

John 6

Written by K B Napier
Monday, 12 January 2015 11:47

The people followed in their thousands because Jesus had been healing people of their illnesses, conditions and demon possession. They wanted more of the same, and treated Him as an amazing magician with tricks up His sleeve, rather than as the Saviour come to the chosen nation so they may be saved! Yet, Jesus had compassion on their unbelief, and their naive following of Him (would not you and I have followed Him to see what He did next, even if we did not believe?).

Perhaps with a sigh in His heart, He saw how desperate and wayward Israel had become. They followed even though the day was far spent and they were hungry. So, this time, Jesus deviated from His usual miracles and showed the massive crowds another kind of miracle, one that proved His divine authority over science and the staples of life (which was behind His teaching that we should not be anxious for these things – even if our financial and other circumstances appear to be dire).

Verses 1-3

1.

After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

2.

And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3.

And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

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After Jesus had spent time warning the Pharisees, He and His disciples sailed over Lake Galilee (also known as the Sea of Tiberius, named after Tiberius Caesar, and a large, beautiful city enlarged on its banks). Vast crowds followed Him, by foot and by boat. They wanted to see more miraculous cures of sick people. This reminds me of the huge crowds that follow present day charismatic charlatans, lapping up their every word and action as though they were genuine. In Jesus' day, the crowds wanted what He gave them physically, rather than what His Gospel word gave eternally, though, unlike today's fakes, He spoke with authority and power. The attitude was essentially the same.

Before the crowds caught up with Him, Jesus went up a mountain for rest, along with His disciples. As a youth I often wondered why missionaries or pastors drove themselves to terminal illnesses, when even Jesus took time to rest. I have been guilty of driving myself like this, and 'guilty' is the right word, because if I am called by God, I should look after myself, so that my (God-given) time is spent wisely and not in illness. I see no virtue in destroying myself when there is no need!

Verses 4-7

1.

And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

2.

When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

3.

And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

4.

Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

It was almost time for the Passover. After a while the enormous crowds came to find Jesus and

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He saw them. He asked Philip how they could buy sufficient food to feed them all. In reality He did not need to know the answer, because it was rhetorical, used to make Philip think... here was the Lord Messiah who Philip had seen healing countless Jews of many diseases. Surely he could answer such a simple question? But, he could not! Instead, like so many today, his mind ran only along human tracks of thought. All he could do was consider the financial costs. Even if they had 200 pennies*, he said, it would not be enough for such a big crowd.

(*200 pennies was 200 denarii. A denarius was a small silver coin, common currency at that time, and was worth an ordinary worker's pay for a day – this shows us just how big the crowd was). Jesus, however, knew exactly what He would do to feed the people. His question to Philip would serve as a stark reminder of His power.

When Christians only think in terms of this earth, their answers and solutions are trite and probably will not work. When they begin with the knowledge and belief that God can do anything, transcending earthly things, then anything is possible. Sadly, most Christians today, afraid of the world and its growing evils, do not transcend what they see and hear from wicked men, and so God does not do what He could do. (It is why Jesus refused to do any major miracles in a particular village: Mark 6:5).

Verses 8-13

1.

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

2.

There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

3.

And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

4.

And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

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5.

When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

6.

Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

Then, Andrew, Peter's brother, told Jesus that a young boy in the crowd had five loaves made of barley and two small fish – but, he asked, what good would that be with such a crowd? Again, an earthly way of looking at a situation. Do you look out at enemies and quake in dismay at their growing numbers and fierceness? Is this not how Israel quaked because of the Philistines, before David walked forward to slay the enemy champion with nothing but a tiny pebble? Look to the enemy and you will quake; look to God and you will be victorious.

Jesus told the disciples to make the crowd sit down on the hillside. Just counting the men, there were 5,000. Then there were women and children. So the actual number may well have been well over 10,000. All eyes, including those of the disciples, were on Jesus. (When we look upon Jesus with expectation He will not let us down!).

The Lord then took the lad's loaves, gave thanks to the Father for the food, and handed them and the two small fish over to the disciples to distribute to the waiting crowd. Just five loaves and two small fish. But, as the disciples walked amongst the people and handed each a loaf and fish, the baskets refused to be empty. After the first five had received a loaf, five were still left. And after the first two fish were given out, two more took their place. The disciples were astonished and excited, but so were the people! They could see the impossibility of the food situation and marvelled at what was happening. It was another kind of miracle.

When everyone was given a loaf and a fish, Jesus told the disciples to gather up any food that remained... and they gathered twelve basketfuls! They began with just five loaves and two small fish, and gathered in remaining food that was twelve times more than they first had! When God gives, He does so with abundance! When you truly seek God for anything, expect an

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overflowing abundance, for He does not know how to give us meagre amounts of His grace.

Verses 14-17

1.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

2.

When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

3.

And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

4.

And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

The crowd, and the disciples, were amazed, and said that Jesus was surely the “prophet that should come into the world”. They meant the promised Messiah, the ‘great prophet’. The response was so widespread and excited that Jesus thought they would mob Him to make Him their earthly king. Here was the Messiah! Surely He would now obliterate the Romans. So, Jesus left that mountain in the midst of the clamour taking place and escaped to another one nearby, to be alone.

When it began to get dark the disciples went down the original mountain to find a ship, asking the owner to take them to Capernaum. They waited until it got dark, but when Jesus still had not come after them, they decided to go without Him. We can only assume that this was at the order of Jesus.

Verses 18-21

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1.

And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

2.

So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

3.

But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

4.

Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

As was usual for that area, the waters were disturbed by a storm, so the boatmen began to row against the wind. They had gone no more than thirty furlongs when, in the darkness, they all saw Jesus walking towards them on the raging sea. Naturally, they were petrified... was it a phantom? He called to them not to be afraid, because it was He. The disciples were instantly calmed and helped Him into the ship... which immediately came to land at Capernaum.

Thus, Jesus performed yet another kind of miracle after walking on the sea, by bringing the endangered ship instantly to shore. Can we even imagine how this must have affected the disciples? They thought they knew the extent of His capabilities, but already, in just one day, Jesus showed them their ideas were vain and woefully inadequate. His miraculous power was (and is) beyond human comprehension.

Verses 22-24

1.

The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went

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not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

2.

(Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

3.

When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

Next day, the crowds were perplexed. They saw that only one ship was moored near the mountain. The night before, they saw the disciples enter that single ship, and knew that Jesus was not one of the passengers. They saw the disciples sail away without Him! (Other ships had brought crowds to the mountain the previous day, but they had all gone by the time the disciples wanted to sail to Capernaum).

The crowds realised that both the disciples and Jesus were no longer there, so they, too, tried to find boats on which to return to Capernaum. They wanted Jesus! This is what Jesus had to endure for His short time of ministry – massive crowds, with each individual wanting to jostle closer to be next to the Messiah. They wanted what He could give to them and most were not interested in His eternal Gospel.

Verses 25-27

1.

And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

2.

Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

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3.

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

People in the public eye (even me) are used to the fact that others watch them like hawks! They listen for errors of speech, watch for errors of practice and behaviour, even down to the colour of one's socks. Jesus was more in the public eye than almost anyone in history, and the crowds watched Him avidly, mainly to see what He would do next, given that He was healing Jews everywhere, all the time.

The crowds were puzzled and asked Jesus, 'Rabbi – how did you get here?' They saw the disciples entering a boat to get back to the Galilean shore, but did not see Jesus get in. As He often did with the Pharisees, Jesus ignored their direct question and, instead, taught them. He told them that they followed Him not because of the miracles he had been doing to that time, but because yesterday they were fed. Of course, even that incident was an incredible miracle. 'Don't work to get food for your bodies, food that easily spoils and rots, but look for the food that satisfies your souls forever. The Son of Man can give you this food. He can give it to you because He has been sealed by the Father'.

Of course, Jesus had already told the Jews He was the Son of Man, the Son of God, One of the Trinity. Now, He was repeating this fact, adding that the Father had 'sealed' (*sphragizō*) Him. This can have a number of possible meanings. In this context it is similar to the way God 'seals' angels – makes them His own and marks them out as His. It can mean to be secure against the wiles of Satan – which Jesus certainly was. However, the main meaning in this text is that the Father has proved to the world Who Jesus really was, and confirmed with many signs that He was divine – God. Note that it also means the proof was beyond any doubt – Jesus was and is authentic and Who He said He was.

That modern day atheists try to say otherwise, is for them to fly in the face of evidence, truth, logic and intellectual fact! Jesus, on this earth, proved EVERY DAY Who He was; His works and speech were sufficient and more! And this proof also extends to God the Father and the Holy Spirit – God is true. Jesus Christ, and He alone, has been *proved* to be the ONLY Saviour of mankind.

Verses 28-33

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1.

Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

2.

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

3.

They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

4.

Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

5.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

6.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

The text shows us that many in the crowd wanted to know what to do next. 'How can we work the great works of God?' Jesus gave a plain answer: 'The work of God is that you believe the One He sent.' Even today, the work of God begins with this simple truth – personal salvation. Without it no man or woman can claim to belong to God, nor can they claim to do His bidding, or expect help. Thus, the huge majority of cults and occults do not belong to God and cannot claim to do His work. Those who do are fakes, false prophets whose end is hell.

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The people who originally asked Him what the work of God was, now wanted proof from Jesus, that what He said was valid: 'What sign can you give us to prove what you say; what spiritual work do you do?' This was really a most stupid question, as they were following Him every day and saw His miracles!

Yet, Jesus patiently answered them. Probably because they had been so wrongly taught by the Pharisees for so long and they could not recognise truth from lies. (The same problem is with us today – most 'Christians' are badly taught by their pastors and popular preachers, and they quickly shun the truth).

He told them that their Fathers (prophets and leaders of Israel) were sent Manna from Heaven to eat, but Moses did not give the people *eternal* bread to save them. Only the Father could give eternal life. What is more, He said, the Father sent down to earth that spiritual bread – Himself. This is not stretching the matter too far, for we find this truth in verse 33; 'The bread of life is the One Who came down from Heaven; it is He Who gives life to the world.'

Verses 34-40

1.

Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

2.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

3.

But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

4.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

5.

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For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

6.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

7.

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

The response from the crowd is self-evident. They UNDERSTOOD what He was saying and, they ASKED for a solution. They asked Him to give them the Heavenly bread that gave eternal life. They asked that He give them the bread continually, 'evermore'. Really, they need not have asked for the bread (salvation) to be continually given, for once a man is saved he is saved for eternity. It is a once-only act of our gracious God.

Jesus then made plain Who He was: "I am the bread of life" (yet another statement by Jesus that He was God). He emphasised this truth by saying that whoever came to Him (this means in repentance and belief) would never hunger (spiritually) or thirst – the latter promise He had already given to the Samaritan woman.

Note that His next few words are a confirmation and affirmation of election and predestination: ALL who were elect by the Father WOULD come to Jesus and WOULD be saved. On the other hand, He warned, even though the crowd saw His miracles, they still did not believe! This only serves to underline the truth that no man can come to Christ except He is elected in Heaven in eternity.

Whoever was elect and came to Jesus would not be cast out. This is because election makes a man's future secure and impossible to erase. This is why Calvinists in particular teach "Once saved, always saved". Nothing can separate a saved person from God. Nothing at all. Jesus, then, was already issuing a stark truth – that there were only two kinds of listener to His Gospel – the elect and the non-elect.

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Jesus emphasised what He had said from the beginning of His ministry – that He did not come to earth because of His own desire, but because the Father had sent Him. Jesus was the ultimate witness to what the Father wants. Jesus came to earth to do the Father's will. Note the fixed fact here: because it is God's will, it is immutable and cannot change. That is why election is a fixed spiritual fact – God chose who would be saved throughout time, and no man can either reject or create his own salvation.

Verse 39 again emphasises the heavenly truth: it was the Father's will that those who were 'given' to Jesus should NEVER BE LOST. In this text to 'give' means to hand over from the Father to the Son, those who have already been elected to salvation. The meaning includes the idea that this ownership by Jesus was already in effect, because He is God and so party to the election of the few. Jesus continued, that those who belonged to Him, the elect, would be raised up (to Heaven) at the end of time. Those who teach against this have a twisted theology and an unsaved mind and heart.

The plain fact is again repeated – those who see and hear the Son (His word) and thereby believe on Him, will have everlasting life, so Jesus would resurrect each one when He returns in the skies to collect His people. The term "may have" is not a statement of doubt. It means to 'hold' or to possess, to lay hold of the promise of eternal life joined to Christ. It is a statement of certainty, of surety. But, it only applies to those who are elect (and therefore saved). Those who say otherwise are liars and evil workers of Satan.

Verses 41-46

1.

The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

2.

And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

3.

Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

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4.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

5.

It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

6.

Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

The 'Jews' (we can take this to mean Pharisees) muttered amongst themselves, because Jesus claimed to be the bread from Heaven, and thus God. They scorned Him, saying that He was just the son of Joseph the local builder! That is, born of human parents... so how could He claim to be God from Heaven! Of course, they were unaware of His divine beginnings. But it was still blasphemy.

Jesus is God. He knew what they were saying amongst themselves! 'Why are you disputing what I say? No man can believe in me unless the Father sends him to me. And those who do come to me I will resurrect on the last day. Even the prophets told you that God will teach men, and those who truly hear and believe God will come to me. No man has seen the Father (Who is Spirit) except those who believe – they have seen Him.'

This is still a fact today. Jesus said elsewhere that those who saw Him, saw the Father. That is, those who believe and have thus 'seen' Jesus, have also seen the Father. They know Him because they are elect and saved.

Verses 47-51

1.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

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2.

I am that bread of life.

3.

Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

4.

This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

5.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Oh, that modern preachers would follow this example by Jesus of how to answer rampant unbelievers! Long ago, I came to see how foolish it was to argue point-by-point with unbelievers: today I might not answer at all, if I perceive their questions to be mischievous. They are not interested in truth; their constant arguments and demands are just games they play, and many Christians fall for it, wasting much valuable time and effort. Jesus, however, had a different approach, one that we should all observe and practice – He was never deflected by their sinful questions, and never allowed unbelievers to rule the conversation, but kept pressing what HE wanted them to know! Knowing the sin lurking in their souls, Jesus repeated His claim: ***“He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life.”***

At a time in history when even ‘Christians’ openly declare the virtues of false gods and religions, this central truth must be pushed onto the world stage. The God of scripture, NOT the mythical ‘god’ of Islam, is the ONLY God. There are no other gods before Him... even if counter-claims are made at the end of a gun! (Be warned by Exodus 20:3, 23:13 and similar texts. Note how we should not even talk about these false gods! Every time we have ‘dialogue’ with believers of false gods, we raise the falsity to equality with truth!).

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Jesus speaks plainly – believe in Him and you get eternal life. Therefore the opposite (unbelief) leads to eternal damnation. Only Jesus can give eternal life, because He IS “that bread of life”. There is no other route to God and Heaven! Do not even discuss other ‘possibilities’ or enter into fruitless (and godless) discussions about other religions.

Jesus then compared His route to life with the manna from God in the desert. The manna was indeed sent from God, and though it was made without reference to earthly laws, it did not give eternal life, but only earthly life. (This reflects the fact that God, in His mercy, allows all people, saved or not, to enjoy things given by the Creator – sun, rain, food, etc., but these gifts do not give salvation).

Emphasising this, Jesus said that those who saw and ate the manna all those years ago, are now dead. The earthly food they were given did not stop them dying. (Which questions the work of so many missions that give food and clothing etc., to unbelievers, whether in the West or Africa etc. What is the point if their spirits are dead? And why use superficial works as a ‘cover’ for preaching?). On the other hand, as the “living bread” (continuing to give life though eaten), He could give men who ate of Him eternal life. Jesus foretold of His death by saying that this heavenly bread is His own flesh, which would be sacrificed for the “life of this world”. Only His substitutionary death could do this. (Note: His death only gave eternal life to those who are elect and saved).

Verses 52-58

1.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

2.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

3.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

4.

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For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

5.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

6.

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

7.

This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

Like all who do not believe, the Pharisees and other Jews argued amongst themselves – ‘HOW could this man possibly give us His flesh to eat?’ (It is interesting that Roman Catholicism later revived this question and made it a tenet of their false religion). As we have seen thus far, the followers of Jesus (some for what He could do for them and others, like the Pharisees, who only wanted proof to kill him by), vacillated between knowing Who He was and disbelieving Him!

Anyone with an open mind and eyes saw what Jesus was capable of! Yet, they demanded proof of Who He was! When He told them only He could give them eternal life, they rejected it. When He said He was the bread of life and that they had to eat His flesh to obtain eternal life, their first question SHOULD have been: “But, how do we do that?” Instead, they turned on Him and did not bother to ask. Of course, ‘eating’ His flesh was a symbol for accepting His sacrifice and believing Him; ‘drinking’ His blood is the same analogy.

Hearing their unbelief, Jesus again hit them between the eyes with truth. He warned them that UNLESS they ate His flesh and drank His blood, they had no life; that is, eternal life. Some might say that He was speaking of the ‘Son of Man’ and not of Himself. This would be an objection based on sheer ignorance, for Jesus had already told them bluntly Who He was, and that He was the ‘Son of Man’! With each statement, Jesus was driving home the truth and the facts of spiritual life. He gave them no quarter.

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Whoever ate His flesh and drank His blood dwells in Him and He in them. There was no room for manoeuvre and debate! Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to live in all who are saved. And only those given to Jesus by the Father through election would be saved. The argument was very tight and did not tolerate error or heresy, or 'personal interpretation' (a door often opened by Satan to deceive).

Jesus further repeated other facts – the Father sent Him to earth to give this eternal life; Jesus acted only upon the instructions of the Father; the Father elected who would be saved; therefore, those who 'eat' Him (believe) do so by command of the Father and shall live (be saved). This is exquisite heavenly logic and truth.

Jesus underlined that HE was the Son and HE was the only route to salvation and Heaven (and so, to God). The manna from Heaven in the days of Moses only fed earthly life and the people who ate it eventually died. But, those who eat Him "shall live for ever". The truth could not have been more plain!

Verses 59-64

1.

These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

2.

Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

3.

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

4.

What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

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5.

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

6.

But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

Jesus was in the synagogue at Capernaum when He spoke these words. He was allowed to speak, and yet His words were denied by the Pharisees. The same sad attitude is found throughout so-called Christendom, in many churches, where unbelieving or heretical pastors have adopted the persona of the Pharisees.

It was not only the Pharisees and local Jews who did not understand. The disciples, too, were perplexed by what Jesus said. It seems that the Samaritan woman at the well understood what Jesus' followers did not. They thought it was a "hard saying", difficult to understand. Like the Pharisees they did not ask the simple question, seeking explanation from Jesus. If you had not seen a car before, and was told that you needed petrol to run it... what would be your first question? Yes, that is right: "What is petrol? Where can I get it from?"

Jesus perceived what the disciples were saying amongst themselves, and asked them if His statements offended them. He used the word 'offend', *skandalizō*. It is the base of the English word, scandal. Jesus was asking if what He said was a stumbling block to their understanding (from *skandalon*), perhaps even enough to cause them to leave Him. It can also mean to be indignant or displeased. By this He meant that they might have found what He said so contrary to what the Pharisees taught, they would rebel against Him.

Today, in my ministry, I come across this reaction many times. What I am saying (which is what God says) is so against what people are being taught in their churches, in whole or in part! I know this is so, not only because they tell me with great anger, but because I was once part of this worldwide deception. False teaching is rife, and so Christians are saved, but then subjected to immense pressures and lies from their pastors and preachers. So much so, they feel unable

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to listen to truth, let alone consider it. Instead, they prefer their personal interpretations to God's unvarnished truth, which interprets itself.

Jesus asked His disciples a question which, when paraphrased, might be: "Will you believe me when you see me ascend into Heaven?" The words "what and if" tell us that Jesus was speaking of a definite planned action in the future. The very ones who left Him would see Him ascend!

He went on to tell them that only the Spirit can make them come alive spiritually (verse 63). The flesh (the human frame and existence) has no benefits concerning eternal life and does not contribute to salvation. What Jesus was giving them was the word of eternal life, using words that were Spirit.

But, He said, some of the disciples refused to believe this. He always knew they did not believe, and even knew who would betray Him, prophesying the sin of Judas Iscariot. Jesus never pulled His punches and never wavered in His stand.

Verses 65-71

1.

And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

2.

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

3.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

4.

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

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5.

And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

6.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

7.

He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

Verse 65 is a very clear emphasis on the fact that only God, through election, can cause a man to come to Jesus for eternal life. Even today, many who claim to be believers do not understand or accept this truth. Are they believers? I do not think so. One has to be elect before he can be saved. This is a definite attack on the Pharisaical teachings based on works. And with this ringing in their ears, many who pretended to be Jesus' disciples left Him. The novelty had worn off!

It does not take much for pseudo-believers to walk away from 'the Church'. Much is made of youngsters and adults 'leaving the Church'. This is bunkum! No man or woman can ever 'leave the Church'! Once saved, always saved! Those who leave do so because they never believed to begin with. Simple as that. It is what comes of allowing unbelievers to put down roots in local churches, without being spiritually challenged. In our own church we interview those who wish to attend regularly. This is done for two reasons: they know what we teach and they know what we will not tolerate. Unbelievers may attend, but they will be told they are unbelievers. This is very important, otherwise the longer they stay the more they might convince themselves and others that they are 'Christians'. In reality they may die the next moment and all their attendances will be for nothing.

When the fake believers walked away from Jesus, He turned to the men who were His apostles and asked if they, too, would walk away. Peter gave a succinct answer: 'Lord, who else can we go to, when only You have the words of eternal life?' Many today move on to fake churches and leaders, thinking they teach the same as scripture. By being undiscerning they fall into a trap

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that might bind them for all their lives. But, they will answer for their heresy on Judgment Day.

Peter went beyond that statement by saying that the apostles believed that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, the Lord God. To which Jesus uttered what was, to them, a deep mystery. He said though He had chosen the twelve to be His closest disciples, one of them was a “devil”, *diabolos*

. This was a very interesting word for Jesus to use of Judas, but it does not mean Judas was an actual devil cast out of Heaven with Lucifer. It means that Judas took the side of Satan and so was hardly distinguished from a devil. He was to be the false accuser of Jesus.

For me, this answers the question, often asked, as to whether or not Judas was saved. It is obvious that if Jesus referred to him as a devil, he could not also have been saved. It is likely that Judas himself did not realise at that time that he was the one who would betray Him. Even within modern churches, there are many who are devils, in the sense that they preach heresies and lies, and thus do the work of Satan in defying the Lord.

Be very sure that you are not guilty of being a devil. Read and accept what God says in His word and nothing that is contrary. Do not listen to false preachers and pastors who give their own ‘personal interpretations’ of scripture.

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