

WILL YOU ALSO GO AWAY?

John 6:60-71

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INTRODUCTION

There are many more “rocky-soil” and “thorny-soil” Christians in this world than there are “good-soil” Christians. Many have professed faith in Christ only later to “fall-away” and to forsake their “faith” and their Christian walk. Oft-times these departures are caused by problems, troubles, etc; other times the departure is precipitated by the loves of and the cares of this world.

Should that be a surprise to us? If the Lord Jesus Christ had as many defections as He did from those who professed to be His followers, how can we expect to see fewer? *Sinful lusts, hypocrisy, love of pleasure, love of ease and comfort, desire for recognition, ambition, and fickleness are all just as prevalent today as ever!*

It is true that we need to be careful **how** we go about winning people to Christ. We must avoid carnal tactics and high-pressure methods when winning the lost. **However, some are so afraid of doing God’s work in the flesh or of getting unstable results that they do very little if any evangelizing.** *That is also a carnal extreme that we must avoid.*

The Scriptures are clear that we must have a passion for winning the lost to Christ, and we must be passionate in the way we go about sharing the gospel. Jesus, Paul, Peter, the other apostles, and early Christians had such passion, and they were powerful evangelists for Christ. We must also have a passion in our preaching and teaching. The lost are getting one step closer to hell each day, and we ought to step in the gap and warn them!

But, we might get some false professors who may walk away from Christ. So did Jesus! Can we fault His methods of evangelism and accuse Him of preaching “easy-believism”? Hardly!

My point is this. It is impossible to avoid getting some false professions of faith if we are busy working for the Lord.

Now, what about you and me? Are we in the faith, or will we be among those who “walk away” from Christ as many of Jesus’ followers did here in John 6:66? Paul exhorts the Corinthian believers to “examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates” (fail the test, be unapproved)?

Are you going to be one of those who walk away? If you are a phony and not a genuine follower of Christ, it is only a matter of time until you do—unless you are the kind of phony that Judas was—one who stays in until the bitter end. And his end was bitter indeed.

Your phoniness will come out eventually. If you are a fake believer and if you aren’t planning any change of direction, you might as well declare your true colors and walk away now. **But,**

better yet, recognize your problem and turn to the Savior for deliverance and genuine salvation.

DON'T WALK AWAY FROM THE SAVIOR—FALL INTO HIS ARMS THAT HE MIGHT SAVE YOU FOREVER.

He is the only One who has the words of eternal life.

I. THE STUMBLING OF MANY “DISCIPLES” (60-65)

It was one thing for the confused multitude to question the Lord (vv. 22-30), and for the Jewish antagonists to oppose Him (vv. 41-59); but, now those who in some very real sense are “**His disciples**” are having trouble with Jesus.

They were getting “caught in the trap”—i.e. stumbling, sinning in unbelief (v. 61)

A. Awareness of the Savior

1. “Within Himself” He knows what their attitudes and words are (61)
Once again there is grumbling.
2. “From the beginning” He knew those who were truly non-believers (64)
3. He also knew His ultimate betrayer (64).

B. Confusion of mere Human efforts.

1. The “hardness” of the speech (60) was not in the speech itself, but in their hearts—it was not hard to understand, but was hard to accept. *It demanded a total change in them and in their lives; they weren't ready for that.*
2. The difficulty would get greater for them (62).
The crucifixion followed by burial, resurrection, and ascension) would be a greater scandal for them and would strengthen their unbelief and rebellion. **They must understand and accept Him for who He really is.** The Son of Man is really *from Heaven and is eternal!*

C. Answer to the Problem

1. Receive the Father's gift (65)
Only a supernatural work of grace can save anyone.
2. Receive life through the Spirit (63)
 - a. The flesh is unprofitable (Does **not** profit **nothing**.)
 - b. The words of Christ are spirit and life.
Only the spiritual man (saved) by spiritual means (Holy Spirit guidance) can comprehend and be profited by Christ's words.
Mere words, and outward practices, cannot save anyone. **Rituals and formulas cannot do it. Literally eating His flesh and blood is worthless!**
3. Come to the Savior (65)
Believe on Him (64). Those “given to Him by the Father will do so. Those who forsake Him are not really His.

II. THE DEPARTURE OF MANY “DISCIPLES” (66)

These were “apostates.” They “fell away” from the Lord.

They “went away into the behind”—that is they went back to what they had and knew before. How sad! Peter tells us that “the last state” of such persons “is worse than the first” (II Pet. 2:20).

Peter goes on to say, “For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them” (2:21).

Were any of them merely confused, and later returned to follow Him? We don’t know.

III. THE ADHERENCE OF TRUE DISCIPLES (67-69)

A. The Savior’s Question (67): “Do you also want to go away?”

Literally—“You do not also want to go away, do you?”

Jesus presumes a “No” answer.

He knows those who are truly His.

B. The Disciple’s Answer (68-69)

Once again, Peter is the spokesman for the other disciples.

1. **We have nowhere else, and no-one else to whom to go.**

2. You have “the words of eternal life.” (v. 63)

3. We have a settled belief.

4. We have a settled knowledge.

a. Notice that true faith settles difficult theological issues!

b. Jesus is “**the Holy One of God.**”

He is perfectly pure and holy; He is the One appointed and sent by the Father on this mission, and is fulfilling it.

[Variant readings—Christ, the Son of the living God]

IV. THE HYPOCRISY OF A FALSE DISCIPLE (70-71)

A. Jesus chose them—the twelve.

These men had phenomenal privileges and opportunities; they were the **twelve of His inner circle.**

B. One of them was the Devil! (not “a devil”)--Judas

Compare Mt. 16 where Jesus calls Peter “Satan.”

1. Judas had both the character and goals of the Devil.

2. He was the son of Simon of Iscariot—literally Kerioth in Judah.

He was the only disciple not from Galilee.

3. He was of the **twelve.**

That made his deed even more atrocious.

4. He was about to betray Jesus.

Literally he was going to “deliver over” Jesus to his enemies.

CONCLUSION

Do you ever get discouraged at hearing about those who have defected from the faith? So, who is the latest casualty? I have known friends, classmates from school & college, fellow pastors, church members, and even former teachers who have forsaken the church or even the Lord Himself. How distressing!

Don't be shocked. Jesus predicted that it would happen: "Then shall many be caused to stumble [fall away] and shall betray one another and shall hate one another. . . . But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mt. 24:10, 13).

Moreover, it happened to Jesus Himself, as we see in this text. Many of His disciples stumbled and found it impossible to listen to Jesus (60-61). Many left Jesus and went back to their old lives (66). Even one of the twelve disciples who remained had already "left Him" in his heart, and was about to betray Him to His enemies (Judas—64, 70-71).

The group was so decimated that Jesus said to the twelve of His inner circle, "Will you also go away?"—67)

So, if you are one of the phonies who are not true followers of the Lord Jesus, if it will only take some persecution, disappointment, or frustration in order for you to go back on the Lord, you might as well show your true colors and quit pretending.

Better yet, **get truly converted and submit your life to Christ fully and forever.**

You will not go away also, will you?

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

"We believe that you are the Holy One of God." Yes, even the Christ, the Son of God.

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE. ARE YOU?