

JOHN 6:60-71
TRUE AND FALSE DISCIPLES!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 6 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

Let me set the stage for what is going on here in John chapter 6 because it will lead up to what we will be looking at this morning.

Crowds of people followed Jesus and He taught them all day, and now it was late in the day, and they had no food to eat.

Imagine thousands of people and no food.

And Andrew brings a young lad to Jesus and this lad had only two small, pickled fish and five barley crackers. And yet he was willing to share what He had with Jesus.

Keep in mind that there were some 5,000 men, plus women and children, maybe some 15,000 to 20,000 people, and when you look at what this young lad had, there is no way that would even fill the stomach of one person.

And yet we see Jesus bless the food and the food was multiplied so that with two small, pickled fish and five barley crackers this crowd of people were not only fed, but they were filled!

And we know this is a miracle because we are told in John 6:14, **“Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, ‘This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.’”**

From there we see Jesus command His men to get into a boat and travel to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. And as they do, as they obey Jesus, a violent windstorm comes upon them and they were rowing and rowing and getting nowhere, in the middle of the Sea of Galilee! Jesus was not with them; He was up on a mountain watching them.

As He sees this Jesus walks upon the water to the boat and calls for the wind to cease and it immediately stops, and they are at their destination!

The next day, many of those who were fed with the food that Jesus provided for them, followed after Jesus!

And it is out of this that Jesus rebukes them for seeking physical bread when the Bread of Life was there before them!

Yes, the manna that fell in the wilderness in the days of Moses, the manna that God provided for them, was a picture of Himself, of Jesus.

Remember what Psalm 40:7 says, “**Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me.’**”

When you look at the Old Testament, we see pictures of Jesus and the work that He was to do!

And, like I have said, this bread or manna that fell from heaven during their wilderness wanderings and only could sustain them for a short time, was now standing before them in the person of Jesus and the life that He has for them would give them everlasting life!

That is what Jesus said here in John chapter 6, “**I am the bread of life. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.**” John 6:48, 51.

Now keep in mind that their thinking was physical and not spiritual and thus, the conclusion that they are going to come to is that Jesus is telling them to eat His flesh and drink His blood if you want to have eternal life!

That is not what He was saying, not at all. But listen to their conclusion. In John 6:52 we are told, **“The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, ‘How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?’”**

It is amazing how the carnal unsaved man can come to such bizarre conclusions, and that is what we see here. Again, they thought Jesus was speaking to them literally and as we will see this morning, He was speaking to them of spiritual things.

Jesus is saying or really, He is illustrating, that just as you need to take into your physical bodies food and water you must also receive into your spirit Jesus, for He alone can give life!

And, as I have said, in a few verses Jesus is going to clear that misunderstanding up for us about physically, literally eating His body and drinking His blood. He would never tell them to do that since it went against the Law, and He did not come to break the Law but fulfill it!

Remember that this took place in the synagogue in Capernaum, so there were many Jews and Jewish religious leaders there listening to this and remember, they did not like Jesus, the Jewish religious leaders, so they looked for ways to discredit Him, and here was a way to do it.

Imagine what is going through the minds of these Jewish people, thinking Jesus is talking about cannibalism, and that is what we will see as we begin looking at our study this morning, their response to what Jesus just said about eating His flesh and drinking His blood!

I have called our study this morning – ***TRUE AND FALSE DISCIPLES!***

And I have broken down these verses into the following points,

FALSE DISCIPLES EXPOSED – JOHN 6:60

JESUS CHALLENGES THEM – JOHN 6:61-65

THE REACTION OF FALSE DISCIPLES – JOHN 6:66

JESUS QUESTIONS HIS MEN – JOHN 6:67

THE RESPONSE OF A TRUE DISCIPLE – JOHN 6:68-69

JESUS EXPOSES THE TRUE AND THE FALSE – JOHN 6:70-71

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 6, beginning in verse 60 and let's see what the Lord has for us this morning as we look at the topic – ***TRUE AND FALSE DISCIPLES!***

JOHN 6

VERSE 60

Now when we hear the word “**disciple**” we think that they are believers. That is not what this word means. The Greek word that is used here by John is MATHETES, (math-ay-tes’) and is just means that this person has found themselves a teacher, attached themselves to a teacher, but it does not necessarily mean that there is any devotion or there is a serious relationship with this person. They are a student you might say.

As you read the Gospels you see that there were large crowds that followed Jesus, not because of who He said He was, Almighty God who came to save them from their sins, but because of the miracles that He did.

Think of what Jesus was doing for them. Healing the sick, delivering those who were demon possessed, feeding them and thus, they were not followers of Jesus, but they were thrill seekers you might say, not truth seekers! And that is what we are seeing here in John chapter 6!

And with this crowd of disciples were believers and unbelievers.

But the unbelievers were not ready to accept Jesus as the Son of God but to meet their physical needs.

And these unbelievers, listen to their response of Jesus saying that He is the Bread of Life and that they must believe in Him, partake of Him if they want eternal life. And, again, this troubled them because they are thinking of physically partaking of His flesh and blood, but that is not what Jesus was saying.

They had ears to hear but they refused to hear with their hearts and thus, listen to what they said, “... ‘This is a hard saying; who can understand it?’” John 6:60.

I like what one writer wrote regarding the response of some of His disciples. He wrote, **“It is little wonder that the disciples found the discourse of Jesus hard. The Greek word is *skleros*, which means not *hard to understand*; but *hard to accept*.”** (Barclay)

They did not like what Jesus said, it was too hard for them, and this verse can literally be stated that they were saying **“*Who can stand and listen to such offensive doctrine?*”**

Why did it bother them so much?

Because thinking about eating His flesh and drinking His blood was too much for them, but there is more to it than just that.

Jesus was not doing what they wanted, giving them physical bread, and when that didn't happen, when what Jesus said went against what they wanted to believe, they just left!

Not only that, but they were looking for a King and a Kingdom and when Jesus said that He was going to ascend back to heaven, they didn't like that as well!

What got in the way of these disciples?

Pride, the flesh, they wanted what they wanted and when they wanted it.

You see, as Jesus was dealing with issues of the flesh, they did not like it and when people refuse to crucify it, they will leave. That is what we see here.

Today we have marketing strategies for the church that don't make room for the flesh to be dealt with, but instead they tend to feed the flesh, help it to grow, encouraging people to follow Jesus for purely physical reasons, fleshly motives!

As you can see, Jesus did not accept that back then and He doesn't do so today! I am sorry, the flesh needs to be crucified, not fed!

And look at what we are seeing in the church today, this push to feed the flesh!

We are changing the Bible to have gender-neutral words!

We see the approving of the LGBTQ lifestyles in churches.

We see the church growth movement promoted in churches where churches find out what people in a community want and then give them what they want and not what they need!

We see humanistic doctrines promoted in the church like self-love and self-esteem. There is no mention of crucifying the flesh or dying to self.

We see the promotion of gaining from God wealth and prosperity!

We see the seeker sensitive movement where you don't want to teach anything that might offend people, like teaching against sin!

We have the emerging church that is moving away from the Word of God and moving towards the words of men. They entertain instead of teaching the Word of God.

Let me share this with you and you will see where the church has gone. We are told,

One of the great examples of the dramatic changes underway in the Church world is the fact that the number of Americans with a Biblical worldview has dropped to just 6% of the Nation as a whole.

This shockingly low number has dropped 50% in just the last 25 years from only 12%.

That means that during the rise of these newer, trendy churches the Biblical literacy and belief in the historic, Christian faith in America has collapsed. A Biblical worldview, as defined by Barna Research, contains the following, modest commitments of Christian faith,

A biblical worldview was defined as ***“believing that absolute moral truths exist; that such truth is defined by the Bible; and firm belief in six specific religious views. Those views were that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life; God is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe and He stills rules it today; salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned; Satan is real; a Christian has a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with other people, and the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings.”***

Now if these basic, doctrinal beliefs are not a part of any church’s worldview it would be reasonable to ask if we are even talking about Christianity anymore.

Can a church end up not being a church?

Is it possible then to unwittingly create a new “American Church” that has nothing to do with the Bible’s view of the Church and true, saving faith?

Is it possible that in a search for cultural relevance to a new generation of Americans we have created our own version of the “Golden Calf”?

Is it possible that the majority of people sitting in our churches on Sunday are not even Christians?

Those are some of the hard questions of this prophetic hour that you hear little discussion about. Instead of seeking to answer these important questions, it often seems many people are more concerned about how big a church is, how many campuses they have, how many programs they are running and if people are happy.

So, as we watch the visible Church dramatically changing before our eyes away from historic Christianity, it can't be surprising to see apostasy growing all around us.

Much of this apostasy always seems to deal with the authority, or lack thereof, of the Bible in the churches.

Does the Bible mean much anymore to people in the Church world? If someone says the Bible speaks against the LBGQT agenda, does that matter anymore?

If we are honest, we would have to say that Biblical authority has been dramatically eroded by our culture and people today largely believe what they want to believe and seem to find churches that agree with them.

As a case in point, a trendy, modern church in Tennessee has recently posted on their social media the picture you see in this article about their view of the Bible and its meaning to their lives.



This church does not believe the Bible is God's Word, infallible or inerrant . . . by their admission. Instead, they believe the Bible is just a human response to God. In other words, the Bible is what people believed through the years, NOT what the Lord has said or revealed to humanity.

Statements like that have made the authority of the Bible in the Church world a joke. Not a single person in that church appears to take the Bible . . . or ultimately the Lord seriously. And yet, one would have to believe the members of this church believe themselves to be "Christians" and on their way to "Heaven", however you define those terms.

The deception underway here in such churches is staggering in scope and not uncommon. There are literally thousands of such churches in America, and around the world that believe the same things as the church in Tennessee, in one form or another.

As a result, there are literally millions and millions of people sitting in such churches and thinking they are doing fine with the Lord, even though their churches, pastors and ministries have jettisoned anything to do with the Christian faith.

Sadly, they have created their own "Golden Calf" and think they are doing just great. If you not sure about that just ask them.

- bit.ly/32WbdvB

Many churches today are apostate and have false disciples in them. Yes, they say they love Jesus and follow Jesus, but it is not the Jesus of the Bible but a Jesus that they have made up in the imagination of their own mind or taught to them by false teachers.

The things that Jesus teaches them is too hard for them to follow, that He is God, that He is the only way to the Father, that we are sinners separated from God and apart from repenting of your sins and asking Jesus to be Lord and Savior of their lives they can't accept or believe.

Like these false disciples of Jesus in His day, “... ‘This is a hard saying; who can understand it.’”

As we will see, Jesus did not accept that back then and He doesn't accept it today! I am sorry, the flesh needs to be crucified, not fed! The things found in the Bible are not a suggestion for us to follow, they are there for us to obey and it is Jesus who gives us life, abundant life no matter what man may say or teach!

And Jesus is not going to leave them in that state of mind. Notice what He does.

VERSES 61-65

In these verses we see that – ***JESUS CHALLENGES THEM!***

If what Jesus said previously rocked their world, they have not seen anything yet!

Morris made this point about what troubled them. He wrote, “*The events of this chapter had made it all too clear that following Him meant something different from anything they had anticipated. Nothing is said to give us a clear idea of their views, but the probability is that they were interested in a messianic kingdom in line with the general expectation.*”

Religious views, false religious views have a way of keeping people from the faith and that is what we are seeing here.

The Greek word for “**offend**” or “**stumble**” is SKANDALIZO, (skan-dal-id'-so) and the idea behind this word is “*to take offense*” or “*to give up believing.*”

I think that both apply. That they were offended by what Jesus said regarding eating His flesh and drinking His blood, and they were willing to walk away, they did not believe what Jesus was saying.

Again, this was a superficial faith, they were not believers, so to walk away is just showing that they never came to saving faith!

And then Jesus says, “**What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?**” John 6:62.

Here we see that Jesus is speaking of something even more troublesome for them, the cross.

Paul said, “**but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.**” I Corinthians 1:23.

In other words, what Jesus is saying here in John, if this issue bothers you, look out because the cross is going to be even more offensive to you than this.

The death, the resurrection of Jesus and then the ascension of Jesus to the Father!

God became flesh, He came down from Heaven and He went back up after He finished the work He was sent to do!

And the cross will be offensive to them, and it still is for many today. You see, for Jesus to ascend back to heaven, to be received into glory, He had to go through the cross!

And when Jesus said, “**What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?**” He was basically saying, “*If all this has offended you, what will you think when you see Me in glory, and have to answer to Me in judgment?*”

Better to be offended now and to get over it, then to be offended on that day.

Now why do I not accept this as being the literal body and blood that we are to partake in communion? First of all, communion was not even established at this point, the New Covenant is not given to the disciples until the night of the last supper.

And just listen to what Jesus says in John 6:63, **“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”**

I think you can clearly see that what Jesus said about eating His flesh and drinking His blood He is not speaking of physically partaking of His body and blood.

How can I be so sure?

Because He says that the flesh profits nothing. He is talking spiritual, receiving Him, receiving His Words into your life, partaking of Him and you will have life!

Let’s not make the Word of God fit into what we want to believe, let God speak for Himself and if we do, I think it is very clear in what He is saying!

And here we see this sad statement that Jesus made regarding those people who had gathered around him, **“But there are some of you who do not believe. . . .”** John 6:64.

After all that Jesus had taught them, shown them, they still refused to believe.

And we need to understand that it was not because of a lack of information, they knew exactly what Jesus was saying, they just refused to believe what Jesus was saying!

Notice, Jesus says that **“ . . . they do not believe. . . .”** He is speaking of faith not a lack of information!

We see that today. People do not reject Jesus because they don’t have all the information that they need. They refuse to believe, and God will hold them accountable for their decision!

VERSE 66

Here we see – ***THE REACTION OF FALSE DISCIPLES!***

How tragic, many left Him because they refused to submit to Him, to His authority, to His control of their lives. They were more interested in feeding their body appetites, and when Jesus was not doing that, when their faith was challenged, they left. The things that Jesus said was just too hard for them to follow, so they went away from the bread of life, the One who loved them so much!

I like what Tenney said regarding this verse, ***“From this time’ is a possible translation of ek toutou. It could also mean ‘Because of this [utterance].’ The latter makes good sense because it was not simply the chronology that changed the disciples’ attitude.”***

Absolutely, it was the teaching of Jesus that caused them to walk away.

What is interesting here is that we don’t see Jesus compromise what He said to them and change it so that they would not be offended. In fact, He does not even encourage them to stay.

Why did He just let them go?

Like we read in John 6:64, **“... For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.”**

This was not a surprise to Jesus, not at all.

The thing we have to keep in mind is that this was a choice on their part. Yes, God knows who will come to saving faith because He knows all things, but He does not create people for Hell, they go there by their own choice.

And here is where the church has missed the point. The church today wants the world to like them and to do that they have to compromise what they believe; they have to accept what the world is telling them.

And they work so hard to be like the world and yet the world still does not love them, and they continue to try and try, and it leads to more and more compromise.

Instead of focusing all our attention in getting the world to like us, why don't we honor the Lord by what we do? That is more profitable, and it is healthy for our faith to follow the Lord all the days of our life!

We also have to be careful here that we don't encourage people to follow Jesus for material reasons. ***"You need Jesus, and your life will be great. All your problems will be gone!"*** I have heard that before and that is wrong.

Let me give you this example from Joel Osteen and his book – ***YOUR BEST LIFE NOW!***

This is from Amazon and a summary of the book,

Pastor Joel Osteen asks everyone to examine what he or she really believes. Why is this important? ***Because we will become what we believe. Our beliefs will prove either a barrier or vehicle as we strive to go higher, rise above our obstacles, and to live in health, abundance, and victory.***

In Your Best Life Now, Osteen says, "I am what I am today because of what I believed about myself yesterday. And I will be tomorrow what I'm believing about myself right now. God sees us as more than conquerors, able to fulfill our destiny. We need to see ourselves through the eyes of our Creator."

He says that our self-image should mirror exactly what God says about us, not what we feel or think. And he encourages readers to be people of faith, for if you can see the invisible, God will do the impossible.

So it all depends on what we want and we can have it all, we just need to believe it and we will have it!

That is just plain garbage.

Now let's think this through.

So if you are not rich, maybe you are not healthy, maybe your family life is a mess, then it must be your fault because you did not believe that you should be healthy, wealthy and wise!

God has plan for our lives, and it is not always easy, and that is where faith comes in. Our faith is challenged all the time, but in this book, it is not what God has for me, it is what I want, and that is not a good thing!

And if you really think this is of God, listen to what Wikipedia had to offer about this book, *“Your Best Life Now: 7 Steps to Living at Your Full Potential is a book by pastor Joel Osteen. . . . There is also a calendar, board game, and study guide available based on the book. A 10th Anniversary edition was published on September 3, 2014.”*

That is marketing and the more he sells, the more money he makes. Read the Bible folks, and it is not always easy, but it will benefit you more than you will ever know.

I don't know about you, but when I came to Christ all my problems grew! But now I have Jesus who will see me through those difficult times. And if you get people to come to Christ for material reasons, then when those things fail, and they will, they will leave just as we see here!

Our faith is going to be challenged as I have said. We are going to go through difficult times as I have said. Just because you are a Christian does not mean you will tip toe through the tulips. (Sorry, for all of you who are old enough, the Tiny Tim reference from Laugh-In)

The saints of old suffered much persecution, and much affliction and so will we, but we can use those times to grow by.

Remember what James wrote, “**My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.**” James 1:2-4.

For the spiritual Christian, trials are necessary for their spiritual growth and development. It is not some kind of Satanic plot, but it is part of God’s plan to help equip them to serve the Lord.

Now let me also say this. Satan can use those trials in our lives to tempt us to sin, but God wants to use them to help us to grow! Satan can throw all kinds of things at us to trip us up, to cause us to sin, but God is using those same things to test our faith, to trust in Him, to grow by!

And thus, James starts out running here and he tells us “**when you fall into various trials**” not “*if.*”

You see, trials are all around us, you can’t escape them and that is not the issue. The issue is how you handle yourself through them.

Trials are going to happen, not might, not if, but “**when**” they do happen, then you need to walk accordingly. Trials are unavoidable.

The Greek word for “**knowing**” is GINOSKO, (ghin-occe’-ko) and it speaks of knowing something more than just information or facts, but from a personal experience.

You see, it is trusting in God in the present situation I am facing knowing how He has taken care of me in the past, how He was with me then. And it gives me confidence now because I have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, I know that by experience, firsthand experience!

James tells us that God is working out in our lives, through these trials, “**patience**” or HUMPOMONE, (hoop-om-on-ay’) in the Greek and it speaks of active endurance.

Trials produce endurance or patience in our lives. And each time we face a trial, as we endure through it, our endurance will be strengthened, it will grow as we learn to depend more upon God and less upon our own strength. You see, being steadfast, immovable in a trial just shows that we trust in the Lord and His promises to us.

But for those that don't know the Lord, have this pseudo-relationship with Him, when difficulties come their way, they walk away.

It is as Bruce reminds us,

What they wanted, he would not give; what he offered, they would not receive.

- F. F. Bruce, The Gospel of John, p. 164

How true that is. They wanted the physical things, and they rejected the everlasting life that Jesus had for them, and they walked away.

VERSE 67

Here we see that – ***JESUS QUESTIONS HIS MEN!***

Picture what is going on here. Jesus has spent some time teaching them that He is the Bread of Life and if they want eternal life, they will have to come to Him, receive Him into their lives.

And many responded by walking away. Can you imagine that!

I don't know about you, but if I said something and a huge crowd of people, supposedly those who were with me, left, I don't think I would ask this question with my closest men. But Jesus did!

But Jesus knew their hearts and He knew who was really with Him and who wasn't.

Bruce picks up on this as he wrote, *“As John phrases our Lord’s question in Greek, he implies that it was not asked in a mood of despair; the use of the Greek negative me in a question indicates that the answer ‘No’ is expected. ‘You don’t want to go away too, do you?’”*

We have seen the response of the false disciples of Jesus, but here, as we read on, we will see – ***THE RESPONSE OF A TRUE DISCIPLE!***

VERSES 68-69

Again, what we are seeing here is - ***THE RESPONSE OF A TRUE DISCIPLE!***

Here we see the words of Peter, in response to the question that Jesus asked, “**... ‘Do you also want to go away?’**” John 6:67.

And Peter is saying, *“Where else are we going to go to Lord? The world has nothing for us. Religion has nothing for us. But you, Lord, You have the words to eternal life. Not only that, but we have come to believe, by watching all that you have done and said, that you are Almighty God, the Son of the living God!”*

And with these words Peter proves he was a true disciple because he expresses the heart of a true disciple.

Look at what Peter believed,

That Jesus was LORD!

That Jesus was the answer despite the difficulties that may come!

That Jesus had the Words of eternal life and thus, he looked to the spiritual rather than the physical or earthly things!

That Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God!

Keep in mind that those false disciples saw and heard many of the same things that Peter saw and heard. They had all that information that was before them, they just chose not to believe what they had seen and heard about Jesus.

And think about this. This is what the others rejected but Peter says that they are not going anywhere, they are following Jesus.

May we have that same passion!

I realize that many things get in the way of our relationship with the Lord, if we let them. But that is the key, don't let those things distract you from what the Lord has called you to do!

True disciples of Jesus, at times, may face such difficult trials and adversities that they're not sure if they can go forward, but they are absolutely sure they can't go backward either.

Listen to what Peter said in I Peter 1:6-7, **“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”**

The Amplified Bible puts these verses like this, **“[You should] be exceedingly glad on this account, though now for a little while you may be distressed by trials and suffer temptations, So that [the genuineness] of your faith may be tested, [your faith] which is infinitely more precious than the perishable gold which is tested and purified by fire. [This proving of your faith is intended] to redound to [your] praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) is revealed.”**

Peter opens up this verse by saying, **“In this”** and this is not speaking of our salvation, but it is speaking of our inheritance in Christ!

Peter just got done speaking of all that we have in Christ, and we rejoice in all that God has given to us. And yes, we are going to go through trials and difficult times, but compared to what we have in Christ, it is minor!

And like with James, we see Peter speaking of joy and trials, various trials, all kinds of difficulties mixed together.

How can that be when they seem to oppose each other, joy and trials?

Because of all that God has done for us, because our salvation is secure, because our inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, it does not fade away and it is not only reserved for us in heaven, but our salvation is kept by the power of God.

You see, in that we rejoice in our incredible inheritance we have in Christ!

Make no mistake about it, Christian joy is independent of the circumstances we face because our joy is based in the Lord.

But what about trials in our lives?

Remember what James told us, **“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”** James 1:2-4.

We need to keep in mind that these difficult times that come upon our lives are only temporary and as we endure through them, as we grow, we will bring glory to God, and when we are called home to be with Him, God will receive the glory for the work He has done in us and through us.

Remember the Parable of the Talents and what the Lord said to His faithful servant, **“... ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”** Matthew 25:21.

We too will receive praise from the Lord and rewards for our faithful service to Him!

And here's the thing. We all will experience trials in our lives to test our faith, as I have said. But here's the thing. As the fires of these trials are heated the garbage from our lives is purged as God is refining us, sanctifying us.

We walk by faith trusting in the Lord.

Job tells us in Job 23:10, **“But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.”**

One writer summed all this up for us as he wrote,

Our willingness as Christians to endure earthly affliction says a lot about our trust in God. He is fashioning us into praiseworthy and honorable vessels for his glory. Malcolm Muggeridge, having come to Christ late in life, understood this well. His ability to embrace life's woes was never put more succinctly than when he wrote:

*I can say with complete truthfulness that everything I have ever learned in my seventy-five years in this world, everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my existence, has been through affliction and not through happiness, whether pursued or attained. In other words, if it ever were to be possible to eliminate affliction from our earthly existence by means of some drug or other medical mumbo jumbo, as Aldous Huxley envisaged in *Brave New World*, the result would not be to make life delectable, but to make it too banal and trivial to be endurable. This, of course, is what the Cross signifies. And it is the Cross, more than anything else, that has called me inexorably [inevitably] to Christ.*

It was this same belief – that God is at work in the muck of life – that enabled Dietrich Bonhoeffer to write the final stanza of his poem “New Year 1945.” That day was a mere three months and nine days before he was executed by Hitler at the close of World War II:

*Should it be ours to drink the cup of grieving
Even to the dregs of pain, at they command,
We will not falter, thankfully receiving
All that is given by thy loving hand.*

The responses of Muggeridge and Bonhoeffer are only made possible by embracing Peter's words as divine truth. For without a deep and abiding trust in God's words, we will try to flee trials at all costs and will miss out on the very lessons God has for us.

- David R. Helm, I & 2 Peter and Jude – Sharing Christ's Sufferings, pp. 42-43

How true that is. There are lessons in the trials we go through, the testing of our faith.

Or, as Paul put it in II Corinthians 4:16-18, **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”**

May we not forget that!

You see, true disciples have been delivered from the world and there is nothing in the world that they want to go back to. I don't care how bad things may be, how bad the circumstances you face are, what can the world give to you that will bless you, that will help you, that will deliver you?

There is nothing that the world has for you, but you have all you need in Christ and thus, cast all your cares upon Him for He cares for you! (I Peter 5:7)

And yes, it is not always easy to follow Christ. The challenges we face, but again, where else can you go, who are you going to run to?

There is no one else who loves you more, who has what is best for your life than Jesus. His Words are eternal life to us. Yes, the world may tempt us, but it can't give us life, it can't give us joy and satisfaction, for that is only found in Jesus as we partake of Him.

And I love what Peter says, **“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

On the other hand, false disciples are always wanting to go back to the world when things get tough or when things don't go the way that they want.

Why do they do that?

Because it is their nature.

Remember what Peter wrote in II Peter 2:20-22, **“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.’”**

In other words, the more you know the more you are accountable!

Now Peter is not saying that a person can lose their salvation, that is not what the Scriptures teach.

Then what is he saying?

He is speaking of people who knew the truth, they may have even said they embraced the truth, but as you look at their lives you can see they are far from it.

They were not a Jesus branch but a Judas branch, a false believer. And remember that Jesus said back in Matthew 7:23 to those who said they knew Jesus, worked for their salvation you might say, that “**... ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’**”

And Peter illustrates this point by speaking of a dog who has vomited the corruption that was inside of him but then, because of his nature, he goes sniffing around that vomit and then he licks it back up, he takes it back in.

Then Peter speaks of a pig, who is cleaned up, looks nice and you let him outside and he goes right back to the mud and gets dirty because that is his nature.

But we are not like that, we have a new nature in Christ and Paul makes that point for us in II Corinthians 5:17, “**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**”

Regarding false disciples and false teachers with their false doctrines, one pastor wrote, *Contemporary Christianity, sadly, contains many people like the ones Peter describes in this passage. They have sought personal improvement and moral reformation in their quests for spiritual and religious experience. Many of them have become teachers, preachers, and self-styled prophets within the professed church.*

Tragically, like dirty dogs or unclean pigs, they eventually return to their old lifestyles – rejecting the only One who can truly reform them. Those who become spiritual leaders are in reality false teachers, motivated by their own selfish pursuits and sensual desires. In view of their appalling character and damning influence, Peter’s warning is clear: Stay away from false teachers and expose them!

Believers are to listen to the true apostles and prophets, not the false ones.

- John MacArthur

Make no mistake about it, the reason people who come to church for a while and stop, and then get involved in some of the sinful things they use to do, will eventually return to the filth of the world because – ***THAT IS THEIR NATURE!***

For true believers, what is manifested in their lives are the things of God. The things that they use to do, sin, they no longer desire to do those things.

What do they want to do?

They want to go to church, to Bible Study, to prayer meetings, they love to worship the Lord, they love the brethren, the fellowship with other believers! Now it is not that we never struggle, but the desire of our lives is to please the Lord in all that we do, and we want the flesh crucified!

No longer are we controlled by self, allowing the world to guide us. Jesus has moved into our lives, and the things we do manifest the nature of Jesus.

Listen to how one pastor put it. He wrote,

Peter's affirmation in verses 68 and 69 expressed two key marks of true disciples: faith (we have believed) - which marks their spiritual birth - and faithfulness (Lord, to whom shall we go?) - which marks their character.

The perfect tense of the verbs translated have believed and have come to know conveys the idea of an act completed in the past, but with ongoing results.

The initial faith of true disciples results in continued commitment and loyalty to Christ.

Unlike the false disciples who had made a final decision to abandon Jesus, the Twelve (except for Judas) had made a permanent pledge to follow Him. In this way, John contrasted the stark difference between those who are fickle and those who are faithful.

In other words, a true believer will not *QUIT!*

VERSES 70-71

Here we see – *JESUS EXPOSES THE TRUE AND FALSE APOSTLES!*

Remember that Peter said “we” and thus, he was speaking of all 12 of the apostles and the Lord is correcting him here, one will betray Him, Judas!

Of this Bruce wrote, “*One of them was a diabolos – the Greek word means a ‘slanderer’ or ‘calumniator’ or ‘false accuser’, but it is probably used here as the counterpart to the Hebrew satan, ‘adversary’.*”

Make no mistake about it, Jesus prayed all night for these men before He chose them, and Judas was one of them, but he chose not to receive Jesus. And in the end, he betrayed Jesus.

You see, God gave all a chance, just as He does today, all have the same choice to make, to come to Him or to reject Him, those are the only choices that matter for they have eternal consequences attached to them! It is a matter of the wills, God’s or ours!

As I close let me leave you with this to think about.

You can know if you have eternal life.

I know that is hard for some to believe but listen carefully to what Jesus said in John 5:24, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.**”

Again, John picks up on this same thought in I John 5:13, where he says, “**These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.**”

What a joy, what a comfort, what peace we can have in knowing that we have eternal life that is given to us through believing, receiving, partaking of Jesus!

I pray that you know ***THE BREAD OF LIFE – JESUS CHRIST!***

I will close with this for you to think about. We are told,

It is told of Sadhu Sundar Singh that many years ago he was distributing Gospels in the Central Provinces of India and he came to some non-Christians on the railway train and offered a man a copy of John's Gospel. The man took it, tore it in pieces in anger and threw the pieces out of the window.

That seemed the end, but it so happened, in the Providence of God, there was a man anxiously seeking for truth walking along the line that very day, and he picked up as he walked along a little bit of paper and looked at it, and the words on it in his own language were "the Bread of Life".

He did not know what it meant; but he enquired among his friends and one of them said: "I can tell you; it is out of the Christian book. You must not read it or you will be defiled."

The man thought for a moment and then said: "I want to read the book that contains that beautiful phrase": and he bought a copy of the New Testament.

He was shown where the sentence occurred-our Lord's words "I am the Bread of Life"; and as he studied the gospel, the light flooded into his heart, he came to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and he became a preacher of the gospel in the Central Provinces of India.

That little bit of paper through God's Spirit was indeed the Bread of life to him, satisfying his deepest need.

- John A. Patten

As Jesus said, “... **‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.’**” John 6:35.