

John 6:57

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

Analysis

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This verse unveils Trinitarian relationality as the model for salvation. The 'living Father' (ho zōn patēr) possesses life inherently and eternally. The Son lives 'by' (dia) the Father—not that the Father causes the Son's existence (contra Arianism), but that the Son's mission and work proceed from the Father's sending. The parallel 'so he that eateth me...shall live by me' (kagō zēsō di' auton) establishes believers' relationship to Christ as analogous to Christ's relationship to the Father. As the Son derives His missional life from the Father, believers derive spiritual life from Christ. This is union with Christ—participating in the very life of the Trinity. Reformed theology emphasizes that salvation is fundamentally Trinitarian: the Father sends the Son, the Son accomplishes redemption, the Spirit applies it, bringing believers into fellowship with the Triune God.

Historical Context

This Trinitarian statement would baffle Jesus's Jewish hearers who knew God as one (Shema: Deuteronomy 6:4) but struggled to grasp the plurality within divine unity. Jesus claims to 'live by the Father' while being sent by the Father, indicating both distinction of persons and unity of essence. Early Christological controversies (Arianism, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism) wrestled with how Christ relates to the Father. The Nicene formulation (325 CE) used Jesus's own words to establish that the Son is 'begotten not made, of one substance with the Father.' The church

fathers, especially Athanasius, saw in verses like this the full deity of Christ and the relational nature of the Trinity. Believers' union with Christ brings them into this eternal relationship.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the Trinitarian model of the Son's relationship to the Father shape our understanding of salvation?
2. What does it mean that believers 'live by' Christ as Christ lives by the Father?
3. How does union with Christ bring us into relationship with the entire Trinity?

Interlinear Text

καθὼς	ἀπέστειλέν	με	ὁ	ζήσεται	πατέρα	κἀγὼ	ζήσεται
As	hath sent	me	G3588	live	Father	and I	live
G2531	G649	G3165		G2198	G3962	G2504	G2198

δι'	τὸν	πατέρα	καὶ	ὁ	τρώγων	με	κἀκεῖνος	ζήσεται
by	G3588	Father	so	G3588	he that eateth	me	even he	live
G1223		G3962	G2532		G5176	G3165	G2548	G2198

δι'	ἐμέ
by	me
G1223	G1691

Additional Cross-References

John 5:26 (Parallel theme): For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

Galatians 2:20 (Parallel theme): I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

John 17:21 (Parallel theme): That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

1 John 4:9 (Parallel theme): In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

John 3:17 (Parallel theme): For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

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