

## John 6:60-71 - Jesus Alone Has the Words of Eternal Life

-- Read the passage and pray --

### *Intro and Groundwork*

1. "Calvinism and Arminianism, divine sovereignty and human responsibility - both are true."
  - a. Clarify what I meant by this last week, and that I was referring to divine sovereignty and human responsibility, which are both true. Calvinism and Arminianism cannot BOTH be true.
  - b. Also address "isms" and how they can be helpful
    - i. Sunday school at Grace - some were "anti-isms"
  - c. Examples of "isms"
    - i. Politics - conservatism, liberalism
    - ii. Religion - Buddhism, Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism
    - iii. Philosophy - hedonism (Christian hedonism), stoicism
    - iv. Race and nationality - anti-semitism, Americanism
    - v. Theology
      1. The Christian life: legalism, libertarianism
      2. God: polytheism, monotheism, trinitarianism
      3. Salvation: Arminianism, Pelagianism, Open Theism, Calvinism (also known as Augustinianism), Hyper-Calvinism
        - a. A spectrum
        - b. Some people (Christians) claim that they are neither Calvinists or Arminians; however, everyone is somewhere on that spectrum of belief and understanding
  - d. Worldview: how we see and think about the world, ourselves, God, Scripture
    - i. Each of us started assembling our worldview, our "isms," from the time we were born
2. Show how this passage is part three in John 6.
3. Remember, "Believe, and you have eaten."

## *Observation and Exposition*

### 6:60-65 - Jesus responds to the disciples (not the twelve)

#### **The disciples grumble (v. 60)**

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"

1. There are disciples, and there are true disciples. There are believers, and there are true believers.
  - a. See John 2:23-25
  - b. What is the deciding factor? Perseverance to the end (see Hebrews)
2. "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"
  - a. Referring to what??
  - b. The paragraph just before this? Eating Jesus' flesh and drinking Jesus' blood?
    - i. This would have been an especially repulsive metaphor to Jews - cannibalism, and blood (the Law).
  - c. "I am the bread of life?"
  - d. Jesus saying essentially that he was greater than Moses?
  - e. "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him?"
    - i. This one is still true today. Many Christians reject the idea that they cannot believe in Jesus on their own initiative.
    - ii. My own example in the Army.

#### **Jesus responds (vv. 61-65)**

<sup>61</sup> But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? <sup>62</sup> Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?"

1. "knowing in himself" - omniscience!
  - a. There is nothing that Jesus does not know, contrary to Open Theism.
  - b. He knows what each of you are thinking at this very moment, and every other moment in your life.

2. "Do you take offense at this?"
  - a. He wasn't asking because he didn't know. He was letting them know that he knew what they were thinking and saying amongst themselves.
3. "Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?"
  - a. "What if" could go in several directions
    - i. Belief
    - ii. Further repulsed
  - b. What does he mean by "ascending to where he was before?"
    - i. Luke 24:50-53
      1. Possibly they might be offended as the Jews were in Acts 7:54-60 when Stephen saw Jesus at God's right hand.
    - ii. John 3:13-14 - there was an idea at that time that some religious leaders had actually ascended to heaven
      1. Jesus' path to glory, his ascension to where he was before, was by or through the cross, which was a very offensive idea to Jews, and ridiculous to Gentiles.
      2. 1 Corinthians 1:22-24 - "For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."
  - c. So in other words Jesus is saying, you're offended by what I said? Then what will you do when you see me nailed to a Roman cross?

<sup>63</sup> It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

1. Back up - why is life needed? Are we not alive already?
  - a. No, all of humanity is spiritually dead. Every single person, except Jesus.
  - b. Genesis 2:15-17; 3:17-19
    - i. Doctrines of original sin, and total depravity
  - c. The Bible paints a dismal, hopeless picture of the state of humanity.
    - i. Ephesians 2:1-3
    - ii. Titus 3:3
    - iii. Romans 3:9-26
2. But thankfully, in the midst of this darkness and spiritual death, "the Spirit...gives life."
  - a. The Spirit in the OT is a giver of life - Genesis 1:2; Ezekiel 37:1-14

- b. Titus 3:4-7
  - c. John 1:12-13; 3:5-8
- 3. What is “flesh” in verse 63 referring to - “the flesh is no help at all?”
  - a. Jesus himself in 6:50-57?
  - b. Our flesh, as in 1:13 and 3:6? (Probably)
- 4. “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”
  - a. Jesus’ words are from God the Father, who gives life through his Spirit, and thus his words are life-giving...for all who believe.
    - i. See John 5:24, 39-40, 46-47
    - ii. And Jesus is the Word - 1:1, 14
    - iii. And Jesus is the final Word
      - 1. Hebrews 1:1-2 - “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son....”
  - b. The Spirit gives life through Jesus’ words - which are the gospel, the message that we still have today, and which still gives life today.
    - i. Romans 1:16 - “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”
  - c. The Spirit and the Word work together, never apart from one another.
    - i. To give the first spark of spiritual, eternal life.
    - ii. And to sustain that spiritual life, and to sanctify throughout the remainder of physical life.
    - iii. This is why here at Sojourn we emphasize Scripture - in reading, praying, singing, teaching, and preaching - and we pray and trust that the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, will do his life-giving work through the Word.

<sup>64</sup> But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) <sup>65</sup> And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

- 1. Notice again Jesus’ omniscience RE who did not believe and who would betray him.
- 2. Even with Jesus’ words, which are spirit and life, and the Holy Spirit, who gives life, some still do not believe. Why?

- a. Because belief (and its parallel idea, coming to Jesus) must be granted by God the Father.
  - b. Jesus is referring here to 6:36-40, 44
  - c. See how Paul explains this in Ephesians 2:8-10
- 3. Notice the Trinity at work in salvation, as explained here in Jesus' words.
  - a. The Father gives all who will believe to the Son
    - i. He (the Father) has chosen and predestined them
      - 1. Ephesians 1:4-5
      - 2. This is the doctrine of Unconditional Election, completely undeserved by anyone, no matter who they are.
    - ii. He draws them - what we call Irresistible Grace - through the words of Jesus and the words about Jesus, the gospel message.
  - b. The Son offers himself as a sacrifice for sins.
    - i. In a general sense, as in John 1:29 - "The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'"
    - ii. And in a specific sense, as in John 6:37 - "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."
      - 1. Ephesians 5:25-27
      - 2. This is the doctrine of Limited Atonement
  - c. The Spirit gives life - the doctrine of Regeneration, or New Birth
    - i. Again, this happens through the message of the gospel; never apart from it.

### 6:66-71 - Jesus now turns to the twelve

#### **This is too much to swallow, and many disciples leave (v. 66)**

<sup>66</sup> After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

#### **But what about the twelve? Will they leave also? (v. 67)**

<sup>67</sup> So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"

- 1. This is the first mention of the twelve in John's Gospel.

2. John doesn't explain who they are or what he means by "the twelve." Does he assume some prior knowledge of the other Gospels, the Synoptics?
3. Jesus' question is constructed in such a way as to expect a negative answer.
  - a. Jesus is not having a pity party here, he knows they will not leave him, because he has chosen them.

### **Simon Peter answers for them all (vv. 68-69)**

<sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, <sup>69</sup> and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

1. "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life..."
  - a. This is a great answer - there is no other option that leads to eternal life. None.
    - i. But the world thinks there is - for example, in the book "Once We Were Brothers"
  - b. And Jesus is not hiding or hoarding these words of eternal life. He shares them, speaks them, for all to hear, and some will believe.
    - i. This is still true today - some will believe if and when they hear the words of eternal life, the gospel message, but we don't know who!
2. "and we have believed, and have come to know"
  - a. Belief - belief in Jesus, granted by the Father, made a reality by the Spirit
  - b. Come to know - further understanding, knowledge
    - i. Jordan's question this week - Is there a difference between knowing about God and knowing God
    - ii. Both are essential
      1. Here, in Peter's statement - propositional truth
      2. Experiential, personal knowledge, as in how we know another person
        - a. Hosea 6:3, 6 (page 754)
        - b. John 17:3 - "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."
3. "that you are the Holy One of God."
  - a. This is what they have come to know.
  - b. There is none other like Jesus!
    - i. He is the Messiah, and more.

- ii. He is Holy - sanctified (set apart by God)
  - 1. In one sense like all believers are set apart.
  - 2. But he is also wholly, entirely OTHER.

### **Jesus concludes the discussion (vv. 70-71)**

<sup>70</sup> Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” <sup>71</sup> He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

- 1. In his answer, Jesus clarifies that their belief and knowledge is not of their own volition or effort. He chose them.
  - a. And neither can we take credit for our belief in and knowledge of God as he has revealed himself in Jesus.
- 2. “And yet one of you is a devil.”
  - a. The word “devil” means opposer, or adversary.
  - b. And that’s what Judas was, and would turn out to be.
  - c. But behind Judas’s actions was the ultimate adversary, Satan, the Devil, who is behind every opposition to Jesus.
    - i. This is why Jesus said to Peter to “get behind me Satan” in Matthew 16:23
    - ii. And Judas was the embodiment of the ultimate opposition, betraying Jesus into the hands of the Jewish leadership and the Romans, who would nail him to a cross. But this was ultimately God’s design in his plan of salvation!
      - 1. Acts 4:27-28

### **Conclusion**

Will you, like many of Jesus’ “disciples,” decide Jesus’ words and message are too hard to swallow, to accept, and turn away to what will ultimately be your eternal destruction?

Or will you, like the twelve, acknowledge that Jesus alone has the words of eternal life, that eternal life is found in none other than Jesus, and will you continue to persevere in this life, by the power of the Holy Spirit, into the life to come, eternal life?