

#1789
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John 6:60-69¹
Only Jesus has
the Words of eternal life.
13th Sunday after Pentecost
Supplementary Lectionary Series “B,”
Gospels

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⁶⁰ On hearing it,² many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³ The Spirit makes alive; the flesh counts for nothing. The Words I have spoken to you are Spirit, and they are Life.

⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it has been given to him by the Father.”

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

⁶⁷ “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “LORD, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE JESUS?

I. HE IS THE SON OF MAN

II. HE IS THE HOLY ONE OF GOD

III. HE HAS THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

In the Name of Jesus who has and speaks the words of eternal life to us, Dear Fellow-Redeemed,

Jesus has ended his “Bread of Life” discourse. In it, he has given the first of his “I Am” statements: “I Am the Bread of Life.” Seven other “I Am” statements will follow. Jesus will say, “I Am the Light of the World” (8:12; 9:5); “I Am the Gate for the Sheep” (10:7,9);

¹ *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984. All Scripture references are taken from this translation unless noted otherwise.

² That is, Jesus’ Bread of Life discourse in which Jesus said,

⁵³ ... **“I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever munches my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the Last Day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever munches my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I myself in him** (6:53-56).

The context indicates that about which Jesus is speaking: “I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life” (6:47). Thus, eating, munching, crunching, gnawing ... Jesus’ flesh and drinking his blood means having complete and total faith in him alone as one’s Savior.

“I Am the Good Shepherd” (10:11,14); “I Am the Resurrection and the Life” (11:25a); “I Am the Way and the Truth and the Life” (14:6a); “I Am the Vine” (15:1,5); and, “Before Abraham was, I Am” (8:58). These “I Am” statements indicate that Jesus is referring to himself as the true God who revealed himself to Moses at the burning bush. God said, “I AM WHO I AM!” (Hebrew: **hy<h]a, rv,a} hy<h]a³**) (Exodus 3:14a). This Name of God was later translated as the word “LORD” in all capital letters – a reference to the God of free and faithful grace. With the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus is the God who loves and forgives those who do not deserve his love and forgiveness; he is the LORD, the God of undeserved love. Thus, the only way to have forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation is through Jesus – through faith in him alone as one’s Savior. It is at this point that many take offense at Jesus – many stumble because of him; many fall away from following Jesus. So the question comes to us too: DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE JESUS? DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE JESUS? I. HE IS THE SON OF MAN; II. HE IS THE HOLY ONE OF GOD; III. HE HAS THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE.

DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE JESUS?
I. HE IS THE SON OF MAN

In his Bread of Life discourse, Jesus has said,

⁵³ ... “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever munches my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the Last Day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever munches my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I myself in him (6:53-56).

The context indicates that about which Jesus is speaking, for Jesus says, “My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the Last Day” (6:40). Thus, this eating, munching, crunching, gnawing of Jesus’ flesh and drinking Jesus’ blood, means having complete and total faith in him alone as one’s Savior. In keeping with this revelation, Jesus has previously, and now in our text, referred to himself as “the Son of Man.”

Jesus says to the disciples who are grumbling about him, “What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!” (6:62). Jesus had said, “I am the living bread who came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (6:51). Thus, Jesus proclaimed, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (6:53). Jesus is “the Son of Man.”

³ *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft Stuttgart) 1990.

“The Son of Man” is a messianic title. That means that it is a title that refers to the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, whom God promised to send into the world to redeem the world from sin, death and hell. “Son of Man,” the messianic title, means that Jesus is, at once and the same time, the Prophet, the Priest and the King whom God sent into the world.

As the Prophet, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, proclaimed God’s Word in truth and purity. Jesus proclaimed repentance for sin and forgiveness of sin that he would achieve for all people. Jesus continues to proclaim repentance and forgiveness today through the Bible, his Word.

As the Great High Priest, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, taught the people, interceded for the people, and was himself the Sacrifice of Atonement for the sins of all. Jesus continues as the Great High Priest today, no longer offering sacrifice – that was done and complete once for all on the cross – but Jesus functions for believers today as the Great High Priest as he intercedes for believers at the right hand of God – a position of all power and authority.

As the King, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, fought the battle against sin, death and the grave; against hell and against the devil and his power. Jesus won that battle. Jesus’ resurrection from the dead on Easter Sunday morning, proves that he is the victorious King. Jesus shares his victory with those who believe in him. Moreover, Jesus, as King, continues to rule, guide, direct and control all things for the benefit of his Church – the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints – all who believe in him as their Savior.

Thus, this title of “Son of Man,” which Jesus appropriates and applies to himself, is an indication that Jesus is not only true man but also true God. Jesus is the God-man who has taken away the sins of the world.

APPROPRIATION

Jesus is the Son of Man for you. Jesus came down from heaven to do his Father’s will, and his Father’s will is that Jesus should take away the sins of the world and give eternal life to all who believe in him. This is what Jesus has done for you and for me. Jesus is the Atoning Sacrifice for our sins. Jesus has reconciled us to the Father in heaven by sacrificing himself on the cross.

But the title, Son of Man, reveals that not only is Jesus true man, he is also true God. Peter makes this confession in our text this morning. Why would anyone want to leave this Jesus, who is both the Son of Man and the Son of God?

DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE JESUS?
I. HE IS THE SON OF MAN; and,
II. HE IS THE HOLY ONE OF GOD

When the Twelve disciples were asked by Jesus if they wanted to leave too, Simon Peter made the confession for all of them: “LORD, to whom shall we go? We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God” (6:68a,69). What does it mean that Jesus is the Holy One of God?

When the Angel Gabriel announced to the virgin Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and the power of the Most High God would overshadow her, the Angel also said, “the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35b). When Peter confesses that Jesus is the Holy One of God, he is confessing that Jesus is the Son of God and, therefore, true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. How could Peter make such a stunning confession?

Jesus indicates how Peter and the rest of the Twelve can believe that Jesus is both the Son of Man and the Son of God. He says, “No one can come to me unless it has been given to him by the Father” (6:65b). Jesus said the same thing earlier in his Bread of Life discourse, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the Last Day” (6:44). The Father has to draw a person to Jesus, for by nature, no one can come to Jesus on his or her own. The Father draws a person to Jesus by sending the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says, “The Spirit makes alive; the flesh counts for nothing” (6:63a). The Holy Spirit “makes alive”; The Holy Spirit is the “faith-maker.” The Holy Spirit creates and sustains saving faith in Jesus. The flesh and everything concerned with the flesh – the pride, prestige, possessions, pastimes and pleasures of this world – those things in which the flesh delights and pursues – those things count for nothing. The only thing that has eternal value for people, is Jesus and his Word – the Word of God.

APPROPRIATION

In addition to being true man, born of the virgin Mary, Jesus also had to be true God to redeem us – to save us. If Jesus were only a man, then the words of Psalm 49 would apply to him:

**⁷ No man can redeem the life of another
or give to God a ransom for him—
⁸ the ransom for a life is costly,
no payment is ever enough—
⁹ that he should live on forever
and not see decay (Psalm 49:7-9)**

Think of what those words mean. You cannot give your life, your soul, your entire being, in order to redeem the life of a loved one. You cannot save your father or mother; you cannot save your sister or brother. You cannot save your son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter; you cannot save your aunt or uncle. Your life, your soul, cannot ransom anyone from sin, death and the grave; or, from hell and from the devil and his power. You cannot even save yourself. Only Jesus, the God-man can do that.

In speaking about Jesus, the Apostle Peter writes, "You know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed ... but with the precious blood of Christ, a Lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:18a,19). Jesus' blood is so precious and valuable that it pays for the sins of the entire world; Jesus' blood ransoms all of the souls of all people. It is by faith alone in Jesus that a person benefits from this redemptive work of Jesus – God's Son and the Son of Man. So,

DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE JESUS? III. HE HAS THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

Jesus asks the Twelve,

⁶⁷ "You do not want to leave too, do you?"

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "LORD, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God" (6:67-69).

Peter answers Jesus' question correctly because the Holy Spirit, the "Faith-Maker," has created faith in Jesus in Peter's heart. Through the Holy Spirit, the Father has drawn Peter to faith in Jesus (cf. 6:44). The Holy Spirit has worked faith in Peter through Jesus' Word.

Peter says to Jesus, "You have the Words of eternal life." Jesus' Words have eternal value. Jesus' Words are powerful. The Holy Spirit creates faith in the heart through Jesus' Words. Faith, created by Jesus' Words, gives eternal life to those who believe.

APPROPRIATION/APPLICATION

You have seen Jesus' Words of eternal life at work in a special way today. When these children, Tristen Weber, Matthew Van Epps, and Alexis Van Epps, were baptized, Jesus' Word of eternal life was at work.

It was Jesus who commanded in his Word, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). It is Jesus who continued to say, "Teach them ... everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20a). What happens when people are baptized and taught God's Word?

St. Paul says, "Faith comes from hearing the Message, and the Message is heard through the Word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). The Message of the Word of Christ is the Gospel, concerning which St. Paul also writes, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16a). The Message of the Gospel, the Word of Christ, is the Good News that Jesus led a perfect, holy, righteous and sinless life, and that Jesus' holiness, perfection, righteousness and sinlessness, has been credited to us. The Message of the Gospel, the Word of Christ, is the Good News that Jesus offered up his perfect, holy, righteous and sinless life on the cross, taking upon himself the punishment which all of us deserve. These are the Words

of eternal life, which are given to you and to me, so that we may believe in Jesus and enjoy eternal life in heaven with him.

CONCLUSION

Do you want to leave Jesus? How silly! How devastating! How self-destructive! To leave Jesus, means to lose everything that Jesus has gained for us and for the world. To lose Jesus, means to lose eternal life in heaven. To lose Jesus, means to be forever in the torment of hell. Rather, hold on to Jesus; he is the Son of Man and the Son of God your Savior and Redeemer. Hold on to Jesus through his Word in truth and purity. Amen.