**The Gospel of John:**

**Sorrowful Conclusion**

*John 6:66-71*

**Context**

In this section of Scripture, many of Jesus’ disciples withdrew from following Him. Even in the face of incredible mercy and grace that was offered to them, they refused to come and refused to further associate with the incarnate Son of God. Sadly, that reality is not new and continues to be the way of many people. Their interest level in Jesus will go only so far, but complete abandonment of all else for Him is not part of their thinking. Their desires lie elsewhere. He offers them far more than they are willing to receive. He is more willing to give grace than man is willing to seek it.

**John 6:66-71**—As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. **67**So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” **68**Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. **69**We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.” **70**Jesus answered them, “Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and *yet* one of you is a devil?” **71**Now He meant Judas *the son* of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.

3 notable conclusions

1. **Counterfeit faith will fall away, v 66**
2. They leave because of His teaching—eating and drinking His flesh and blood, **vv48-58**

What they wanted, He would not give; what He offered, they would not receive.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. Not a new phenomenon
2. It happened to Jesus
3. It will happen to us
4. Do not let it discourage us
5. Sadly, it happens more than genuine faith

Men may have feelings, desires, convictions, resolutions, hopes, joys, sorrows in religion, and yet never have the grace of God.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Matthew 7:13**—*Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.* 

1. **Genuine faith will remain, vv67-69**
2. Jesus contrasts the defectors with the faith of the 12
3. This is the first occurrence of the 12 in John’s gospel
4. It is a common expression of the Apostles
5. Jesus asks them a question
6. Jesus does not ask a question for information
7. As God, He knows what’s in the heart of man (**John 2:25**)
8. He knows exactly who will go and who will stay  
     
   **John 6:64***—“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.*
9. It was asked to prove His chosen followers as well as draw from them a response

**John 6:6**—*This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.*

1. The Lord knows who are His  
    **2 Timothy 2:19**—*Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.”*

**John 10:28**—*and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.*

**Matthew 13:20-21**—*The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;****21****yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.*

1. Simon Peter answered Him

**Context:** it was only the night before this scene takes place, that the storm on the lake would provide the backdrop of Peter’s walking on the water with Jesus (Matthew 14:28).   
  
**Matthew 14:28**—*Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”*

Here he is the first to make a proclamation of his faith as well as a resolve that he’s not going anywhere.

1. *We have believed,* ***v69***
2. *Lord, to whom shall we go*? **v68**

**Matthew 16:16**—*Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

**Matthew 14:33**—*And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “You are certainly God’s Son!”*

1. You alone have the words of eternal life, **v68**  
     
   **v63**—*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*

What possible alternative could supplant or is in any way better than what Christ offers us?

1. **Religious privilege is not enough to produce salvation, vv70-71**
2. Did I not choose you  
     
   *choose*—here it is not in reference to election, but choice of office (Apostleship)
3. Yet one was a devil*devil*—(diabolos) meaning “slanderer” or “false accuser”

**1 Timothy 3:11**—Women *must* likewise *be* dignified, not malicious gossips [diabolos], but temperate, faithful in all things.

**2 Timothy 3:1-5**—*But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.****2****For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,* ***3****unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips [diabolos], without self-control, brutal, haters of good,* ***4****treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,****5****holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.*

**Titus 2:3**—*Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips [diabolos] nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good*

It appears as though the Lord is identifying Satan as the source behind the work of Judas

**John 13:2**—*During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him*

**John 13:27**—*After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”* 

1. Judas does not get a pass on his actions

Judas was a chosen disciple, a constant companion of Christ, a witness of His miracles, a hearer of His sermons, a commissioned preacher of His kingdom, a fellow and friend of Peter, James, and John—it would be impossible to imagine a more favorable position for a man’s soul. Yet if anyone ever fell hopelessly into hell, and made shipwreck at last for eternity, that man was Judas Iscariot.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Matthew 26:24**—*The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”*

**Conclusion**

True discipleship has always been marked by two key identifiers:

1. **Faith** (we have believed, )
2. **Faithfulness** (Lord, to whom shall we go?)

**John 6: 68-69**—*Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.****69****We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”*

That means that there is a commitment and an ongoing devotion and loyalty to our Savior and Lord.

1. Bruce, F.F. The Gospel of John, p 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. JC Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel, John, Vol 1*, p. 292. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, p. 293. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)