

W D J S
Seeing Red
John 6

I grew up learning about Jesus. My mother taught me about Jesus. I went to church several times a week to learn about Jesus and the life that he promised those who would follow him. I sang the songs that many of you sang in your childhood. “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so!” “Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight.” I was taught that he healed the sick and protected the poor. He honored women. He gave time and attention to children. When he was presented to kids in this way, no child in his right mind could fail to love Jesus. **“But the times, they is a changin’!”** The people that have been born since my generation in the U.S. have a vastly different view of Jesus. Many did not grow up in church being taught about Jesus. Many do not accept the Bible as authoritative, or even as TRUE. They don’t feel a need to view Jesus through some special lens. They may like some of what they HEAR about Jesus, but they seldom hear the full truth about who Jesus is and what Jesus actually taught! Several years ago, someone came up with the idea to make bracelets inscribed with the letters, WWJD. Remember what that meant? **(What Would Jesus Do?)** This was a good idea, but driven solely by PERSONAL OPINION, it could be used to support anything one wanted to believe about Jesus. This is not new. People have been using Jesus to support their own agendas for centuries. **[READ [Who Is This Man? – P. 17-18, Ortberg](#)]**

Philip Yancey stated that there are over 1,500 books a year written about Jesus. (No one else even comes close to that!) Yet, if you were to read all of those books, you would no doubt get a widely divergent – even a violently contradictory – view of whom he really is! Some present him as simply a benevolent figure that taught people to be NICE. [Mr. Roger’s Jesus] Others present him as a fiery fundamentalist who hated sin and sinners. [Westborough “Baptists” carrying signs stating, “God hates homos!”] Still others portray him as a PROPHET OF PEACE who approves of anything done for the sake of and in the name of LOVE. [John Lennon Jesus – **“All you need is love.”**] [Elton John said that Jesus would approve of gay marriage, because Jesus was all about love.] **So, who is right, and how can you know?**

We need a FILTER so we can meet the REAL Jesus. Thankfully, we have one. That filter is the written account of the WORKS and WORDS of JESUS. We cannot know what Jesus WOULD do if we do not take into account what Jesus DID DO and what Jesus HAS SAID. I like the fact that the words of Jesus in the Gospels are all written in RED. When you see red in the Gospels, you are seeing the words of Christ. But that will not make the task of learning about Jesus EASY. He is anything but an easy study. In fact, a thorough study of his teachings may just have you not only READING red, but SEEING RED as well! You see, Jesus said many controversial, unpopular, and confusing things. **Now, his words never contradicted his actions, so we must refuse to take his words out of context or remove them from the full and complete volume of his teachings.** Remember, the same Jesus who told us to “turn the other cheek,”

also gave a good whipping to crooked salesmen in the temple, and later told his disciples to “sell their cloaks and buy a sword.” Thus, we enter the daunting task of truly LEARNING about JESUS by studying and meditating on his words and works. Of course, we are not going to study EVERYTHING that Jesus said, but we will look at several specific teachings that are unique to him: His absolute claims about himself, marriage, divorce, and singleness, judging others, money, sex, and the Holy Spirit, among other things. [I would like to know which topics that Jesus addressed that YOU would like to hear. You can just write them on the bulletin and place them in the offering box if you like.](#)

I want to begin this series by spending our time in one single chapter of the Gospel of John. It is a very significant chapter in light of its content, but it also demonstrates the massive conflicts that seemed to swirl around Jesus during his ministry on this earth. It may even parallel some of the joys and frustrations that YOU have felt in your relationship with Jesus. [If you do NOT have a connection with the Son of God, then this is a series that will allow you to get a good, close look at the most amazing man who ever walked the face of this earth.](#)

***Great Resource: Harmony of the Gospels**

*Favorite books about Jesus:

The Jesus I Never Knew – Philip Yancey

Who Is This Man? – John Ortberg

Set up John 6: [\[Concurrent with Matthew 14, Mark 6, and Luke 9\]](#)

*This was about 2 years into his ministry and 1 year from his death.

*This was at the very HEIGHT of his popularity.

*There was a frenzy of HOPE in expectation of the Promised Messiah

*John the Baptist had been beheaded a few months before this.

*Many of his followers then turned exclusively to Jesus.

*This was just before the Passover Feast. **(Vs. 4)**

-What was on their minds?

DELIVERANCE (from Rome) and BLOODY SACRIFICES

FOOD [Think Thanksgiving]!

-The Food was specific: Roasted Lamb, Bread, and Wine!

The Feeding of the 5,000+ (John 6:1-13)

John 6:14-15 NIV

[14 After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.](#)

*The people wanted him to become their king and deliver them from Rome.

*Jesus had something much BIGGER in mind for Jews AND everyone else!

*Because of this, Jesus TURNED AWAY from the crowd. [\[No election posters!\]](#)

One of the first things that you will face when you meet Jesus in the Gospels and begin to see what he is actually capable of: FRUSTRATION!

You will be tempted to get frustrated with Christ when he refuses to cooperate with your desires and demands.

This is why so many either do not choose to follow Christ, or choose to walk away from him after a short period of interest. We can think of millions of ways that we think he OUGHT to act on our behalf and in our world. [Insurance commercial] But he is not a “Genie Jesus” who exists to fulfill our every wish. He is the Son of God who came to do the sovereign will of his Father. **(John 6:38)**

*His will always involves our TRANSFORMATION! [Thank God!]

*This principle holds true for us even AFTER we put our faith in Jesus.

-Christ constantly trains his followers to trust him.

Jesus walks on water: John 6:16-19 NIV

16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, 17 where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. 18 A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. 19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened.

*Jesus COMMANDED them to go across the lake without him. [Mark 6]

-Jesus watched them as they rowed against the wind! **[Mark 6:45]**

*Have you ever done something that Jesus commanded only to face huge adversity?

-Why doesn't he DO something to fix it? **[Pushing the boat at Heber!]**

-Parents who are praying for their kids; people who need healing.

-What we are facing at CHC as we obey our call to “go into all the world:”

-We have been “straining at the oars” for many years now! We will not quit!

*Jesus waited nearly 9 HOURS before he went to them on the water! [4th Watch]

-He found these men faithfully straining at the oars!

*His PRESENCE solved their problem almost immediately! **[John 6:20-21]**

-He was doing a work IN THEM before he did a work FOR THEM!

*In this next section of Scripture, we see one of the main things that set Jesus apart from all other people: **His claims about himself**. He was like no other prophet or leader. Prophets like Moses and Elijah and Isaiah all proclaimed messages FROM God. However, Jesus HUMBLY presented HIMSELF as the MESSAGE sent from God for the salvation of mankind. His claims were based on whom he IS and on what he came to DO! **[I AM statements]** C.S. Lewis said that these claims made him out to be a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord! He gave us no other option!”

*The crowds then went across the lake to FIND Jesus. [Point of the entire passage.]

The Bread of Life - John 6:26-29 NIV

26 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life,

which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." 28 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" 29 Jesus answered, "**The work of God is this:** to believe in the one he has sent."

*This was a message of GRACE, not works! No religious performances necessary!

*At this point, they then asked for another free meal! **John 6:30-31**
30 So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may **see it and believe you?** What will you do? 31 Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

-Let us see another miracle so that we can believe! [Why did they need another?]

*Miracles NEVER create faith; they only encourage faith.

-Jesus made it clear that they do not need a miracle; they needed GOD!

-The Gospel: Forgiveness and Reconciliation with God!

*More STUFF never truly SATISFIES the human heart! [Suicide rates in U.S.]

*More GOOD WORKS do not solve world problems. [Well water and the Gospel]

-America is headed toward Socialism. Think that will fix everything?

Jesus does not teach us to see so we can believe, but he calls us to believe in him so that we can see!

*Jesus invites us into a PERSONAL, FAITH-BASED RELATIONSHIP with God.

-His words to Martha and Mary: "If you believe, you will see . . ."

-His miracles were not meant to make us believe, but to reveal his nature.

John 6:33-35 NIV

33 For the bread of God is HE that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 "Sir," they said, "**always** give us this bread." 35 Then Jesus declared, "I AM the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will **never** go hungry, and whoever believes in me will **never** be thirsty.

*Does Jesus have to KEEP ON doing miracles to keep you satisfied? [Vs. Friendship]

-Religion is either a "dog and pony show" for US or for God!

-Instead, Christ offered HIMSELF to us! Come, believe, and be filled!

*Do Christ's claims challenge your limited knowledge? **John 6:41-43 NIV**

41 At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven?'" 43 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered.

-They did not realize that he was VIRGIN BORN. [Our ADVANTAGE]

-What causes YOU to doubt his origins? [Myths/Philosophies/Science?]

-Jesus does not back down. This is a matter of essential FAITH!

John 6:51-55, 60-61 NIV

51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of **the world.**"
 52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a **hard teaching.** Who can accept it?" 61 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this **offend** you?"

*This was the last straw! His words here were disgusting and offensive to everyone who was listening. [Imagine if I told you to eat my flesh and drink my blood!]

-Offend=To Scandalize, to cause to STUMBLE

*He made himself FULLY AVAILABLE to the WORLD, not just to JEWS! [Scandal!]

-We ALL do this! White make him white, blacks make him black, etc.

*We know that he was referring to his coming death. [Another scandal!]

-Remember, it was PASSOVER time. He was making them THINK!

*Even the 12 Disciples did not know this! They had to believe then see!

-They could not even understand when he told them plainly about his death.

-They would not experience the Lord's Supper until months later!

-His words were SPIRITUAL TRUTHS that addressed our deepest needs!

*Bread=great picture: Bread must be broken to benefit us.

*This caused MANY to WALK AWAY from him. (Vs. 66)

-How do you think this affected Jesus?

*He knew the ones that did not believe in him (Vs. 64)

*Yet, he still WEPT over the unbelief of the Jews at their final rejection!

-Remember, he ALLOWED them to walk away! [No forced confessions]

*He then asked the 12 a HUGE question. "You don't want to leave too, do you?"

-What could cause YOU to give up and walk away?

*The failure of others?

*Broken or lost relationships?

*The apparent ABSENCE of God during times of difficulty?

*Confusion in your own heart? [Has Jesus "lost it?"]

Simon Peter's response was priceless! **John 6:68-69 NIV**

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

*What SUSTAINED these followers of Jesus?

-Where else could they go? Jesus alone promised eternal (abundant) life!

-They had come to BELIEVE and KNOW that Jesus was THE Holy One of God.

So, here is the question: **Do you believe that Jesus is the Holy One of God and that he alone has the words of eternal life?**

-If not, then where else will you go? [Better make up your mind!]

-Jesus makes it clear that the TENSION OF FAITH will be a lifelong reality.

You will NOT understand all that he allows to happen, but you must choose to keep on believing. You will have times that you will have to say, "Jesus, I do not know what you mean by what you just said, and I don't know why you are doing (or NOT doing) what you are doing, but I KNOW YOU and I believe in who you are. You have spoken truth that no one else ever spoke. You have satisfied my soul like no one and nothing else! You died for me and you rose again, so I am standing with you!" That is RELATIONSHIP! You see, you will either STUMBLE over Jesus, or you will STAND with him in his GLORY! Those who don't believe will NEVER see his glory!

J.D. Greear wrote, "**Many people can't believe in Jesus because they've never recognized they were made for this glory or known that they are missing it. They are so fixated on quick fixes, physical bread, that they've never understood what they are missing—God, and that the only way He could be restored to them was for God himself to have his body broken like bread and his blood poured out like water.**

You're so consumed with small things—wonderful things, but lesser things—like marriage and boats and cars and politics and world peace—that you miss the true bread from heaven, the God behind it all; **The glory of Jesus that outshines the sun and bursts through every beautiful thing in the universe."**

My invitation to you is to come and feast on HIM . . . TODAY!

Let's pray together as we prepare for the Lord's Supper.