

# **“Will Ye Also Go Away?”**

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In John 6, after Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes and after He walked on the sea, the people came to Him with worldly motives. Notice Jesus' response to them in John 6:26, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." This led Jesus into a discourse about the bread of life. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:32-33). They had obviously missed the point of Jesus' message for they said, "Lord, evermore give us this bread" (John 6:34). But Jesus responded more directly saying, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). The Jews challenged Jesus' statement, but Jesus defended Himself and reaffirmed that He was "the bread of life."

John goes on to record the statements many disciples made in response to Jesus claim, "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60). As a result, John says, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:66). Finally, Jesus turns His attention to the twelve and asked them, "Will ye also go away?" (John 6:67).

We ask the same question. With apostasy so rampant in the ranks and the problems of sin that the church is facing today, there are many falling back into the world and grasping onto the bondage of denominationalism. And so we ask, but more than ask, we plead for an answer to the question Jesus herald almost two thousand years ago, "Will ye also go away?" But we also ask, "Why do some leave?" For answers to these questions, we will attempt to give response.

## **Some Leave Because They Really Do Not Believe**

Unbelief was the problem which Jesus was dealing with. Notice the fact that in verse 26 these Jews saw the miracles, but they were more concerned with the appetite of the body. Later John records, "The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" (John 6:41-42). It is obvious because of murmuring these Jews did not believe. But directly concerning their unbelief, John record, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him" (John 6:64).

So often many confuse the belief the world teaches and the belief the Bible teaches. The world teaches a belief that is a knowledge of facts, but the Bible teaches a belief that is a knowledge of facts coupled with an action response of obedience. Jesus in response to their unbelief said in John 6:27-29,

“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

This is the same thing taught in James 2:17, “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” Remember the devils believe, but they also tremble for they are not saved, and they know their eternal destiny. They are not saved because their belief is not coupled with the action of obedience.

### **Some Will Leave Because They Do Not Want to Commit Themselves**

Those in John 6 did not want to commit themselves to righteous living for they just wanted to be fed with physical food. They were not willing to partake of the body and blood of Jesus for in doing, their lifestyles would have to change. Jesus taught commitment, and they were unwilling to commit themselves to feeding on the bread of life. Sadly today, we have many within our own number who are more interested in physical things than spiritual values. Jesus taught in Matthew 16:24-27,

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”

Commitment is one key to stability and spiritual growth. If we are not committed to Jesus, to God, and to His Word, then we are likely to be the ones who will depart from the faith. Therefore, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2).

### **Some Will Leave Because They Are Persuaded by the World**

Notice in our text of John 6: One can readily see the great persuasive power of the Jews. Remember, it was the Jews who first murmured at Jesus (John 6:41), and it was the Jews that “strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” (John 6:52), but it was the disciples who turned away from Jesus (John 6:66)! The same social pressure today has caused many “would-be” disciple not to be disciples. This world and those of this world holds no hope, but sadly, many have sought after it. John warns, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1John 2:15). Paul warned, “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (1Timothy 6:7). And James warned, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4). Yet, there are those whose concern is not for their own spiritual being but for the world.

## **One Last Response**

There is one response that we did not mention for we saved it for the last. It is the right response, the one Jesus wants us to give. It is Peter's response to Jesus question, "Will ye also go away?," and it is found in John 6:68-69, "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Notice Peter's reply is three-fold. First, he said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Second, he said, "we believe" which shows they were mentally persuaded. And third, he said, "and are sure" indicating complete knowledge ascertained by examination that "Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Literally, it could be translated, "We have believed and have known that You are God's holy one."

Finally, we must ask, "How do you respond to this question that Jesus asked?" Apostasy is real, and many are traveling down its road, but worst is the fact that many are being persuaded by those who are unconcerned about spiritual things as were the Jews in this account. Jesus asked the twelve, but it must also be asked of you,

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