

I Find That Hard to Believe

John 6:60-71

We are confronted daily with issues and facts that seem too good to be true. Sometimes we respond, “I find that hard to believe.” We have to make a conscious choice as to whether or not we will believe what we see and hear.

Jesus’ disciples were faced with a similar challenge. In John 6:22-59, Jesus taught that he came from heaven to do God’s will. He stated that believing his message would lead to eternal life rather than death. Many of his followers struggled to believe that this message was true.

Jesus challenged his followers to put their faith into practice. Discipleship is far more than merely saying the right words or being part of a group. It is a matter of obediently following Jesus. *Following Jesus requires faith plus a personal commitment.*

Response of the many (60-65)

Many of Jesus’ disciples (Jews, Gentiles) were offended by Jesus’ teaching on the Bread of Life (60-61). They found it too hard to believe.

Some of his disciples wanted the physical benefits of Jesus as Messiah, but not the spiritual matters (14-15, 26, 30-31). Others could not see beyond Jesus’ humanity to his true identity (41-46). Others could not accept his claim to be greater than Moses (32-33, 58). Still others found his language offensive, specifically eating flesh and drinking blood (53-54).

Jesus countered their grumbling by suggesting he would reveal things that would be even harder to accept. If they struggled to believe he came from heaven (38), what would they think when he returned to heaven through his death and resurrection (62)?

Rather than rely on our own abilities, we need to trust the words of the Holy Spirit that bring real life (63).

Jesus recognized that some of his disciples did not believe on him (64).

The human decision to believe is linked to God’s sovereign choice (37, 44, 65).

Response of the Twelve (66-71)

Many of his disciples chose to walk away and no longer follow Jesus because of the teaching on the Bread of Life (66).

Jesus asked the Twelve disciples whether or not they would continue to follow him (67). While Jesus did not question their commitment, he wanted them to reaffirm their commitment.

Peter spoke for the Twelve and reaffirmed their allegiance to the One whom Peter now identified as the “Holy One of God” (68-69). They recognized Jesus was their only hope.

While it might appear the Twelve had chosen Jesus as their rabbi, the reality is that Jesus chose them (70).

Jesus revealed that there was an unbeliever in their midst (70-71). He was going to behave as Satan would, or as an adversary. John, not Jesus, identified Judas as the one who would betray Jesus.

How do you respond to the words of Jesus?

- Desertion (60-66). Will you decide salvation by grace is too good to be true and choose not to believe? Will you decide that the Christian life is too hard and choose to walk away?
- Determination (67-68). Will you commit yourself to follow Jesus wholeheartedly? Will you recognize that all the other options pale in comparison?
- Deception (70-71). Will you believe the lie that being close to Jesus is good enough? Will you believe that you don't need to give Jesus your heart and life?

Follow Jesus wholeheartedly by putting your faith into practice.