

God With Us

A Study of John's Gospel: "The Hard Truth"

John 6:60-71

"After this many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him, so Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you want to go away as well?'" – John 6:66-67

I. The Hard Saying

- a. *Disciple* in this text is used to refer to those who had "loosely" attached themselves to Jesus.
- b. *Hard* does not mean hard to understand, but hard to accept.
- c. The truth is hard to receive for those who have hard hearts. What were the hard saying(s)?
- d. *Eating His flesh*; come down from heaven (38); and the fact Jesus came in peace and did not come to liberate their Israel through a natural war (*Blessed are the peacemakers*).
- e. The unstable disciples stumbled over the fact that they had to eat Jesus' flesh and drink His blood.
 1. Jesus was speaking figuratively and spiritually, not literally. There is no salvation in the flesh. (v.63)
- f. This moment represents a decisive turning point for the followers...*many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him*. (v.66)
- g. If people stumbled at these Words, how much more would they stumble over life's struggles?

II. A Season of Defection

- a. The defection was on account of belief. Jesus did not mistreat the followers. He simply preached the truth. They did not understand, nor listen, and would not stay to hear an explanation.
- b. Jesus is not moved by the departure of those who had professed *some* loyalty to Him.
- c. Just like in the Lord's day, as it is today, some depart from Christ because they cannot accept His teaching. These *disciples* reversed their steps and *no longer walked with Him*. (v.66)
- d. The *disciples* that left had received *some* of the teaching of Christ, but had not been challenged to believe and apply what they heard. (Read 2 Timothy 4:3)
- e. A true disciple sits at the feet of the Master and believes what they are told even when they may not clearly comprehend the initial meaning. (Psalm 25:4-5)
- f. Why did Jesus ask the question to His primary disciples, *Do you want to go as well?* (v.67)
- g. There is a challenge in the question to be faithful in the presence of the faithless.
- h. If we say we love Jesus, we should love all of Him, beginning with His Word and His sacrifice.
- i. The saddest tragedy the Church can experience is not the assault of enemies outside, but from people leaving based on misapplying/misinterpreting God's Word for their lives.
- j. The saddest day in a pastor's heart is the misguided defection of church family members.

III. Lessons to be Learned (There is a Cost)

- a. Read John 10:27-28, How do we reconcile this text with departure of "some disciples?"
- b. The question is, "Could any of us hear something from God's Word so difficult to accept that we would defect (fall away)?" The Bible says, "He that endures to the end shall be saved."
- c. Those whose lives are distracted by things of the here and now, cannot understand Jesus' teaching. His Words not only tell of life (what to hold on to and what to let go of); they bring life (what to live for). Sacrifice and Service.
- d. *You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him.* (Rom 8:9)
- e. *Do you want to go as well?* This is a spiritual check-up question we should be prepared to answer.
- f. Why do you want to continue your journey with Jesus? Is it for the blessings or the mission?