



DATE: September 27, 2009

TEXT: John 6: 60-71

TITLE: "John XVIII: Reactions to the Truth"

Do you ever wonder if someone is telling you the truth? My wife and I had a nightmare experience last Spring. We bought a new car. The process was a nightmare. Kim and I determined that we needed a new car. Our Aztec was becoming very unreliable and we did not trust in on long trips. Kim and I sat down and determined our criteria for the car and began looking. We came down to two different cars that met our criteria. We began the tedious task of negotiating with Salesmen. I know salesmen have a job and their # 1 goal is to make money for the company. But again and again we would come to a figure that they said was the best offer.... we walked away and they would call us with a new "best offer." I had one dealership, I won't name it from the pulpit, give us an offer..... we accepted the offer... we were ready to sign the papers.... when the salesman went away... came back and said His boss raised the price of the car by \$2000.00. We were angry... we felt we were deceived and lied to... and decided we would not buy that car and not even that make of car.... we felt the dealership and even the

company did not deserve our business. That was our reaction.

For the past two weeks we have seen Jesus share the truth. He said **“I Am the bread of the world.”** He said **“Truly, Truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.”** Jesus is saying following Him takes true commitment and surrender. In our text this morning we see the response to this teaching. We will look at three responses to the truth fo Jesus.

**Response # 1** Some disciples of Jesus chose to betray him. *John 6: 70-71*

**70**Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!"  
**71**(He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

One response to the truth of Jesus is to betray Jesus. I believe it is important to understand the motives of Judas. Judas was a Jewish Zealot. This was a group of men who were dedicated to ending the Roman occupation of Israel. Judas thought Jesus was the Messiah.... but his understanding of the Messiah was a man who would be a great revolutionary and restore the throne of David over the Promised land. It is believed my many that Judas betrayed Jesus in order to force his hand. Judas tried to force Jesus to be a revolutionary. Judas had spent a least

2 years with Jesus. He had heard all the teachings of Jesus and still did not understand who Jesus was and refused to accept the truth. When it was clear that his plan had failed... he killed himself.

This is the betrayal of Jesus.... twisting the truth of Jesus into a false idea. The disciples of Jesus knew Jesus knew He was teaching a difficult truth. They say this to Jesus. (*John 6:60*)

**On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"**

Jesus was teaching the need for absolute surrender and discipleship. The betrayal of Jesus today occurs when this truth of Jesus is turned into a statement of “convenient belief” and “Cheap grace.” Again and again you run into people who say “You just have to believe in Jesus and be a good person.” Or “God wouldn’t send anyone to hell” Or “You just have to be baptized and then you are a Christian.” And I could go on and on and on. It is an “Ophra Winfrey gospel. Or a “Dr. Phil” gospel. “Just do the best you can and God will accept the effort.” This truly is the betrayal of Jesus with terrible consequences.

In the past I have quoted Dietrich Bonhoffer. Bonhoffer was a Lutheran pastor in

Germany in the 30's and 40's. he was one of the few to speak up against Hitler. On the day allied forces entered Berlin, one of the last orders of Hitler from the bunker was for the execution of Bonhoffer. He was put to death that day. Bonhoffer wrote about the cost of being a Christian.

In his book The cost of Discipleship he wrote the difference of cheap versus true grace. Allow me to share some quotes from his book

**Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross.**

**Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of man will gladly go and sell all that he has. Costly grace is the gospel that is sought again and again, the gift that must be asked for. Such grace is costly because it call us to follow , and it is grace because it call us to follow Jesus Christ.**

**The cross of Christ is laid on every Christian. The call to discipleship means both death and life. The call of Christ sets the Christian in the middle of the daily arena against sin and the devil. Every day he encounters new temptations, and every day he must suffer anew for Jesus Christ's sake.**

To make Christianity into a simple belief system that has little to nothing to do with our actions is a betrayal of truth. To turn Jesus into a revolutionary... or into a benevolent grandfather.... is a betrayal of Jesus. To twist Jesus into a man who condones your lifestyle....whatever that is... is a betrayal of Jesus. The first reaction to the truth of Jesus is betrayal.... twisting the truth of Jesus to fit your truth and your opinions and your life.

**Reaction # 2** Many who heard the truth of Jesus abandoned Jesus. *John 6: 66*

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

Jesus had been at the height of his popularity. He was in Capernaum and he had a large group of followers. From this point on his number of followers grew less and less and less. They understood the cost of following Jesus was too high and they were not willing to pay the price.

I am reminded of the story of the “Rich Fool”. I will not read the text from *Matthew 19* but I will paraphrase it.

A rich man came to Jesus and asked “What must I do to gain eternal life.” Jesus said “obey the commandments.” The man said. “ I have done this.” Then Jesus said... “go sell all and follow me.” And the text concludes... **22**When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

For Jesus, it is not a matter of wealth... it is a matter of prioritizing. Is Christ first in our life? Those who do not put Christ first... abandon Jesus.

Most people in this day and age do not publically condemn Jesus. Most people in this day

and age do not purposely walk away from Jesus. The abandonment of Jesus today entails simply ignoring Jesus.

When I bought my new car I had a choice. I could buy a car with a spare tire or without a spare tire. I truly had that option. The salesman said... The cars without the spare tire have these new tires that even if they go flat you can drive on them for 100 miles and then have them fixed. After about 2 seconds of thought I said "I want a spare tire... and I don't even want a fake tire... I want a real tire." It is my expectation that I will never use this spare tire. I do not think about it... truthfully, since I bought the car I have never checked it. .. But I like knowing it is there.

The sad truth is many people treat Jesus like a spare tire. They want him. If there is an emergency they want to pull him out and apply him to their lives. But they want him to be under the car... invisible. Not overly burdensome in their lives. This is the abandonment of Jesus.

Jesus is not Lord.... he's "emergency repair kit."

**Response # 3** There is the opportunity to obey Him and walk with Him. *John 6:67-69*

**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. 69We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."**

This statement is parallel to the statement of Jesus found in *Matthew 16:16*

**16Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

Peter understood the truth. Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the Holy One of God. Jesus is God. Every person who listened to Jesus understood what he was claiming. He was claiming to be God. Peter accepted this claim. We too accept this claim.

Unlike Judas we understood that Jesus was the suffering servant. He was the messiah that had to die on the cross. He was the messiah that had to re resurrected. Judas never waited for the resurrection. He gave up. He abandoned Jesus. He hung himself. We are followers of Jesus. We live by the resurrection.

Let me conclude with this idea. I believe we see in our text a discouraged Jesus. People were following him to be fed. People were following him to see miracles. When he spoke the truth... they abandoned him. Can you almost hear the discouragement in the words of Jesus as he addressed the 12 disciples. **"What about you... do you want to leave too?"** And even after Peter affirms his intention to follow him he says.... **"Yes, but even one of you will betray me..."**

**even my closest friends will abandon me.”** Jesus faced the discouragement and continued forward. Chapter 7 begins with the words....

**After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life**

Even as followers of Jesus we face times of discouragement. We face times when we feel alone. We face times we feel abandoned. We need to get up and face the next day and continue to serve. We have to keep our focus on the Lord and know we are his children, resting in His care.

Make this choice. Chose to follow Jesus. Not cheap grace. Not easy believeism. Take up His cross and follow Him.

AMEN