

3/2/25

Do You Misunderstand Jesus?

Jn. 6:41-71

The apostles have just returned from their mission and have told Jesus all they had done also that John had been beheaded by Herod.

So Jesus took them aside to rest for a while, but the crowds were following Jesus because they saw his signs which He performed on those who were diseased and Jesus had compassion on the multitudes because they were as sheep having no shepherd, so He began to teach them the Scriptures. Mk. 6:34; Jn. 6:2
 * The occasion is about two years into the ministry of Jesus and provides the setting for the fourth and fifth sign chosen by John to prove that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing people may have life in His name. Jn. 20:30-31

The fourth sign is the feeding of the 5,000 men in Galilee besides women and children with five barley loaves and two fishes, which pointed to the fact that He was God, and He alone was able to meet the needs of man, yet they only saw him as a prophet. Jn. 6:14
 * This miracle is recorded in all four gospels!

In their enthusiasm and contentment they sought to make him their King, but He would not receive allegiance just because He was able to provide their

physical needs, so He sent His disciple away to the other side towards Bethsaida and Capernaum before retreating to pray on the mountain.

The fifth sign is the walking on the water by Jesus in the Sea of Galilee, which was for the personal viewing of His disciple who were most likely wondering why He had not allowed the crowds to make Him King and perhaps even questioned His departing.

* Jesus demonstrated to them that He in fact was King of Kings and Lord of Lords who commanded nature!

Jesus has rebuked the crowds for following Him to Capernaum because they were only interested in the physical bread He has provided and also admonished them to labor not for the food that perishes but for the food that endure to everlasting life that is given by Jesus Himself by the authority of the Father who had sent Him. Jn. 6:26-27

The crowd asked Jesus what they should do in order to do the works of God? And Jesus told them in a very clear way, that the work of God was that they believe in Him whom God had sent. Jn. 6:29

* So they asked for a sign in order to validate what He had said, and they pointed to Moses who had given Manna, bread from heaven to their fathers.

The amazing thing is that Jesus had just fed over 20-40,000 people, if an equal number of women and two to four children are allowed.

* The Scriptures are clear that miracles do not make believers necessarily, but in fact cause it reveals people require more miracles to affirm the last one, trusting their sight instead of walking by faith.

The time is the Passover, multitudes are making their pilgrimage to Jerusalem according to the law. Jn. 6:4

The response of the people to the discourse of Jesus about being the bread that came down from heaven was to reject Jesus, which reveals three reasons why the people rejected Jesus. Jn. 6:41-71

- I. The Jews misunderstood the person of Jesus. vs. 41-51
 - II. The Jews misunderstood the purpose of Jesus. vs. 52-59
 - III. The Jew disciples misunderstood the promised Kingdom of Jesus. vs. 60-71
- I. The Jews misunderstood the person of Jesus. vs. 41-51**
- A. Jesus was rejected by the Jews for declaring He was from heaven. vs. 41
 - * “The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.”
 - 1. The Jews complained against Jesus. vs. 41a

- a. The word complained “gonguzo” means to grumble, mutter, murmur, to say anything against in a low tone.
 - 1) The word is used of the cooing of doves.
 - 2) The word is used of those who confer secretly together.
 - 3)) The word is used of those who discontentedly complain.
 - 4)) The imperfect tense indicates their talking to each other after Jesus had stoppled speaking!
 - b. The same word is used in the LXX for the wilderness murmuring. Ex. 15:24; Num. 14:2
 - c. The Jews had not changed from their fathers, who came out of Egypt or the Jews in Jerusalem that reject the words of Jesus about His relation to His Father. Jn. 5:18
 - d. The murmuring of people is not always distinct or clear, but it is evident and annoying to hear.
- 2. The claim of Jesus was that of deity. vs. 41b-c**
- a. Jesus said He was the bread which came down from heaven. vs. 33, 35a-b, 38a
 - b. Jesus was declaring His pre-existence from all eternity. Jn. 1:1
 - c. Jesus was declaring His eternal nature as God. Jn. 1:2; 6:32

d. Jesus was declaring His mission to impart life. Jn. 1:4; 6:33, 35, 40

B. Jesus had been perceived only as the son of Joseph by the Jews. vs. 42

* “And they said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”

1. The Galilean Jews were unable to reconcile the two truths, having witnessed or heard of his growing up in the Galilee.

* Like Nicodemus who said, “How can a man be born-again when he is old and enter his mother's womb again.” Jn. 3:4

a. They knew Jesus as the son of Joseph.

b. They knew the father and mother of Jesus.

c. They could not understand how Jesus could say He came Down from heaven.

2. The Galilean Jews never believed the virgin story about Mary.

a. They rejected the revelation of God prior to His birth by the angel Gabriel. Matt. 1:18-25; Lk. 1:26-38

b. They called Jesus an illegitimate son, “We are not born of fornication”. Jn. 8:41

c. They ultimately crucified Him because He made Himself out to be equal with God. Matt. 26:63-64

C. Jesus confronted them in their murmuring about Him. vs. 43-46

1. Jesus rebuked them for their murmuring and tells them to stop their grumbling, “Jesus therefore answered and said to them, “Do not murmur among yourselves.” vs. 43

* This is a present imperative command, literally to stop this muttering, grumbling complaint.

2. Jesus doesn’t even address what they were murmuring about, instead Jesus told them the reason why they had not come to Him, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.” vs. 44

a. The Father who sent Me is emphatic.

b. The fact that the Father has to draw a person does not exclude the flip side of man’s free will, the whosoever will’s”, human responsibility. Jn. 6:37, 39

* The drawing by the Father or Jesus is resistible, Jesus wept over Jerusalem pronouncing judgment over the nation, Jesus said, “But you were not willing”. Matt. 23:37

b. The doctrines of predestination and free-will or human responsibility are intended to bless the sinner for salvation, but tragically man has turned it into a divisive camp by interpreting them out of their complementing context.

- c. The consequences of not responding to repent at the drawing of the Father means Jesus will not raise them up in the last day to be with Him, only those who respond.
- 3. Jesus reminded them of the prophetic promise in the Scriptures, “It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.” vs. 45
 - a) The quote is from Isaiah, though others could be alluded to. “Is. 54:13”; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 4:2
 - b) The words “heard and learned” are two aorist participle with one article for both to indicate timeless, but qualitative to describe actual hearing and learning, the emphasis on “taught by God”. Lenski
- 4. Jesus revealed his unique person, “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.” vs. 46
 - a. Jesus is the only One who has seen the Father. Jn. 1:18
 - b. Jesus is the One sent by the Father, being God, the Jews were being taught by God!
 - * Jesus was sent “pempo” is mentioned 25 times in John’s gospel, 18 times “apostello”, a total of 43 times.

D. Jesus told them who He was. vs. 47-51

- 1. Jesus qualifies His proclamation about to be declared as very important and absolute truth by placing the the phrase “Most assuredly” at the beginning of the sentence, it is the word “amen”, pay attention, do not miss this! vs. 47a
- 2. Jesus told them He was the highest and supreme authority, needing to quote no person, “I say to you.” vs. 47b
- 3. Jesus told them He was the object of faith for everlasting life, “he who believes in Me has everlasting life.” vs. 47c
- 4. Jesus told them He was the giver and sustainer of spiritual life, “I am the bread of life.” vs. 48
 - * All these truths were important eternal truths by the highest and supreme authority of God, Jesus, the Son of God!
- 5. Jesus told them He was distinct and superior to the manna that only sustained physical life on earth, it did not impart spiritual eternal life, “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.” vs. 49
 - * The manna in verse 30-40, but notice Jesus said, “your fathers” not our fathers, not including himself with these Jews
- 6. Jesus told them again He was the living bread that came down from heaven by the Incarnation with the purpose of imparting eternal life to anyone who chooses to believe, partake and not perish eternally, but

live eternally with Jesus, “This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.” vs. 50-51a-c

- a. The phrase “I am” emphatic.
- b. The words “came down from heaven” is the aorist, declaring the historical fact.

7. Jesus told them He was the One who would give His life for the ransom of the sinful world, “and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” vs. 51d-e

- a. Through the Incarnation, the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. Jn. 1:29
- b. The propitiation for our sins, not only ours but the whole world. 1Jn. 2:2

Illustration

Some people are willing to except Jesus as a good man, a prophet or one of the ascended masters of the ages, like New Agers and philosophes, but that is to misunderstand His person.

Application

1. People will murmur about you because of the things you say about there being an absolute constant object right and wrong, heaven and hell and the judgment of all men and women by Jesus Christ one

day, but you are in good company, they did it to the prophets and Jesus first.

* Jesus said to His disciples that He must suffer many things, and be rejected of that generation. Lk. 17:25

2. People will not believe your new birth by the Holy Spirit and the fact that you are a new creature having had all of your sins forgiven, but you are once again in good company, they did not believe Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

* The things of God are not received by the natural man and are considered foolish. 1Cor. 2:14

3. People should hear from you and I the plan of salvation, the way of salvation and the consequences of rejecting salvation.

* We are to be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks a reason for the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. 1Pet. 3:15

The Jews misunderstood the person of Jesus!

II. The Jews misunderstood the purpose of Jesus. vs. 52-59

A. Jesus had offended the Jews by His teaching by taking Him literally rather than spiritually, pre-figured by the Passover feast they were about to attend. vs. 52

- 1. The Jews quarreled among themselves because of His words, “The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves.” vs. 52a

- a. The word quarreled “machomai” means to argue, strive or fight and is used of here of those who engage in a war of words, wrangle, dispute.
- b. The word is used of armed combatants, or those who engage in a hand to hand struggle. Ja. 4:2
- c. The word is used of those who contend at law for property and privileges. Acts 7:26
 - 1) Like the Samaritan woman who said, “How is it that You being a Jew ask a drink of me, a Samaritan woman?” and later, “Sir You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where then do You get this living water?”
 - 2) Like Nicodemus who said, “How can a man be born again when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” Jn. 3:4
- 2. The Jews questioned how it was possible for Jesus to give them His flesh to eat, “saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” vs. 52b-c
 - a. The Jews saw Jesus as a mere man, His mother Mary had been pregnant before the marriage.
 - b. The Jews were also taking Jesus literally to eat His human body.
 - b. The Jews knew the law prohibited any form of human sacrifice for it was

murder and the drinking of blood. Gen. 9:5-6; Lev. 17:11-12

- B. Jesus reaffirmed what He has stated and revealed He came to reveal man was spiritually dead without Him. vs. 53-56
 - 1. The remedy of going from having no spiritual life to having spiritual life was to partake of Jesus, “Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.” vs. 53
 - a. Again Jesus qualifies the importance of His proclamation as authoritative by the phrase “most assuredly I say to you.”
 - b. The title “Son of Man” was a Messianic title, he revealed plainly and clearly that He was their Messiah.
 - c. Their refusal to believe and partake of His flesh and blood, His atoning sacrifice and resurrection meant they were spiritually dead.
 - * The Scriptures say that if a person is living in pleasure, she or he is dead while they are living. 1Tim. 5:6
 - 2. The result benefit is two-fold, “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” vs. 54
 - a. The person has eternal life here and now, having repented and saved.

- b. The person will be raised in the resurrection in the last day, at the rapture. 1Cor. 15:51-54; 1Thess. 4:16-17
- 3. The relationship is one of mutual commitment and abiding. vs. 55-56
 - * “For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.”
 - a. This text is not speaking about the Lord’s Supper, but certainly Jesus and Paul later taught the elements of His body and blood to represent the communion. Jn. 13; 1Cor. 11:24-25
 - b. The person who indeed “alethos”, truly, in reality believes and repents will be one with God, being born again, both abiding as one.
- C. Jesus came to give eternal life to man. vs. 57-58
 - 1. The living Father sent Him, “As the living Father sent Me.” vs. 57a
 - a. Jesus was the living bread. vs. 35a-b, 48, 51a
 - b. The word sent “apostello” we saiddappears 18 times in John, 25 times sent “pempo”, a total of 43 times.
 - 2. The Son lives because of the Father, “and I live because of the Father.” vs. 57b
 - 3. The person who is nourished by Jesus being born again will live because of Jesus is our

- mediator, “so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.” vs. 57c
- 4. The bread from heaven, Jesus, is superior to the Manna of the wilderness for the Manna sustained pysical life, but Jesus imparted spiritual eternal life, “This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.” vs. 58
 - * Jesus said to Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman the same things by the metaphor of “water and of the Spirit” and “living water”.
- 5. The words Jesus spoke took place in the synagogue at Capernaum, “These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.” vs. 59

Illustration

Often children misunderstand the purpose of parents and think that parents go out of their way to make their life difficult and miserable, instead of seeing they are trying to keep them from making serious mistakes and at times destroying their lives.

Application

- 1. The purposes behind the sayings of Jesus are so often misunderstood by people to mean a limitation on a person to enjoy and experience life, while they are for that very purpose. Jn. 10:10

* “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

2. The purpose behind the declaration of the Bible that man is dead in his trespass and sins is not that he be condemned or merely feel bad about himself, but that he or she would run to Jesus to repent of their sins and receive eternal life and abide forever. Jn. 3:17

* “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

3. The purpose behind the insistence that Jesus is the source of this eternal life is that He is and if anyone does not come to Him and through Him before they die, they will perish in their sins. Jn. 3:36; 14:6

- a. “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
- b. “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Jn. 14:6

The Jews misunderstood the purpose of Jesus!

III. The Jew disciples misunderstood the promised Kingdom of Jesus. vs. 60-71

- A. The company of disciples were expecting a physical Kingdom. vs. 60-63

1. Many of His disciples when they heard the teaching declared it was a difficult thing to except, “Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?” vs. 60
* Attempting to comprehend intellectually!
2. Jesus knowing their murmuring hearts exposed their being stumbled, “When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you?” vs. 61
 - a. The word complained “gonguzo” means to grumble, mutter, grumble, murmur, to say anything against in a low tone. vs. 41
 - b. The word offend “skandalizo” comes from a stick to hold a trap and bait to trap an animal, literally does this entrap you.
3. Jesus revealed His crowning as king will be in heaven not earth, “What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?” vs. 62
 - a. The title “Son of Man” for the third time identifies Himself as the Messiah that had come, arrived and was present before them. vs. 27, 53, 62
 - b. The word should “theoreo” is better translated “shall” in the present active and means to be a spectator, to behold, we get the word theatre from it.
 - c. Jesus knew He would ascend to heaven again, the apostles saw it. Acts 1:9

4. Jesus declared that the nature and affects of the Kingdom is spiritual not physical, “It is the spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.” vs. 63
 - a. The spirit refers to the spiritual nature of His words, not the Holy Spirit.
* That was why Nicodemus could not understand the new birth. Jn. 3:3-5
 - b. The words of Jesus are spritual and deal with making our spirits alive, regenerated and making us children of God.
- B.** The commentary of Jesus on the many disciples and His Kingdom is important. vs. 64-66
1. Jesus declared that some of them did not believe what He was saying, “But there are some of you who do not believe.” vs. 64a
 2. Jesus knew from the beginning the unbelievers, “For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.” vs. 64b-c
 - a. Those who did not believe at that time. vs. 64b; 2:24-25
 - b. The one who would betray Him, Judas. vs. 64c
 3. Jesus said that the reason they did not believe was due to the fact that it had not been granted by His father, “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.” vs. 65
- a. Not by Predestination, but the context is by not believng in who Jesus is and the Father and Jesus know who they are.
 - b. We are presestined according to the foreknowledge of God, foreknowledge means knowledge before hand, not predestination or determination.
 - c. Once again the “Whosoever will’s”, can not be excluded at the expense of predestination, if they are willing to believe in His Son Jesus! Jn. 3:16
4. The many Galilian disciples from that time turn away from Jesus, “From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.” vs. 66
* It is a choice of the will, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Lk. 9:62
- C.** The company of the twelve had embraced the Kingdom, but one. vs. 67-71
1. Jesus asked His twelve disciples if they also wanted to go back?, “Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” vs. 67
 2. Jesus is answered by Peter as the spokesman for the group. vs. 68-69

- a. Peter declared that Jesus was their only hope, “But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go?” vs. 68a-c
 - b. Peter declared that Jesus alone possessed the words of eternal life as He proclaimed, “You have the words of eternal life.” vs. 68c
 - c. Peter declared that they had come to this settled conclusion in the past and continued at the present, “Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” vs. 69
3. Jesus declared He chose the twelve. vs. 70-71
- a. The revelation, “Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve?” vs. 70a-b
 - 1) This is a rhetorical question with only one correct answer, yes!
 - 2) The word choose “eklegomai” means to pick out or choose for oneself, the context is to be His apostles, not predestination to salvation, as Calvinist will always distort the Scriptures in John’s gospel. vs. 70a
 - b. The distinction, “and one of you is a devil.” vs. 70b
 - 1) The word devil “diabolos” means a slanderer, false accuser, speaking of Judas. vs. 70b

- 2) The tense is the present indicative, Judas was one of the 12 apostle who Judas cast out demons and healed some miraculously, as they were sent by Jesus two by two. Lk. 6:10-13
- c. The clarification, “He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.” vs. 71a

Illustration

I know a young woman bitter against God because she misunderstood His Kingdom, thinking it would promise no difficulties or tragic things in life, and because she had a disabled child born to her and because her husband left her for another woman, she walked away from Him.

Application

1. Are your expectations of Jesus solely on the physical level, to provide food, clothing and the comforts of life, then you have not changed from your perspective before you came to Jesus. Matt. 6:25-34
 * “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his

stature? “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

2. Are you offended often at the words and teaching of Jesus, then maybe you have not really believed in Him! Matt. 11:6

* “And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

3. Are you going to walk away from Jesus like the crowds who followed Jesus only as long as He meet your physical needs or remain with Him as He reveals to you the nature of His person, purpose and promised Kingdom like the eleven?

* The story began with multitudes following as they were fed and the story ends with only twelve, soon it would be eleven!

The Jew disciples misunderstood the promised Kingdom of Jesus!

Conclusion

The Galilean Jews rejected Jesus for three reasons.

- I.** The Jews misunderstood the person of Jesus!
- II.** The Jews misunderstood the purpose of Jesus!
- III.** The Jew disciples misunderstood the promised Kingdom of Jesus!