

## **Not the Flesh but the Spirit**

### **John 6:59-71**

59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?"

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. 65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" 71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve. NKJV

#### I. A Hard Saying

##### A. These people were looking for a physical blessing.

1. They were focused on this world and the things that would satisfy their needs and desires.
2. But Jesus had not come to give them physical benefits as much as spiritual.
3. He has told them that the way to do God's will was to believe in Him.
4. All they could do in response was to ask another miracle, another sign.

##### B. Jesus instead of telling them of the coming earthly kingdom begins to tell them about his coming death and how He will give his life, flesh and blood, for the life of the world.

1. This was so totally contrary to their thinking that even the apostles had rebuked Jesus for telling them things like this.
2. How could the Messiah die, if He were to reign over Israel?
3. And Jesus tells them with this metaphor of eating His flesh and blood that they must totally buy into His suffering and death and that without that

they could not have eternal life.

4. Jesus turned out to be not what they were looking for.
5. He did not fit into their ideas of a Messiah.

C. Then He also told them that believing on Him was something that was given them by the Father and that when they did not believe, it only confirmed that they were not led by God.

1. Jesus would not beg and plead them to follow Him.
2. If their heart was hardened by their sin and their eyes were blinded by their own ambitions, and their hearing was deadened by their own stubbornness, then only God could free them from their self induced condition.

II. What did they stumble at? V-61-62

- A. They stumbled at faith alone.
- B. They stumbled at His sacrificial death.
- C. They stumbled at His not fulfilling their goals.
- D. Then Jesus tells them that surely they would then stumble at His ascension back to where he was before.
  1. Jesus was not building a physical kingdom but a spiritual kingdom.

III. The Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing. V-63

- A. Fleshly things are necessary but they can never fill us up.
  1. It is because that every fleshly joy and pleasure is only temporary.
  2. They can never give us a lasting sense of peace or contentment.
  3. This verse is also a deathnet to those who claim that Jesus was talking about a physical eating of the flesh of Jesus.
  4. I think that Jesus knew that some would later on teach such things and included this to make it plain that the way into a spiritual kingdom is not through physical means, not even eating the flesh of Jesus.
- B. It is the Spirit that gives life.
  1. It is the Holy Spirit that God uses to quicken us and give us eternal life.
  2. This points out the fact that eternal life is beyond our reach to attain it.
  3. Eph 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
  4. Eph 2:5-10 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together,

and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. NKJV

5. Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, NKJV
6. 1 Thess 1:5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. NKJV
7. James 1:18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. NKJV

#### IV. Faltering Followers

- A. From that time, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.
  1. There will always be those who get caught up in religion who become offended for the gospel's sake,
  2. Mark 4:1-9 And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. 2 Then He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His teaching: 3 "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. 5 Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. 7 And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. 8 But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." 9 And He said to them, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" NKJV

#### V. No Other Alternative

- A. Jesus then turns to the 12 and asks them if they also will go away.
  1. Everyone else of the vast multitude have ate the loaves and heard His great teachings and now they turn shaking their heads as they depart back to their old lives.
  2. Will the disciples also now go away?

3. But there is a difference, these have already partaken of the Spiritual birth and are already the children of God.
- B. The great confession.
1. Where else can we go?
  2. You alone have the words of eternal life.
- C. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.
1. There you have it.
  2. He does not say, well we have been baptized.
  3. There was not some fleshly connection to Jesus.
  4. It was faith and faith alone.

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