**The Gospel of John:**

**Genuine and Fake Disciples, 2**

*John 6:22-27*

**Context**

This section of Scripture is one of the clearest related to genuine followers of Jesus and those who are not. There are a number of events included in this chapter, but the primary emphasis is related to the response of the audience to either a genuine belief or a falling away (defecting). False followers ultimately have a problem believing Jesus’ words:   
  
**John 6:60-66**—*Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, “This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?”****61****But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, “Does this cause you to stumble?* ***62****What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?* ***63****It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.****64****But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.****65****And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”* ***66****As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.*

Although both are called “disciples,” true disciples ultimately make the affirmation, as Peter did, “**You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God**” (vv68-69) and worship Him as such (Matthew 14:33).

**John 6:22-27**—*The next day the crowd that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples had gone away alone.****23****There came other small boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks.****24****So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus.****25****When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You get here?”****26****Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.****27****Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”*

**Narrative**

* Synoptic Gospel accounts: **Matthew 14:22-36** and **Mark 6:45-52**
* **The next day**—the day after the 5,000 plus feeding
* Jesus and the disciples are now on the western side of the lake
* **v22** picks up where the feeding occurred and where they were expecting Jesus to be
* The crowd had spent the night and were looking for him (**Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45)**
* They were looking for another meal (**v26**)
* Perhaps still wanting to take him by force to make him king (**v15**)
* They realized no small boat (that the disciples had come on) and that Jesus had sent them off in, and no Jesus
* There had come other small boats likely after hearing of the feeding miracle to investigate Jesus is not there, so they get into the boats and head to Capernaum (**v24**)
* Perhaps some overheard Jesus telling His disciples (**Matthew14:22**) or it was the most logical place for Jesus to go
* **Capernaum**—Jesus’ adopted home town (**Matthew 4:13**)

***Matthew 4:12b-13****—He withdrew into Galilee;****13****and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.*

* They find him and ask in astonishment, when (and perhaps implied how) did you get here?
* Jesus does not answer their question
* He does not entrust himself to the whims of man

**John 2:24**—*But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men*

**Psalm 25:14**—*The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant.*

**Proverbs 3:32**—*For the devious are an abomination to the Lord; But He is intimate with the upright.*

**Matthew 13:11**—*Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.*

* Classic Jesus, He gives them what they need
* **Truly, truly**—amen, amen. Here is an important truth to understand. Used 9 times in John’s gospel account
* Jesus exposes them for their selfish, materialistic hearts. What should have been a recognition of the person and work of Christ was simply selfishness.
* They were moved not by full hearts, but by full bellies[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Mark 6:52**—*…for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened.*

* **Do not work for the food which perishes**—Jesus alone is the Bread of Life (vv35, 54).

**John 6:35**—*Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.* 

**John 6:54**—*He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*

***John 4:14****—but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”*

* The focus isn’t on the temporal food but on eternal food. One will perish, the other will not.

**2 Corinthians 4:16**—*Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.*

* **The Father, God, has set His seal**—It signifies that in the eternal counsel of God the Father, He has sealed, commissioned, designated, and appointed the Son of man, the Incarnate Word, to be the Giver of everlasting life to man. It is an office for which he has been solemnly set apart by the Father.[[2]](#footnote-2)

3 notable truths

1. **The Lord knows our hearts**
   1. He exposes our motives
   2. He is not fooled by false words or actions

1. **The Lord forbids**
   1. Labor for the wrong things  
      **v27a**—*Do not work for the food which perishes…*
   2. Labor for temporal at the expense of the eternal

**Matthew 6:33**—*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

1. **The Lord instructs**

**v27b**—…but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you,

* 1. Seek the eternal
  2. Diligently seek it

**Hebrews 11:6**—*And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.* 

* 1. How are we to labor?

“There is but one answer. We must labor in the use of all appointed means. We must read our bibles, like me digging for hidden treasure. We must wrestle earnestly in prayer, like me contending with a deadly enemy for life. We must take our whole heart to the house of God, and worship and hear like those who listen to the reading of a will. We must fight daily against sin, the world, and the devil, like those who fight for liberty, and must conquer or be slaves. These are the ways we must walk in if we would find Christ, and be found in Him. This is “laboring.” This is the secret of getting on about our souls.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Characteristics related to false disciples[[4]](#footnote-4)**

1. They’re drawn to the crowds
2. They’re drawn to the show
3. They focus on the HERE and NOW
4. They focus on self-worship
5. *They look for their own satisfaction*
   1. *They followed Him for what they could get*
   2. *They were not interested in either worshipping or obeying Him*
6. *They make demands on God*

1. The Gospel according to John, Leon Morris, p358 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Expository thoughts on the Gospels: John, Vol 1, JC Ryle, p249 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. JC Ryle, p. 244 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Adapted from John MacArthur resources [↑](#footnote-ref-4)