Questions Jesus Asked (As Recorded in the Gospel of John)  
“Do You Wish to Go Away Also?” John 6:67 (5 of 9)

INTRODUCTION:
We continue our sermon series looking at questions Jesus asked as recorded in the Gospel of John. We looked at the question Jesus asked His mother at the wedding in Cana. We talked about the question Jesus asked a Pharisee named Nicodemus. We looked at the question Jesus asked the Samaritan woman at the well. And last week, we looked at the question Jesus asked a paraplegic man. Today, we look at a heart-wrenching question Jesus asked His disciples.

Let’s set the stage.

Jesus has just fed the five thousand. That night, He walked on the water out to the disciples who were in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. The next day, Jesus provides some very challenging teachings.  
1.) Jesus told them that He was the living bread (the bread of life). This is one of the famous “I am” statements Jesus made. Jesus is the bread of life. He satisfies the hunger of the soul. As bread nourishes the physical body, Jesus nourishes the spiritual body - He affords us a relationship with His Father.  
2.) Jesus told them that He had come down from heaven. The Jews objected to this claim. They knew Joseph and Jesus’ mother. They thought Jesus had been born just like everyone else. Jesus doubled-down. He strengthened His claim. He said He had come from God. He had seen the Father. He was the living bread that could give eternal life. The crowd was feeling the pressure.  
3.) Jesus told them that He had come down from heaven. The Jews objected to this claim. They knew Joseph and Jesus’ mother. They thought Jesus had been born just like everyone else. Jesus doubled-down. He strengthened His claim. He said He had come from God. He had seen the Father. He was the living bread that could give eternal life. The crowd was feeling the pressure.  
4.) Jesus told them they had to eat His flesh and drink His blood if they were to have life. To the Christian who looks back from this side of the cross, it’s clear that Jesus was figuratively anticipating the institution of the Lord’s Supper. But how could they understand it on that side of the cross? The difficulty was not only in what Jesus said about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, which was strictly forbidden in the Law of Moses, but also that He claimed that God was His Father, that He came down from Heaven, that He was bread greater than the manna of Moses, and that they could only have life because of Him. Jesus was holding nothing back!

What was the crowd’s response to all this? It’s found in John 6:60-69 and their response must have broken Christ’s heart. It states, “Therefore many of his disciples hearing said: “This word is difficult; who can hear it?” But Jesus knowing in himself that his disciples were murmuring about this, said to them: “This offends you? What then if you see the Son of man ascending where he was at first? The spirit is the [thing] giving life, the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the [ones] not believing and who was the [one] betraying him. And he said: “Therefore I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is given to him by the Father.” From this many of his disciples turned away and no longer walked with him. Therefore Jesus said to the twelve: “Do you wish to go away also?” Simon Peter answered him: “Lord, to whom shall we go away? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that you are the holy one of God.”

TRANSITIONAL SENTENCE: Today, through the filter of Jesus’ question, “Do you wish to go away also?”, we examine three reasons people walk away from Jesus and three more appropriate responses.

1. People walk away from Jesus because they don’t UNDERSTAND His teachings.

We like to understand things. We like to have a grasp on what others are talking about when they’re talking about sports, politics, family, religion, work, and life in general. We don’t like to feel stupid or in the dark. But somethings are just difficult to comprehend.

What’s your dispensational view of Christ’s return? How is it that I am saved by grace but also by being baptized into Christ? Can you explain the various images in the book of Revelation and what they mean? When we die, do we go to Heaven or do we go to a holding place?

So many questions…so little understanding. Some people allow the things they don’t understand to keep them from Jesus. Because they can’t comprehend His teachings, they refuse to embrace Him as Savior and Lord…or they walk away at a later time if they encounter something that’s beyond their ability to comprehend.

But understand this…Jesus wasn’t asking them in the first century to understand. He was asking them to believe! The people in the audience in Capernaum who looked back upon Jesus’ words from a later day of faith would see more in these truths than in the hour the words were actually delivered. Nicodemus, for example, would’ve understood the new birth better after the resurrection and seeing the connection to baptism and the risen Savior than at any time before that moment.
The same is true for us today. Just because we don’t understand something that Jesus taught - about us or about His Father or the timing of the Second Coming, or whatever, doesn’t mean we should allow that to get in the way of continuing our relationship with Him - or cause us to walk away. Faith! That’s what we have been asked to have.

Hebrews 11:1 states, “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” Hebrews 11:6 states, “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

The whole point of faith is that it’s not all figured out. Faith pleases God. God has orchestrated it so we don’t have it all figured out on this side of Heaven...so on this side of Heaven we have to demonstrate faith...this, so we have to demonstrate trust...so we demonstrate belief even when we may not fully understand!

When Jesus asked, “Do you wish to go away also?” - look at Peter’s response. “Lord, to whom shall we go away? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that you are the holy one of God.”

“We have believed!” Peter says. Peter wears his leather sandals instead of chewing on them. What an awesome response! The teaching was hard for Peter to understand. He doesn’t get it. He hasn’t figured it all out. The Holy Spirit hasn’t yet come to reveal, remind them, and explain to them what Jesus taught. And despite that, Peter responds with FAITH! That’s the more appropriate response to a lack of understanding...faith.

Don’t allow your lack of understanding to cause you to walk away...instead, do what Peter did - ACKNOWLEDGE your faith!

2. People walk away from Jesus because His teaching is DIFFICULT to accept.

I get it. Jesus shared some pretty challenging teachings. We have to eat His flesh and drink His blood. This was offensive to every Jew committed to living out the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses prohibited eating human flesh and drinking blood. I get it. If Jesus was speaking literally...I get it. But Jesus was the best teacher ever to walk on this planet. He had deep stuff to share...spiritual stuff...stuff that takes a life-time to think about and unpack and still will leave you wondering. The parables can be challenging. For some, when Jesus said the only way to get to the Father was through Him, that there was no other way...I get it. It can be difficult to swallow. It’s sometimes difficult to accept. And some chose, in the past and today, to walk away.

But despite the difficulty, it doesn’t mean it isn’t truth. Despite the difficulty surrounding Jesus’ teaching, do I want to just close my ears to it and ignore it because its challenging? I get praying for your enemies is tough. I get blessing those who curse you isn’t easy. I get working out my salvation is a daily struggle, but do I want to walk away from Jesus just because its difficult or even troublesome?

When Jesus asked, “Do you wish to go away also?” - look at Peter’s response. “Lord, to whom shall we go away? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that you are the holy one of God.”

Jesus has the words of eternal life! Where else can you turn for that? Buddha doesn’t have the words of life. Mohammad doesn’t. Confucius doesn’t. Jim Jones - crazy. Joseph Smith - Ridiculous! Peter asked his own question to Jesus’ question…”Where else can we go?” There is NO WHERE else...there is NO ONE else to go for the words of eternal life - no place except Jesus. Jesus is the one who has the words of eternal life.

Don’t allow difficult teaching to cause you to walk away...instead, do what Peter did - AFFIRM Jesus’ words.

3. People walk away from Jesus because they don’t want to go the DIRECTION He’s leading.

This was a time of sifting out Jesus’ followers. If His death brought offense, what of His ascension? If the idea of His death was scandalous, the idea of His ascension - even more so. Jesus was going to be lifted up on the cross. Jesus was going to be lifted up to Heaven. It’s through this complete work of Christ that salvation comes to the world.

I’m amazed how people fight against a direction that’s so clearly stated in Scripture. Take baptism for example. How can anyone say it’s not attached to the salvation process when over 50 Scriptures in the New Testament attach it to the salvation process. How can someone say it’s not that important, even though Jesus stated it was important for Him to be baptized to fulfill all righteousness. How can someone say it’s just an outward sign of an inward faith, when there is no Scripture proclaiming that and yet Jesus commissioned us to go
into all the world and baptize people for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit?

I’m amazed that Jesus came to the Jewish people and yet as a nation they stand at the western wailing wall in Jerusalem praying for a Messiah. They’ve rejected Jesus. They’ve walked away from Him because the cross of Calvary is stumbling block to them. They can’t accept a suffering Savior…a persecuted Messiah, and yet the Scriptures throughout the Old Testament reveal that this was the very direction of God’s plan in order to save the people in the world from their sins. The entire Levitical law was built on the sacrificial system of the blood of bulls and goats and yet those animals’ blood could not truly forgive sins, so God provided His own Lamb, His Son Jesus to make a sacrifice once and for all that truly removes sin from our lives in order for us to stand before our Creator and yet the Jewish nation can’t see it.

What about when Jesus tells you to demonstrate love to someone who’s gay or lesbian and all you feel is judgment and disdain? What about when Jesus reveals He wants you to serve that individual who has broken trust with you on more than one occasion? What about when Jesus tells you to hold the line of integrity in your work place and you know it may cost you your job?

Sometimes we walk away when the direction Jesus is leading is not what we want.

When Jesus asked, “Do you wish to go away also?” - look at Peter’s response. “Lord, to whom shall we go away? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that you are the holy one of God.”

Peter proclaims the holiness of Jesus. Jesus is the “Holy One” of God. The demons used this potent and unusual terminology to address Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The terminology is used throughout the Old Testament for God Himself. What’s Peter’s point? No matter Your direction Jesus, we will follow You because You are the Messiah. You are holy. You are the Father’s Son, and because of who You are, we will follow.

Don’t allow Jesus’ direction to cause you to walk away…instead, do what Peter did - **ASSERT His Messiahship.**

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**CONCLUSION:**

If you were in a plane, 30,000 feet up in the sky, and I offered you a parachute, would you jump? Well, suppose you’re 30,000 feet up in the air and the plane’s on fire and I offered you a parachute, would you jump? I would imagine appropriate motivation changes our decisions.

You and I, and everyone in the world, will die in our sins. We’ve offended the holiness of the only God. There is however a spiritual parachute for the fire in store for us. His name is Jesus. And walking away from Him insures no escape from that eternal fire. But, if we have faith in Him, if we assert His Messiahship, and if we affirm His words by following them, we have hope…we have life…we have forgiveness. And all of it, is found in only one place - in only one person - the Holy One of God, Jesus Christ.