

John (Week 16)
“The Cross Requires a Response”
John 6:47-71 (NIV)

Welcome first time guests

If you're new, or you've been sleeping in church these past few weeks and you don't know what's going on, we are going verse by verse through the gospel of John

See Jesus had his 12 disciples, and in those 12 he had 3 who were closest to Him, and in those 3 we have John, who was Jesus' best friend

John wrote his eyewitness testimony of Jesus and their time together with the focus being, Jesus is the Son of God, and He is God in the flesh.

John's goal for writing this book is revealed in our series verse found in John chapter 20 verse 31

It says “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” John 20:31 NIV

Today we're going to finish out chapter 6 with a continuation of the conversation Pastor Mike went over last week

Now if you're hungry this is a chapter you gotta save for later because it's all about bread

It starts with Jesus miraculously feeding over 5,000 people when He was given only 5 loaves of bread and 2 small fish

The people loved this miracle and wanted to make Jesus king with the mentality that if He can do this, surely He could be their political leader and free them from Rome

We come to a brief intermission in our bread saga when the 12 disciples get into a boat overnight and head towards the other side of the lake, hit a crazy storm for hours in the

middle of the lake, Jesus walks on the water onto their boat and then they finally make it to the other side

The people find Jesus across the lake and we continue the bread saga with what Pastor Mike went over last week

Last week we heard Jesus' first I AM statement, which was "I AM the bread of life"

Jesus checks the people on their motives because they were only there for what Jesus could do for them, not for Who He Is

Pastor Mike mentioned that temporary things can't satisfy you but Jesus can

These people were looking for Jesus to give them real bread because the meal from yesterday was only temporary

Their stomachs were growling again but their souls were growling louder and Jesus explained that He could satisfy the spiritual hunger they had

Jesus said that He is the bread of life that gives life to the world, and we know the life he is speaking about is salvation

What is salvation? We have all sinned against God but in His love, He paid the price of our sin on the cross, then He rose again three days later defeating hell and death

Pastor Mike brought up that Jesus also satisfies, and secures us

Everything you strive for, everything you try to fill the hole in your heart with, will fade away

But Jesus can fill that empty space and when we trust in Him, our salvation is secure.

When those who trust in Him die, the eternity that comes after is secured by Jesus to be amazing

So then we come to the third part of our bread-filled chapter.

Let's pray and get into this

PRAY

If you have your Bible, open up to John chapter 6 verse 47, we won't go there yet but have it ready

To give you a sneak peak, in this latter end of the chapter, Jesus makes this crowd that's beginning to get upset, even more upset, and even offended at the claims He makes

But how many of us know the truth is still the truth even if it's offensive?

1+1 is 2, that's just the truth no ifs ands or buts

The truth doesn't change based on your opinions, standards, definitions, or feelings

I'm gonna list three truths and you gotta raise your hand if you know it

Water boils at 100°C

Light travels faster than sound

Bananas are technically berries, but strawberries aren't

Notice how these stay true regardless of if you knew it or not, whether you agreed or not, and these aren't very offensive, i don't think...unless somebody is offended about the banana-strawberry thing which to be honest i think i might be

But even if you are offended, these truths remain true

The problem is, not everyone likes the truth, and so in response, they deny it, and walk away from it

The truth I'm talking about now is Jesus, and what I want to show you in these next couple of minutes is a couple reasons why we walk away from the truth, from Jesus

Let's get into it. I might read fast but its 'cause we got a lot of verses to get through so we can understand this text fully

John 6 starting in verse 47

“Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. 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.” Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” 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. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?””

John 6:47-60 NIV

I know some of you thinking you just walked into a cult today

“You talking about eating people and drinking their blood on the pulpit”

Don't pack your bags yet, just give me a chance to explain and make this make sense for you

Alright...everybody seated? Nobody left? Good let's go

Point number one if you're taking notes:

We walk away from Jesus because of

Things we can't accept or understand

Listen to this scenario:

Let's say I was a doctor. In this scenario I walk up to a Japanese guy who only speaks Japanese and he is sick with a disease that will take him out in the next few hours. I hold out a cure for his illness and tell him that I saw him in his sickness and knew exactly how to cure it so I came rushing to bring him this cure

He'd probably think, "I can't, or I won't, accept this because I don't understand what this crazy guy is saying"

He denies it and walks away and soon after he dies

Because he did not understand, he chose not to accept this free gift I offered to him

If he only understood or sought a way to understand, he would know that I offered him a free gift that would've saved his life

You see the Bible says in **1 Corinthians 1:18 NIV** "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God"

Jesus here in these verses is seemingly saying some crazy stuff but what He's actually talking about is the cross

Let me ease this for you, Jesus is not calling for cannibalism here and I'll give you a few reasons why we know that

Reason 1: Jesus perfectly followed the Law of the Old Testament and so He would never have promoted or commanded something that goes directly against it

Deuteronomy 12:23:

"But never consume the blood, for the blood is the life, and you must not consume the lifeblood with the meat" Deuteronomy 12:23 NLT

Reason 2: We never see any examples of the disciples, or anyone at all, putting this into practice in a literal sense

There is no place in the Bible where someone says ummm Jesus, you mind sticking out your finger i need a bite, and while you're at it you mind if i get a drink with that?

This brings up a very important issue here

This is why we never form doctrine around one single verse. We always gotta check what we believe against multiple parts of the Bible, not just one verse

That's how false teaching happens and that's how people justify their wrong actions using the Bible

One false teaching that comes out from this passage that we just read is unfortunately what catholics believe for communion, or as they call it the eucharist

Hey and this is no offense to any catholics listening, but like i said earlier truth is truth regardless of what we think so please just hear me out

They teach a doctrine called "transubstantiation" which is a word that means to change substance

They believe and teach that during Communion, the bread is transformed into the literal body of Jesus, and the wine is transformed into His literal blood

But Jesus hadn't even done the last supper and instituted communion yet so nobody would know what He meant if it was supposed to be taken literally, which is reason 3 for why Jesus wasn't being literal

Reason 4: Jesus said "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood ***has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day***" John 6:54 NIV

If we take this literally, what's the point of hearing the gospel, or even listening to a sermon? All you'd have to do is take communion once and you good. You're saved without a relationship with Jesus. We know that's not the truth because Jesus said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" John 14:6 NIV

He didn't say "Taking communion is the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the father except through communion"

That also would make salvation based on your works which we know is not true. We aren't saved based on anything we can do, but on what Jesus already did.

I got one more for you and Jesus himself clears this up: We're gonna get there in a sec but skip ahead to verse 63, Jesus says "The **Spirit** gives *life*; the **flesh** counts for *nothing*. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life" John 6:63 NIV

So Jesus makes it clear that the focus is not on the literal, physical meaning of what He said, but instead, the focus is on the Spiritual truths within those words

So hopefully I cleared it up for you, and if not take Jesus' own word for it

He is not being literal in this instance about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, instead, He is describing what would soon take place on the cross and how we should respond

On the cross He would give His body as a sacrifice for us, taking damage that caused His blood to be poured out

In the same way that we take our time and enjoy our food and drink, we are to take time with Jesus, and enjoy the freedom that comes with what He did on the cross

In the same way that food and drink gives us energy and strength, we are to gain energy and strength from Jesus' death and resurrection

In the same way that the nutrients from our food and drink are distributed through our blood to every area of our bodies, we are to make Jesus and what He did inseparable from who we are.

If people see us they see Jesus. If we love somebody let them feel the love Jesus showed on the cross. If we give advice to somebody let it be coming from the mouth of Jesus and based on the cross.

On a personal level, let Jesus into every area of your life in the same way that what you eat and drink reaches every area of your body

Why is Jesus focusing so much on the cross? Because that's where everything changed

Before the cross you were dead in your sin, after the cross you have been given the opportunity to really live

Before the cross you were a slave to depression, in bondage to self-doubt, chained to your failures and fears

After the cross you are given the opportunity to experience the joy of the Lord, you are given the opportunity of a new identity where Jesus calls you priceless instead of worthless, where He sees you for who you will be and not who you were, where you can trust in Him and have no fear

That's why He's describing the cross in this way

Because it should be something we find nourishment and satisfaction in, and something that we always go back to the same way that you always go back to a meal every day multiple times a day

You'll never say nahhh i don't need to eat or drink today, im good

So why do you say nahhh i don't need Jesus, im good

Look at verse 60, "On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"" John 6:60 NIV

We deny Jesus because of things we cant accept or understand

Point 2 for your notes:

We walk away from Jesus because of

2. Things that we don't agree with

Verse 61:

"Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.""

John 6:61-65 NIV

Jesus just has been on a roll offending these guys with what He's saying

He claimed he came from heaven in the section we went over last week...that offends them

He gives a hard saying that sounds bad until you understand it and that offends them

Now He calls out their offense and doubles down on His claim that He's from Heaven, going further and saying watch me go back there

And again, He points back to the cross

This time foreshadowing His victory over it when He rises from the grave and returns to His throne in Heaven

These guys just cant take it anymore, Jesus is claiming things they just can't get behind and they're getting fed up

We see in the next verse that they walk away but how many of us are the same?

We hear something about Jesus, or what He stands for that we just don't agree with

Somebody quotes the Bible but we can't get behind that idea

But Pastor Mike says it all the time "if you find yourself disagreeing with the Bible, **you're** wrong

There are so many things that the Word of God says that people in our culture don't wanna agree with

Just to name a few:

There are only two genders

Marriage is only between one man and one woman

There is only one God

Jesus is the only way to Heaven

These are some of the hot topics today and we're living in a time when we don't wanna be offensive, even if it's the truth

I've seen it time and time again, you say anything about what someone believes and they immediately attack you and say let them believe what they wanna believe, you don't gotta worry about them just worry about yourself

Yeah but what they believe is sending them to hell

In every other religion or belief system you don't know how to be saved

They just tell you try your best, do good deeds, and hope that God lets you in, or hope that you don't re enter the cycle of reincarnation, or whatever else

If you don't believe me ask a muslim if they're going to heaven and ask how they know, see what they say

Most will say idk, that's for Allah to decide

Ask a hindu what they need to do to be freed from the cycle of reincarnation and see what they say, they'll say do enough good things

The list goes on

They'll all say i just try to be the best person i can be

And if there's a muslim, a hindu, a buddhist, a whoever else hearing me, don't misunderstand, I love you and Jesus loves you more, it's not personal it's just what you believe is leading you down the wrong path

If you do believe any of those things I have a question for you. How much does heaven cost? How many good deeds will get me there?

Do some deeds count more than others?

Doesn't that mean when I get to heaven I can tell God I got myself there?

And last question, what makes you think that your good deeds can be compared in any way to a perfect and Holy God? That your good deeds can somehow make you righteous enough or holy enough to stand before a perfect God and say I did it?

That's pretty arrogant isn't it? There's also no hope in that because you never know if you really are secured a spot in heaven? You're living in constant fear that you haven't done enough or aren't good enough

Compare that to a Christian: "How can I be saved?" Romans 10:9-10 "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the

dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved” Romans 10:9-10 NIV

How do you know for sure? Because Jesus really walked this Earth, really lived a perfect life, really died, really rose, and really backed up the claims He made, and it’s all supported historically, archaeologically, anthropologically, and scripturally

Church, just because something is offensive doesn't mean it’s bad

How many times did your mom tell you, “don't do that or you gonna hurt yourself”

And you get kind of offended like “mom, you think i cant do that?”

Then you do it and now you gotta wear a brace 'cause you hurt yourself just like she said

You could’ve been spared the pain but because you let that offense get the best of you now you gotta deal with it

There’s a phrase that goes “I'd rather offend someone into heaven than flatter them into hell”

Now before you go and call your unsaved friend and **TRY** to offend them into Heaven, lemme stop you

We are not called to offend, we are called to speak the truth in love

If the truth is offensive then that’s just what it is, and you speak it in love so the offense can bring conviction that leads to change, not anger that leads to walls going up

But don't go out of your way *trying* to offend people 'cause that’s not the goal here

Now if I haven’t already, let me offend you some more while I got the mic

I already offended the catholics, muslims, hindus, and basically everybody else

Verse 60 and 61 call this crowd “His disciples”

We’ve gotten used to thinking a disciple is a close friend and follower of somebody like the 12 disciples were with Jesus

But in these verses in the Greek which is what they were written in, this term disciple is “mathétés (ma-thay-TAYS)”, which means “a learner, pupil, disciple”, or in a wide sense, in the Gospels, those among the Jews who favored Jesus, joined his party, and became his adherents, or someone who supports a particular party, person, or set of ideas

How many of us are calling ourselves disciples thinking we’re like the 12, when we’re really a carbon copy of the crowd?

We like what Jesus has to say sometimes, we love the miracles and when He does stuff for us, but when He starts saying things we don't agree with we want cute baby Jesus back who cant say anything?

Jesus said in John 8:31 “... “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples”” John 8:31 NIV

Are you really His disciple or are you a fan that only sticks by the things you agree with?

But look at the love Jesus has that you won't find nowhere else

Verse 64:

“Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him” John 6:64 NIV

Jesus already knew who didn’t believe and who would betray Him and He STILL gave them a chance

He STILL preached the Word KNOWING they’d reject Him

Jesus being God already knew they would reject what He's saying, He knew soon enough they would be shouting crucify Him and betray Him, and still, with all of that at the front of His mind, He gave them the chance to hear the message anyway

That's the God I serve, the one who died for His enemies

Now isn't that a good God?

Now isn't that something you won't and you can't find anywhere else?

But still, verse 66 continues

"From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him."

John 6:66 NIV

Point 3 for your notes:

When you walk away from Jesus, you are following an anti-Christ spirit

What do I mean "an anti-Christ spirit"?

The prefix anti- means against, opposite, or opposed to

So put it together you get a spirit that's against Christ, opposite Christ, and opposed to Christ

Now let's get our magnifying glasses out and take a closer look at the chapter and verse numbers

Notice anything?

It's John 6, verse 66

Put it together you get 666

The verse where everyone walked away from Jesus, is John 6:66

The number 666 is associated with satan and his goons in revelation 13, specifically the beast but we most definitely don't have the time to get into that can of worms today

But isn't that interesting?

I gotta give credit to famous, world renowned pastor, Mike Tolone for pointing that out to me

This isn't license to now go and find meaning in every number you see, like on some numerology stuff

It's just an interesting thing to note

But when we walk away from Jesus, we are following something opposed to Him and if you're not walking towards Jesus you're walking back towards bondage to things He once freed you from

Or if Jesus isn't your personal Lord and Savior, you're just tightening the chains that hold you down

Don't think you're bound by anything?

Jesus says in John 8:34

“...“Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin” John 8:34 NIV

So as the worship team comes up and we end this chapter Jesus turns to the 12 disciples in verse 67:

““You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.” Then Jesus replied, “Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!” (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)”

John 6:67-71 NIV

Here's your last point

Jesus chooses you, knowing your worst moments

Jesus asks them a question that might've taken them aback for a second

Jesus, why are you asking us that? Especially after you hit us with something so hard to digest

But Peter, always the guy with an answer, gives the answer we should all have when we are faced with that question

When we are faced with things we can't accept or understand, when we are faced with things we don't agree with,

He says "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life"

See earlier in the chapter the crowd called Him "sir", when the 12 were asked this question, Peter calls Him "Lord"

That's the difference between a fan-disciple, and a real disciple

You call a man sir if you don't know Him but you wanna show respect

You call a man Lord when His word is law

Who's Jesus to you? Is He sir? Or is He Lord?

To one of the 12, Jesus was sir

And we know that one is Judas

Wanna hear something you might not know?

There is not one recorded time in the Bible where Judas calls Jesus Lord

Most times He calls Him rabbi, or refers to Him in some other way, but never Lord

You could be right there counted among the 12, right there lying in front of everyone's face but Jesus knows

Later on in the book of John, Jesus washes His disciples feet and guess who that includes? Judas

Jesus, the God who died for His enemies, who washed His enemies feet, that is a true display of unconditional love

And what I want you to know today as we close is that Jesus will choose you knowing your worst moments

Jesus loves you knowing the worst thing you've done

He doesn't choose people 'cause they're good enough, He chooses you because you were priceless to begin with

Nothing you do could ever make Jesus love you more or less

Nothing you've done, and nothing you will do could ever cause Jesus to take His hand back and say you're too far gone

You stole? Judas was stealing from Team Jesus' collective funds yet Jesus washed His feet in love

You've publicly said things against Jesus? Peter denied Jesus three separate times in one night after telling Him he'd never leave His side

You've murdered? Paul was known for persecuting Christians yet Jesus met Him where He was and changed His life so much that Paul wrote most of the New Testament

This is perfectly shown in Romans 8:38-39 (which Paul wrote)

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord”
Romans 8:38-39 NIV

Could you stand with me?

Can I be honest with you guys?

I tried going in a other directions multiple times as I was preparing for this sermon but God just kept bringing me back to this message of the cross and our response

Jesus emphasized the cross in the first half of our text today and the second half emphasized our response to that message

You will always come across things in the Bible that you don't understand, or don't wanna accept, or don't agree with, but don't walk away

Wrestle with it man

God isn't afraid of the questions, or confusion, or doubts

Wrestle with God, tell Him your thoughts and tell Him why you don't agree, why you're struggling to accept His word and watch how He answers you if you seek Him with a genuine heart

ALTAR TIME