



February 4-5, 2023

John 6:60-71

Ice Breaker Questions

- Today's text comes after Jesus feeds the 5000 and then identifies himself as the Bread of Life. Bread is a staple food in every society. When you think about your own growing up years, what food was core to your family? What did you regularly eat?

Understand Their Story

Read John 6:60-71 in your group.

1. This passage begins with a reference back to the previous verses. What is the "hard saying" that people are grumbling about in John 6:60? **They are grumbling about what Jesus said in 6:52-59: that they need to feed on his flesh & drink his blood to have eternal life and be raised on the last day.**
2. What do you learn about our triune God in these verses?
 - What do you learn about God the Father? **He grants who come to Jesus (6:65)**
 - What do you learn about Jesus? **He knew in himself what his disciples were grumbling about (6:61), He came from above (6:62), He knew from the beginning who would believe & who would betray him (6:64), He chose the 12 (6:70)**
 - What do you learn about the Holy Spirit? **The Spirit gives life (6:63)**
3. What do you learn about people in this text?
 - Jesus' disciples **Jesus had disciples who followed him for a while but 'turned back and no longer walked with him' (6:68) when they got offended (6:61). They ultimately didn't believe (6:64).**
 - The Twelve **They were chosen by Jesus (6:70), and stay with him rather than turning back like the other disciples. They have believed and know that He is the Holy one of God (6:69) Despite being chosen by Jesus, Judas would betray him (6:71)**
 - Peter **Jesus is his only hope! There is no where else to turn, Peter has no Plan B or C or D - it is only Jesus who provides the words of eternal life (6:68)**
4. How does John describe Jesus' attitude towards his disciples and the Twelve? Are you surprised by the way Jesus responds to people in this text? Why or why not?
 - **Jesus doesn't try to soften their offense or win them back - instead he confronts them and says that they would be even more offended if they saw him as he really was (6:62), and he calls out their unbelief (6:64). He says they can't come to him unless the Father grants it (6:65).**
 - **Is your group surprised by this or not? If so, talk about why? It may be, because of the way our ideas of Jesus have been shaped by the church. Or, it may be because this is not the way that most of us would behave if people were offended by us! Our hearts would be conflicted, we'd run after them, or try harder to explain. We are more about people-pleasing than Jesus was.**

Connect to His Story.

5. In this text, Jesus confronts his disciples for taking offense at his saying. People are repeatedly offended by Jesus in the gospels¹ and by Jesus' message in the rest of the New Testament. Read the following texts to think through why this is the case:
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. Why are people offended by Jesus according to the Apostle Paul?
 - Because they are perishing - the word of the cross is folly to people who are not saved (1:18)
 - God doesn't operate by human wisdom (1:20), he delights in saving people through the "folly" of what is preached (1:21)
 - Because people demand signs, or wisdom before they believe (1:22). Christ crucified is a stumbling block to them. (1:23)
 - b. 1 Corinthians 2:6-13. How can people "get over" this offense according to the Apostle Paul? What needs to happen to them?
 - We understand the secret and hidden wisdom of God (2:7), through the Holy Spirit (2:10)
 - The Spirit helps us understand the things freely given us by God (2:12). He interprets spiritual truths to people, and teaches people. (2:13)
 - i. How does this truth tie in with what Jesus teaches in John 6:60-71?
 - It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh is no help at all (6:63)

Apply to Our Story

6. In John 6:60-71, John helps us to understand what all of us have experienced: many people appear to be Jesus' disciples for a time, but some eventually turn away while others continue walking with him. True followers of Jesus must do 3 things: Profess, Practice and Persevere in their faith.²

As you think about applying this text, identify and pray for people in both groups:

- People who get offended by Jesus. If you know people who have walked away from Jesus, how would you describe why they have done so? What has offended them about Jesus?
 - i. Pray that the Spirit would soften their hearts and remove their offense, so they resume walking with him.
- People who continue walking with Jesus. Some people can't imagine letting go of Jesus no matter how hard life gets. They would say, with Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:69). Is this your attitude? If so, how has God shown you that you need him?
 - i. Praise the Spirit for giving you life (6:63) and causing you (& others) to hold onto Jesus.

God's work and our Work

How All of Life Connects to the Gospel - in John 6:60-71

¹ If you want to see some examples, read Jesus' warnings in Matthew 11:6, Luke 7:23, and then examples of people being offended in Matthew 13:57, 15:12, and Mark 6:3.

² **Profess:** Romans 10:9-11; **Practice:** Galatians 5:21-23, Ephesians 2:10; **Persevere:** Colossians 1:21-23, 2 Tim 4:7-8

As we learned in this week's text, Jesus' words and actions offend some people. You also likely know people who are OK with Jesus, but are offended by Christians! A third group may have no idea who Jesus is or what Christianity is about, so they are not offended but are simply disinterested.

If you know people who aren't Christians, but you aren't sure which of these three groups would describe them, we'd encourage you, this week, to identify one non-Christian in your industry or your neighbourhood or friendship circles, and ask them what their perceptions are about Jesus or the church or Christians.

Try simply listening to what people tell you, rather than feeling like you need to explain or defend your faith! Hearing their perceptions will help you respond more thoughtfully and intentionally to them in the future.

A series of questions to ask may be:

- At our church we're talking about how we can support people and programs in our city. It's helpful to get perspectives from people who aren't part of our church, so I'm wondering what you think:
 - What good could the church do in a community, in your perspective?
 - What hesitations would you have about the church being involved in the community?
 - What has been your experience with the church or Christians?

If you choose to do this, we'd encourage you to reflect on what you learn as you meet with your community group. Were you surprised by what people said? Why or why not? Feel free to share any stories with us: communitygroups@northview.org.