

## **WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY**

### **The Glory of the Bread of Life – Part 5**

#### **Introduction**

The Jews at the time of Christ gave attention to Jesus, they even assumed he might be the Messiah, and many followed him for what they could get – free food. And besides, if he was the Messiah, he'd restore peace and prosperity to Israel. That's what they looked for in a Messiah.

In John chapter 6, Jesus pointed out this motive, he condemned it; he taught them that he was no earthly messiah. He taught them that He had come to them from Heaven and that He must be in them, be consumed by them – be united to them in order to be saved. He also taught them that apart from the Father's initiative they were totally incapable of coming to Christ.

Everything Jesus taught destroyed the notions of human self-sufficiency, earthly prosperity and wealth. And just like today, people don't like that. This final discourse brings to conclusion a year of ministry among the Galileans. Let's read the text.

#### **Text: John 6:60-71**

#### **Truly My Disciples**

The straightforward teaching of our Lord, particularly when He assailed their human freedom, was the turning point for many of the followers. Please remember that throughout this Gospel John addresses counterfeit disciples and real disciples. We already dealt with that back in Chapter 2, vv23-25. Even the words of Christ in our text make it clear that just because "many" were called "disciples", Jesus knew who really believed (v64).

I have no intention of pressing this point. Genuine believers continue on in the faith. Let me just invite you to consider 3 passage of Scripture and we will move on.

- *"For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end."* (Hebrews 3:14, ESV)
- *"No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God."* (1 John 3:9, ESV)
- *"So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,"* (John 8:31, ESV)

#### **The Reaction of Jesus**

As I mentioned, this was the end of Jesus' Galilean ministry. He had ministered for about a year. People flocked to him. He became very popular. He had visited all the towns and villages in that area. The area

was densely populated. Some historians believed that there was close to 500,000 inhabitants that might have heard about or been in contact with Jesus' ministry. That's not how it ended. We read in v66 many walked away.

I reflected on my ministry at Elk Point Baptist Church:

- I think of a man that I personally led to Christ. Every week I was in his home discipling him. He moved away. Became divorced. Abandoned the faith.
- I think of a lady that came to Christ. I baptized her in this church. She left her husband and moved away. Abandoned Christ.
- I think of the numbers of people that started coming to our fellowship. They seemed like they wanted to be part of us. Suddenly they departed (not to another church) – they just departed.
- I think of a man who came to Christ. I tried to disciple him. He was baptized. His testimony is on the internet. His girl didn't want him. He left Christ.
- I think of people who are so caught up with pursuing worldly interests that they no longer delight in their Bible. They are bored with worship. They are slipping and slipping.

The numbers of people that in 30 years have departed – not departed to another fellowship of Christians – just departed, is incredibly sad, even depressing. Add to their number the countless numbers of pastors, Christian leaders, evangelists who turned away from Christ. How do we respond to people who have departed, defected from the faith? Jesus gives us some answers:

1. He reminded us that apart from the Spirit creating life they will not believe. He says, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all."<sup>1</sup> This is a direct reference to John 3 and Christ's interaction with Nicodemus. It even reaches back to the Prologue that expresses the same idea when it affirms that those who believe are born "not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God." All efforts of the flesh will fail. Therefore, we plead with the Spirit of God to give life. We avoid trying carnal, manipulative tactics. We plead for the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
2. It is the Word that gives faith. "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."<sup>2</sup> It was not the works of Jesus that offended the crowd. It was His words. But it's the words of Jesus carry divine power and give life. As Paul would write later, "*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*" (Romans 10:17, ESV). To deny the "words" is to deny faith. Whatever we do, it is only the saving power of the Gospel words that will change a person. People who seem to abandon Christ must hear the Gospel. They must be reminded of the truth of the Gospel.

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<sup>1</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Jn 6:63). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Jn 6:63). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

3. The Father must draw those whom he has given to Jesus and enable them to believe. So, Jesus reminds the group, that “no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.” Mankind’s impotence and inability requires God’s initiative and grace. Oh, how we are called to fall upon the mercies of God and pray, “Lord, draw them.” Apart from the initiative of the Father there is no hope.

We pray that God would remove their hearts of stone and give them a new heart (Ezekiel 11:19). We pray that God will circumcise their hearts and cut away the sin and death (Deuteronomy 30:6). We pray that God will grant them His Presence by His Spirit (Ezekiel 36:27). We pray that God will give them the gift of repentance (2 Timothy 2:24-26) and the gift of faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). We do not pray that they will open their hearts to Christ for they cannot. We pray that God will open their hearts (Acts 16:14).

The best advice I ever received as I weep and cry for two prodigal daughters is from Ruth Graham as she spoke of her wayward son, Franklyn. She said, “My job is to love him; it’s God’s job to change him.”

### **Alone with the Twelve**

So, the “many” are now “twelve”. So, Jesus turns now to the Twelve and asks the all-important question, “Do you want to go away as well?”<sup>3</sup> Can you imagine the scene of “many” so-called disciples and one by one they are all leaving. The Savior turns to His Twelve and asks, “Do you want to go, too?”

*“Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.””* (John 6:68–69, ESV)

Peter’s answer is profound, “Where shall we go?” If you reject Jesus; if you reject God’s anointed Savior; if you reject the only way to be saved; where would you go?

### **Application**

- If the teachings of Jesus offend you? Where will you go?
- If the rigors of the Christian life disappoint you? Where will you go?
- If the radical call to discipleship doesn’t appeal to you? Where will you go?
- If the love of God in Christ Jesus doesn’t stir you, what will?
- If the glory of God in His sovereign beauty doesn’t thrill you, what will?

This morning I look over the Church that God has given me to pastor. I look at people I pray for, people I love, people whom I will give an account to God for – and I ask you, “Where are you going?” If you are not drawing close to the Savior this morning, where are you going?

I’d love to ask each one of you, personally and face-to-face ... if nothing changes in your life, where will you end up? If you keep doing what you are doing, where will your destination be? I wonder if God is

<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 6:67). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

calling some of you to repent – to turn around? I wonder if God is not calling some of us to come back to the Cross – come back to where we started – come back to look at the crucified Lamb of God, and make things right with Him?