

## **Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

### **Marks of a Spiritual Defector, Part 2**

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 90-11

#### Divine Sorrow over Spiritual Defection, Part 3

As we come tonight to a time of study of the Word of God and as we prepare ourselves for the Lord's table in a few moments, I want you to open your Bible once again to the sixth chapter of John. I was just telling Chris Mueller that I had really intended this originally to be a twopart series, two messages that I would do on two Sundays, but the first time we did it we had a visiting children's musical and I wasn't left very much time. And so it sort of turned into a short one, a long one and then a couple weeks off and here we are again, kind of approach. But I do want to complete what we began in John chapter 6 on the subject of divine sorrow over spiritual defection. I think, and I regret, that perhaps it's lost a bit of its impact in our minds because of the time involved, but I trust in the future as it goes out on tape it will have the continuity of those who listen to these sequentially.

John chapter 6 provides for us a very good illustration of the problem and the characteristic of spiritual defection. We took as a key verse a verse near the end of the chapter, verse 66. Now that verse says, "From that time, or that point, many of His disciples...that is the disciples following Jesus...went back and walked no more with Him." Spiritual defection, disciples who defected. This is not the only place in Scripture where we find out about such things. We are reminded of the parables of the soil and those soils where there seem to be life, there seem to be interest in Christ. And after a little while, when pressure and tribulation came, the sun of persecution came out, they were scorched because there was no real root and died. We are reminded of that soil filled with weeds and when the true seed would have been able to grow and bring forth fruit, it was choked out by the weeds in that life being the cares of this age and earthly riches and such things.

We are not unmindful of those who are exhorted in Hebrews chapter 3, not to abandon the day of salvation, not to move away from the things they know to be true. We are reminded of those in 1 John 2:19 who having known in their minds the truth rejected it, walked no more with the truth of Christ but left. And John writes of them and says they went out from us that it might be made manifest they were never of us.

The reality then of spiritual defection is something that Scripture deals with from the beginning of the history of Israel right on through the close of the book of Revelation. And ever and always such spiritual defection causes sorrow to the Lord. And in this particular chapter, chapter 6 of John's gospel, as clearly as anywhere we can sense the pathos of the heart of Christ as He deals with

spiritual defectors. And though it does not say specifically, I believe in this particular incident is very likely that Jesus Himself wept tears over the anguish of His own soul in seeing spiritual defection.

Now as we look at the chapter, we ask the question: what marks a spiritual defector? What do we look for and how do we identify someone who appears to attach himself to Christ but then defects? And all of us have experienced such people, all of us if we've been Christians for any length of time at all. What marks a spiritual defector?

First of all, we said in verses 1 and 2 that it tells us that a great multitude followed Jesus, verse 2. And we noted that spiritual defectors are attracted by the crowd. They are attracted by the crowd. The truth is, and I say this not as a matter of absolute fact but as a sort of formulating opinion, I believe there are more likely to be spiritual defectors in a large church than in a small one where there is sort of a bandwagon mentality, or there is sort of an attractiveness because of the diversity of options. A church like ours that provides all kinds of social contacts, all kinds of recreational opportunities, all kinds of music opportunities, and many many kinds of relationships and conferences and seminars and camps and trips and so forth provides, I think, a more attractive lure to a person who is not genuine than, for example, a very small church with very limited resources where a person might only go in search of that which was truly representative of the mind and heart of God. So I don't want to say that as an absolute fact, but it seems to me that since these people tend to follow after the crowd, we might be more prone to experience spiritual defection than some others.

Secondly, we noted in our last study that a spiritual defector is fascinated by the supernatural. There is a mystery about Jesus in John 6 that draws the crowd, verse 2 says, "Because they saw His miracles which He did on those who were diseased." The spiritual defector tends to be the person who is attracted by the crowd and fascinated by the promise of a changed life or miraculous intervention by God or miraculous success in his business or miraculous success in his social life or his relationships with others, or even in the area of peace and joy. He's looking for something that's going to come from outside his little world, maybe a supernatural intervention to change things from being the way they are to being the way he'd like them to be. These are the thrillseekers. And you remember they followed Jesus. They saw the miracle that day, verses 11 and 12, He fed them, He gave them all that food. That fascinates the defector. You don't know that he's going to be a defector yet but certainly he is attracted usually, not always, by the supernatural fascination. It seems in the New Testament that these kind of people always wanted more miracles, more signs, more wonders and on many occasions even asked Jesus please if He would accommodate them by performing what they wanted.

The third thing he mentions and we saw this in verses 14 and 15 is that the spiritual defector tends to think only of earthly things. They were in verse 14 convinced that Jesus was the great prophet mentioned by Moses in Deuteronomy. In Deuteronomy, Moses was given the revelation of God that there would come that prophet, that great prophet who would bring truth into the world. And that

prophet would be the Messiah, that great anointed one. Here they are convinced that Jesus is that prophet. But instead of worshiping Him, verse 15 says, they wanted to take Him by force to make Him a king. They wanted to force Him to overthrow Rome and provide free food on a continual basis. They wanted to push Him, in other words, into their own earthly enterprises.

The spiritual defector is the person who is attracted by the crowd. He's attracted, more fascinated by the supernatural promises of Christianity. And he shows up with one thing in his mind or her mind and that is to see if Christ might not deliver what he or she wants in this earth. If it's joy or peace or happiness, or bliss or a meaningful relationship, or success, or prosperity or whatever it is, they seek the fulfillment of those earthly things. And, of course, Jesus answered that in His conversation with Pilate in John 18:36 and 37 when He said, "My Kingdom is not of this world." But these people have no sense of the spiritual, no sense of the eternal, no concern for the divine plan of God. They want here and now what Jesus can deliver and if Jesus doesn't deliver it, they're not going to hang around. It's all in the here and now.

Fourthly we saw the spiritual defector also has no desire for true worship. In the incident beginning in verse 16 and running down to verse 21, Jesus walked on the water, came into the little boat with the disciples finally. The incident ended with worship because Matthew 14 recording the very same incident in verse 23 says, "And they worshiped Him." And here we have set in contrast to the false worshipers the true disciples who worshiped the Lord Jesus Christ. Sham believers never do that. They're not interested in worship, they are basically self centered and religion for them is strictly utilitarian. It is strictly a matter of pragmatism, what is it going to benefit me? There is no awe, there is no wonder, there is no adoring praise. They are not interested in true worship.

Fifthly we saw that the spiritual defector is a seeker of personal prosperity. We've already hinted at that in terms of the idea of their desire for earthly things. This expands it a little bit more. Beginning in verse 22 going all the way down to verse 27, all they have in mind is personal prosperity, all they have in mind is what they want. What can I get from Jesus? And here it had to be food. As I told you last time, life for them in that agricultural society basically was taken up in trying to earn their bread. They had not the sophisticated options that we have today, in a society that most of us have absolutely nothing to do with producing what we eat. We simply go down and buy it or pay somebody to feed it to us. Those people literally lived to eat. And the idea or the prospect of free food would have given them total vacation the rest of their life. And so, when they thought Jesus might provide that, they sought after Him, verse 26, strictly for the loaves, strictly for the loaves. And in verse 27 He reminds them that they are ignoring the eternal and they are hankering after that which perishes.

Typically a spiritual defector comes around Christ, Christians and Christianity and the church to seek out personal prosperity. There is no thought of worship. There is no concern for heavenly things, eternal things, divine things. There is a fascination with the supernatural and what it might mean to them. And there is certainly the attraction of the crowd and all these people who seem to be happy

and have found something meaningful in their life but there is that underlying seeking of personal prosperity that dominates the thought.

That leads to a sixth characteristic or mark of a spiritual defector, he makes demands on God. He makes demands on God. Beginning in verse 28 was the demand for power. They said, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" And they're just like Simon in Acts 8 who wanted the miracle power of Philip and he said, "Here's some money, I'll buy that magic, I want that power." And there are those people who demand power from God. They seek the miraculous. They seek the supernatural. They want God to give them the power. That's why they line up, as I mentioned to you, in the meetings that are held by people like Kenneth Hagan and Kenneth Copeland and Fred Price in this area and others who preach that kind of doctrine. And they demand that God give them power so they can be prosperous, so they can be effective in attaining their goals.

The second thing this crowd demanded in verse 30 was the demand not only for power but the demand for proof. "They said therefore to Him, What sign do You show us then that we may see and believe You? What do You work?" Well how ridiculous, He had just fed maybe as many as 30 thousand people, He had created food in His own hands for them, they all not only saw the miracle, they all ate the miracle in a very personal appropriation. But still they're saying, "Prove Yourself...Prove Yourself, show Your credentials." And this is something, believe me, that the church has always had to deal with with those people who are forever seeking proof. It is not faith to seek that. People say, "You know, if you believe God He'll do a miracle, if you believe hard enough He'll do a miracle. If you don't doubt He'll do a miracle." There are people out there trying to screw up all their faith and sort of force God to do a miracle. That is not faith, that is doubt looking for proof. That is not faith. There are those people who want God to top the miracle that He did last time to show His credentials, to pressure Him to do more just as these people wanted Jesus to perform better than Moses. They reminded Jesus that He only fed them one meal and Moses had fed the children of Israel for all their duration in the wilderness with manna from heaven and Jesus turned around and remind them that Moses didn't feed them, God did. Moses just organized the collection process.

Then in verse 34 they demand something else. First they demanded power, secondly they demanded proof and thirdly they demanded provision. They said, "Give us this bread. You've got some kind of special bread that's going to make us so satisfied we won't hunger anymore, give it to us...give it to us." It's a very grasping response to Christ. He is referring, of course, to the bread of heaven, the eternal life that's in Himself. He is offering Himself to them. They don't understand that. They say, "You've got some kind of bread that causes people never to hunger, give it to us on our terms, powerful bread to end our hunger." Very self seeking.

And you see the selfseeking spirit in all these things. So the shallow disciple, the spiritual defector makes demands on God to perform at their command, give them power, give them proof, give them provision. We want what we want when we want it. It's very much like a spoiled child...with no

patience, no sense of submission.

And then in the seventh place the spiritual defector, and this is very important, seeks no personal relationship. The spiritual defector is not interested in a personal relationship. Do you remember from verse 35 to 40 we talked about this. Notice how many times in verse 35, "I am the bread of life...he that comes to Me shall never hunger...he that believes on Me," note those personal pronouns. Verse 36, "You also have seen Me," and you should believe but you believe not is implied there. In verse 37, "Him that comes to Me." Verse 38, "I came down from heaven." He is the bread and what He is saying is that you must come to Me, believe in Me, commit your life to Me, receive Me. Verse 41 kind of sums it up, "I am" is repeated again, "the bread." The Jews, of course, were murmuring that He said that.

But the idea here is everything in terms of what Jesus has to offer is connected to a personal relationship. You receive Him, not His teachings, you receive Him. I had someone say to me this week and well meaningly, when I asked the person if that person knew Jesus Christ, the response was, "I've had a religious experience...I've had a religious experience." I said, "You have? Well, what was it?" "Well, one time I was up north in a certain place and all of a sudden I was spiritual transported to Southern California and I...and this was very sincere...and I found myself in a certain place, recognizing everything, and seeing things in that place that were not there the last time I saw that place but were there the next time I saw that place so I know I was really there. And that was a spiritual experience. So I really believe God is with me cause I've had a spiritual experience."

To which I replied, "Do you know what that spiritual experience means?" "No." I said, "I do. It means nothing. It means absolutely nothing in regard to your relationship to God. It means nothing. I don't even know what it was. Maybe it was a dream. Maybe it was a hallucination, maybe it was demonic. You have no indication that it was God and there's no content to it." No, we're not just looking for a spiritual experience.

A young man said to me this morning, going through the line in the visitors reception, he said, "I've been going to a different church and I came to visit your church today but," he said, "it was nice but your church isn't as spiritual as the other church I've been going to." I said, "Really?" He said, "No, they're more spiritual." I said, "Well, what do you mean by that?" "Well, I'm not sure." I said, "Well what did you want out of church? What did you come for?" He said, "Well, I want to learn about God." I said, "Well, this morning with us did you hear things about God? Did you learn some things about God?" "Yes." And he said, "Well, I wanted to...I wanted to understand...I want to understand the Bible." I said, "Well, did I help to explain a little of the Bible to you?" "Yes." I said, "Well, what do you want?" He says, "Well, it wasn't much of an experience." And I said to him, "Well, you keep coming and maybe you'll get into it."

If you want an experience, go to a boxing match. You can laugh and cry and feel pathos and suffer vicarious pain. You can agonize, you can scream. You can throw your arms back and go into a dead faint if you want, if all you want is an experience. Go to a basketball game. I mean, if you're looking for a feeling, if you just want to emote, go to a funeral and just cry or go to a party and laugh, but don't equate that with a genuine living relationship with Christ, it may not have anything to do with that.

Personal relationship...but you see, the spiritual defector is not looking for a personal relationship, that isn't the issue. The true disciple seeks a personal relationship. Defectors, they have no...no desire for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, that is very threatening to them.

So, the spiritual defector is drawn by the crowd, fascinated by the supernatural, thinking only of earthly things, he has no desire for worship. He seeks personal prosperity therefore makes demands on God and seeks no personal relationship. Now that brings us to where we ended. And let's pick it up just briefly at verse 41.

The eighth mark and this may be not always the case but is very often the case, he speaks privately against the truth. He speaks privately against the truth. It's been my experience, and I think it's the understanding of spiritual experience on a pretty wide basis, that people who come into the church seeking what they can get out of Christ who don't get it may continue to play the game in front of the Christians but they begin to down play and criticize and mock the church when they get outside. Verse 41, of course the Jews then...there's that conguzoword means to mumble or murmur, speak privately, quietly, mumble, murmur, grumble, a mocking tongue. The Jews mocked because He said I am the bread that came down from heaven, how ridiculous. They laughed to scorn. "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says I came down from heaven? We know He was just a child just like every other child." And they scorned the truth.

"Jesus answered and said to them, Stop your murmuring among yourselves." You see, He shattered their hope for free food and they were upset and once Jesus doesn't deliver, people begin to turn. There was no desire for repentance, there was no desire for faith. They just wanted...they wanted to dine basically on the husks of earth fit for the pigs and not the sweet bread of heaven, to put it simply. So when they didn't get what they wanted they mock.

That's not the way it is when someone truly comes to Christ. So they mocked. And Jesus said, verse 44, "No man can come to Me except the Father who has sent Me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." And there we have that same most interesting thing where Jesus is almost wanting to explain their unbelief leans on God's...what?...sovereignty again and says almost as if to say oh well, after all they couldn't come except the Father draws them. I mean, it's almost a way of saying, "Well there is an answer to how they could reject Me, there is an explanation to how they could say no. There doesn't seem to be any reasonable explanation but there is and that is they couldn't come any

way unless the Father drew them. And if the Father drew them they would come and they would stay and I would raise them up at the end." He doesn't argue with them. He doesn't say, "Well if you're going to insist let Me do a few more tricks..let Me do a few more wonders." He doesn't say that. He just returns to His confidence in God's sovereignty. He says, in effect, water won't flow up hill, bitter fountains don't yield sweet water, evil trees don't bear good fruit. And without sovereign calling grace, nobody can come any way. And again He leans on the sovereignty of God.

But it is typical I think of a defector to speak evil against a church. I've experienced that many many times. People come and, boy, they want to cash in on the crowd and they want to see what God will do and they come with their agenda for God to perform. And when God doesn't perform the way He ought to, they begin to mock. And...the words come back to me on many occasions about people who came for a while and then begin to speak evil against the ministry because it didn't deliver all the little things they had on their list.

A defector is also marked, if you're keeping score this is number nine, a defector is also marked because he has no hunger for divine reality...divine truth, no hunger for that. Look at verse 45 which is really a quote from Isaiah 54:13 but a representative quote from many prophets, Jeremiah, Joel, Micah, Zephaniah, Malachi, they all taught the same thing and this was common among the prophets. And so it is written in the prophets and Isaiah 54:13 is quoted as representative of those prophets. "It is written in the prophets and they shall all be taught of God, every man therefore that has heard and learned of the Father comes to Me." You see, He says those who come are the ones who have been taught of God, they've been taught of God. That's a beautiful phrase. It is equal to being drawn by the Father. Verse 44, "The Father draws them." Verse 45, "The Father teaches them." It's as if to say all that the Father draws He teaches and all that He draws come and all that He teaches learn.

So, true disciples come to Christ and they love the Word. They have a hunger for divine reality. Elections drawing is connected to divine truth coming through the Word. And so we can ask the question very simply, if your heart...ask yourself this, what is the longing of my heart? Is the longing of my heart a hunger for the bread of the Word? If it is then that is the mark of a true disciple. If that is not the hunger of your heart, if the hunger of your heart is for personal prosperity, personal gain, self aggrandizement then that's characteristic of a spiritual defector and when you don't cash in you'll be gone....you'll be gone. Mark it. Does your heart hunger for the Word? Is the bread of heaven enough? Is it enough for you to be drawn by the Father and then to be taught by God? To hear the truth and learn it, is that the deepest cry of your heart?

And someone comes to me....recently I got a letter from someone who said, "I'm leaving your church because I want to go where I can go and have an experience." I understand that. Some people want to be taught of God, some people want to have an experience. And when they're not feeling what they would like to feel, they're not getting what they want to get, they're gone. I understand that. And

I guess, in a sense, you know, I feel badly about that, but in another sense we believe the priority is the Word of God.

Look at verse 46, "Not that any man hath seen the Father except He who is of God, He hath seen the Father." In other words, in verse 45 He talked about learning of the Father and He wants to be sure that nobody thinks that there is a possible way to see the living God so He just sort of adds the footnote, no one has ever really seen the Father except He who is of God, He has seen the Father. And He sees Him through the eye of faith. Christ is the one who reveals that everlasting life of God in Himself. God communicates through His Son. So the point of this little area of the text that I want you to see is that where you have true faith you have a desire or a hunger for spiritual reality. When you have sham faith and where you have a defector there is not the interest in teaching, there is not the longing to see God, to know God, to commune with God through His Son. "Verily, verily...verse 47 says...I say to you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life, I am that bread of life, your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead, this is the bread that comes down from heaven that a man may eat of it and not die." And then in verse 51 He says it again, "I am the living bread." And He keeps offering Himself to them but that's not what satisfies their desire. They're not hungry for Him. They're not hungry for spiritual reality. They're just not. There's no desire to appropriate. There's no desire to take in divine reality.

To add to that, may I also say, if you want to put number ten on your list, the spiritual defector has no deepfelt hunger for true salvation. He has no deepfelt hunger for true salvation. Look at verse 51 again. "I am the living bread that came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever and the bread that I will give is My flesh which I will give for the life of the world." And there He speaks of His death. "If one will believe in Me," He says, "and in My death for the sin of the world, and will take Me into his life personally, like eating bread, he will have eternal life." Some people will look at Christ and they'll sniff the bread a little, they'll admire it, they'll analyze it, they'll philosophize about it, they'll eulogize it, they'll handle it, they'll even say it's excellent but they'll never know what it means to have eternal life until they eat or personally appropriate Christ by faith, till you receive Christ personally into your own life.

But some people have no deepfelt hunger for true salvation. They have no real hunger for spiritual reality, they're not interested in the truth of God. They can take it or leave it, they can come to church or not come to church as far as the message is concerned. They can complain if it gets longer than ten or fifteen minutes. They're not interested in spiritual reality. They would never read the Bible on their own, they might go to a Bible study because they think they might get something out of it to meet their personal agenda and list of things. But they're not going to study on their own, they're not going to search for spiritual reality, they're not going to long to know God, they have no hunger for true salvation.



So, verse 52 says, "The Jews therefore argued among themselves saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" And they mocked that showing their abysmal ignorance. "What is He teaching, cannibalism? This is ridiculous. How is He going to...how is He going to give us His flesh?" This shows you how thick they were. They couldn't even understand the metaphor in His language. Obviously He wasn't talking about His physical flesh because in verse 51 He said, "The bread that I will give is My flesh which I will give for the life of the world." Did they think He was silly enough to assume that He had enough flesh to feed the whole world? Of course He didn't mean that but in their spiritual thickness they couldn't understand what He did mean.

By the way, that's been one of the major errors of Catholicism through the years. The Catholics have misinterpreted this passage to severely through the centuries that they actually believe that in the communion service transubstantiation takes place and the wafer and the cup literally become the actual flesh and blood of Christ. And the world of people who partake of that are literally eating that miraculously transformed flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. And I think they have the same inability to understand divine truth who proffered that doctrine as those listeners did on this particular occasion in John 6. He is not talking about that, that is obvious. What He is talking about is personal reception of Himself, personal appropriation.

Follow His thought in verse 54. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life." He's not talking about cannibalism. He's talking about one who accepts My incarnation, that's the flesh, and accepts My death on the cross, that's His out poured blood. This is, in a sense, an allusion...with an "a" not an "i"...an allusion, that is alluding to His incarnation and His crucifixion. You must accept that God came in human flesh and died on the cross. And the one who will accept that, who will eat that truth and take it in, I'll raise him at the last day and implied, just as I'll raise Myself from the grave, for My flesh is food indeed and My blood is drink indeed and He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood dwells in Me and I in Him.

Just as when you take in...listen...when you take in food it becomes you, have you noticed? It sure does. That's the work of amino acids. It doesn't matter what you eat, it comes out you. You can take in any kind of food. It can be vegetable, it can be mineral, it can be animal, you can take in chicken and you don't grow feathers you just get more you. And that's the work of your amino acid system. And that little picture of science is our Lord's analogy. When you drink My blood and eat My flesh, that is you take in My incarnation and you appropriate My death, you literally become one with Me. Isn't that a marvelous thought? I become you. That's why Galatians 2:20 says, "The life which I live I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." That's why Galatians 2:20 says, "It's no longer I but Christ living in me." And I receive eternal life and I receive resurrection life and I will be raised at the last day when I personally appropriate Christ.

And He says it again in verse 57, "As the living Father has sent Me and I live by the Father, so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me." You receive His life, the very life of God. Take Him into your life

and receive life, the life of God, eternal life, resurrection, oneness with Christ. Incredible things. This is that bread which came down from heaven. It's not like the manna your fathers ate, verse 58 says, and they're dead. You eat this and you'll...what?...you'll live forever. You understand His words, don't you? Not so hard.

Salvation is relationship, beloved, that's what He's saying. It is the exchanged life, it is taking Christ in. It brings me eternal life, resurrection life, divine life, one with Christ. But Jesus is saying that to them and they're not interested. Verse 59 says He was teaching these things in the synagogue, they weren't interested in this. You see, it's a very basic thing, only the hungry eat...only the hungry eat. The defector is not hungry for spiritual righteousness. The defector is not hungry for salvation. Why? He's full of the world and he's full of himself and he has all the answers and he is self-satisfied, fed with the food that perishes and the idea of the bread of life is absolutely ridiculous to him.

Let me just talk about that concept of eating for a moment, before we wrap this up. The concept of eating is a very graphic figure to express personal appropriation of Christ. Let me tell you why. First of all, eating is necessary if I am to derive the advantage of the bread that it is intended to give. I can smell bread, I can look at bread, I can like bread, I can squeeze bread but it isn't going to do a thing for me until I...what?...till I eat it. The same thing is true of Christ. You can admire Christ from a distance, you can kind of poke around say, "Isn't that wonderful, isn't He beautiful, isn't that great, boy, I sure believe in Him, that's a great thing." But not until you take into your own life and receive as your own Lord and Savior the living God in human flesh and accept His death and resurrection on your behalf do you appropriate the advantage that the living bread is intended to convey. So eating is a very apt analogy.

Secondly, eating is always responding to a felt need...a felt need. That need is called hunger. And let me tell you something, there is nothing as wonderful as eating when you're hungry, it is wonderful. And I'll tell you something else, there is nothing as repulsive as eating when you are not hungry, and I have experienced that in my ministry where everyone, when you go somewhere, feels they want to feed you the fattened calf...breakfast, lunch and dinner. And when you are still carrying around by late evening what you have not been able to swallow since morning and they want to feed you again, it really is repulsive. And I often liken that to the person in the world who has no appetite for things divine. You can't stuff it in them, there's no appetite. But when a sinner loves his sin, when a sinner is stuffed full of the world, stuffed full of the flesh, full of the food that perishes, the thought of true bread is ridiculous, repulsive, nauseating, he mocks it, he despises it, he pushes Christ away. It's not until a man is broken over his sin, awakened to his lost condition, his purposelessness, not until a man or woman senses his void, his loneliness in front of God, the gnawing hunger of his soul that cries for salvation, it's not until he experiences that that he will eat eagerly the true bread. And so what we're doing in that sense is as we carry the message of Christ we're looking for hungry hearts, aren't we? So eating is an apt analogy for that reason, because it's responding to a felt need.

Eating also does imply appropriation. Food is taken in and it becomes us. And eating also is personal. You can't have someone eat for you. If I could have done that years ago I would have because I get so busy I sometimes don't have time to eat. I've thought about asking someone to eat for me, but I really don't think it will work too well. I have to do that myself. I have to do that myself, no one can do that on my behalf. So when the Lord selected eating as the analogy here, He really selected a marvelously rich analogy. Christ is the living bread. If we are to derive anything from that it must be taken into us, that by faith we receive Him as Lord and Savior, the one who lived for us, died for us and rose again. That will only occur when we are hungry for that. It only will benefit us as we literally appropriate the life of Christ in us so that He becomes one with us and that must be done personally, it cannot be done on our behalf by anyone else. And so, the spiritual defector is not interested...not interested. He has no hunger for such bread. And if you try to give him that, he usually leaves.

Well, those are some marks. Let's see the response in verse 60. "Many therefore of His disciples when they heard this said, This is a hard saying, this is difficult, many of His learners," by the way, these are not necessarily true believers as we will see in verse 66, "they said this is hard." By that they mean it's objectionable. This is offensive. What is offensive about it and what's hard? I'll tell you what it is, very easy, Jesus is saying I am it spiritually, I and I alone am the source of spiritual life. And they're saying, "Wait a minute, that's objectionable. And then to accept Your flesh and Your blood, that is objectionable." They didn't like the narrowness of what He said.

Oh, they were attracted by the crowd, and they were fascinated by His miracles, and they couldn't think of anything in this world that they wouldn't like to have Him give them, but they had no desire to worship Him, adore Him, they sought only personal gain, they wanted to demand whatever He could give them. There was no desire for relationship. There was no hunger for spiritual reality. There was no felt need for repentance and salvation. There was no interest in His death for sin. And so, in verse 61 Jesus sensed their response and when Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples, now you can't make that word "disciple" mean anything more than a follower, true or false here, when He knew inside of Him by His omniscience that they were grumbling at this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? Don't you believe I came down from heaven? Don't you believe I alone am the bread of life? Don't you believe I am the one and no one else who can satisfy the cry of your heart?"

Verse 62, "What if you see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" In other words, if I just take off like a rocket and go back to heaven, will you believe Me then? If I go back to heaven, will you believe I came from heaven? And that is an interesting statement because that is precisely what He did, right? In His ascension but not before the eyes of any but His own disciples who were true believers. So in verse 63 He says, "It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing, the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." And what He's saying is, "Look, don't be stuck on the physical. The eating I'm talking about means accepting My words, accepting the truth I'm

speaking."

But, verse 64 says, there are some of you who don't believe. "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not...and here it comes...who it was that betrayed Him...that would betray Him." He knew who the defectors were and who the betrayers were. He was omniscient. Oh, there were some things that He chose not to know, like the times and the seasons of the Father planning the future, but there were some things He chose to know in His omniscience. And one of those areas was who was a defector and who was a betrayer. And how deeply that must have hurt His perfect soul. I know who you are, He said. I know that.

And again, verse 65, He leans on sovereignty and He said almost in this soliloquy again, "Therefore said I unto you that no man can come unto Me except it were given unto him of My Father." That's always His explanation...Well, logically and rationally and reasonably I can't understand why you won't believe but I understand that you can't believe unless it's given you of My Father. An expression of response to His own pain of rejection, He leans on sovereignty.

And then it says in verse 66, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." Fickle spiritual defectors. And I believe at this moment Jesus felt a pain within like a sword run into His own heart, like a spear rammed in His side. I believe the pain here must have at least been equal to that He endured on the cross. And I believe in an emotional sense His heart was absolutely broken. Many of these disciples went away and that hurt Him deeply because He is not willing that men should perish. And even though He's leaning on the sovereignty of God, He is still in deep pain over their unbelief. And look at the response in verse 67, this is a great insight into the compassionate Christ, "Then said Jesus to the Twelve...and you have to understand the Greek text, it says this...you won't go away also, will you?" It's almost pathetic, as if to say you won't do this too, will you, please? It is mein the Greek and it expects a no answer and so you phrase it that way, you won't go away will you?

And sweet Peter responds, "Lord, to whom shall we go, You have the words of eternal life." He knew. He knew He wasn't talking about eating His body and drinking His blood. He knew that taking in His flesh and His blood was receiving His words, His truth. And Peter responds not for himself, "To whom shall we go," and he embraces all those genuine disciples who are still left. And verse 69 says, "And we believe and we are sure that You are that Christ, the Son of the living God." We accept You're God in human flesh. Oh bless them. Here by the calling grace of the Father are some who think of heavenly things. Oh, what a change, what a refreshment. Some who seek to worship, some who desire a personal relationship with Christ, some who understand His truth and seek repentance and seek salvation. Bless them...bless them. They're the genuine.

But it doesn't end there. Verse 70, the chapter closes, two final verses, "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve? And one of you is a devil." Peter, you're wrong. I know you said "we",

Peter, but it's not you twelve, it's only eleven, one of you is a devil. "He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve."

Listen, some spiritual defectors defect early. Some spiritual defectors get in the inside group and defect very late. Judas is the archetype, the prototype defector, the perfect closing illustration. Listen, Judas was drawn to Jesus by the crowd. Judas was fascinated by the supernatural. Judas thought only of earthly things. He had no desire to worship Christ, he sought only personal gain, money was his god. He demanded what he wanted and when he didn't get it, he tried to sell Jesus for all he could get. He never had any true intimate relationship with Christ. He had no understanding of divine truth and he never hungered for genuine salvation. He is the model defector. I wish he was the only one, he is not. There have been millions who have joined Judas in the defector's kiss to be betray the Son of God. And that grieves the heart of the Savior.

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