radical that they could not hear it and turned and walked away from Him.

We find that a radical statement for us today as well. But it's true. What we eat and drink literally becomes a part of us. The Bible tells us that the life is in the blood (Lev. 17:11). If we are to become a part of Jesus and He of us--if we are to become **One** with Him--then we have to partake of His life. That oneness comes through faith and obedience to His Word. We abide in Christ, or have Him "in us" by feeding on His word and taking Him into every area of our being. *"For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed"* (John 6:55)."

The Jews asked Jesus for a sign to prove that He was of God (John 6:26ff). They wanted a sign like the manna that their fathers ate in the desert. They didn't recognize that "the true bread from heaven" was among them and it was the time to "gather it" daily and eat of it. Those in the desert gathered enough manna each morning for that one day. Any left over would rot by the next day. They could not live on yesterday's manna (except on the sixth day when they gathered enough for the Sabbath also). This daily manna sustained them for forty years in the wilderness.

The Manna that God sent from heaven is still available to us today. Like the children of Israel, we too must gather and eat the manna provided each morning. We receive His life by "eating His flesh, drinking His blood," and taking into our spirit the Bread of Life each day. Our oneness with Christ comes as we meditate on the Scriptures and listen to His Word. Spiritual nourishment comes from the fellowship we enjoy with Him each day. When we fail to do this, we become weak, malnourished, and susceptible to the desires of the flesh and the attacks of the devil.

Can you imagine what it would be like if you ate only on Sundays? No one eats only once a week except during times of fasting. Think how weak you would become if you ate only four or five meals a month. Yet many people (who consider themselves Christians) "eat" only on Sundays. They do not have a time set apart each day to meet with God.

I've heard that if you go without food long enough, you enter into a state of starvation and lose your appetite. You become almost too weak to eat. It is easy for us to lose our appetites for God, especially if we seek satisfaction from other things. Much time and money is spent in pursuit of things and relationships for fulfillment that God alone can supply.

If you are not spending time alone each day with Jesus, reading the scriptures and praying, you have lost your appetite for God. Rather than just trying to make yourself get up and read your Bible, ask your Heavenly Father to restore to you a desire to spend time with Him. Pray that He will give you a hunger for His Word and a thirst for His Spirit. Ask Him for the grace to gather the manna each morning, the grace to "eat His flesh and drink His blood," so that you can experience His life throughout the day. If you ask, you will receive. He promised it.