

RELATED SCRIPTURES

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 2.5.23

Romans 7:14-25 | John 6:37 | 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

SUMMARY

The followers of Jesus had witnessed his miraculous signs and heard him say some difficult things. But arguably, nothing Jesus said was more difficult for them than what they had heard leading into John 6:60. Jesus had just told his disciples, “I am the bread of life,” likening himself to the life-sustaining bread from heaven that their ancestors ate in the wilderness. However, Jesus took the comparison a step further by saying, “If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” Not only was a saying like this hard to understand, but it wasn’t in alignment with what his followers expected from Jesus. Many of his disciples expected a conquering military leader and a physical kingdom, yet Jesus spoke of death and sacrifice. Jesus then explains that he isn’t speaking in the physical realm but the spiritual; his death would satisfy not a physical deficiency but a spiritual one. Jesus explains further that it is the Spirit of God who gives life. The flesh (human emotions, will, and intellect) cannot produce genuine spiritual life. Only the Spirit can accomplish spiritual renewal. Upon hearing a difficult message like this, the passage tells us that many of his followers left. Those followers failed to realize that even though they can’t achieve spiritual renewal through human effort, it also means we can’t lose it through a failure in human effort. This is the assurance Jesus gives all those who believe him, which he said alongside his difficult words: “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out” (John 6:37).

GROUP QUESTIONS

From the sermon or your direct reading of John 6:6-70, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you.

Jesus frequently spoke difficult words. What is difficult about following Jesus, and what are some reassurances he gives us that help to deal with the difficulties? Have you arrived at a place where you see the reassurances? Why or why not?

What are some areas in your spiritual life where you are prone to operate “in the flesh”? How can one move from operating in the flesh to trusting solely in the work of Christ?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.