



Sermon, Sunday June 6, 2023 “Do you wish to go away?”

SCRIPTURE: John 6:53-69 ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day, ⁵⁵ for my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which the ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in a synagogue at Capernaum. ⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones who did not believe and who was the one who would betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.” ⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

Introduction: Food that spoils vs food that endures to eternal life

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! We are celebrating the season of Pentecost on the church calendar. John chapter 6 tells the story of Jesus who fed five thousand people with five small barley loaves and two small fish. After this incident known to us as "**Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes**", Jesus becomes an icon of hope that can change the world. But Jesus betrayed people's expectations and crossed the Sea of Galilee in a boat to avoid the crowd and went to Capernaum. People followed Jesus to Capernaum.

However, what the crowd wanted from Jesus and what Jesus wanted to achieve through his life were completely different. That is why Jesus told the crowd in **John 6:27: “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”**

But, what about the reality we live in? Can we accept the words of Jesus and live like that, **“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life”?**

In general, popular politicians, both in the past and now, are leaders who can solve the problems of feeding people and living well. So politicians who offer solutions for eating and living are popular with people even if the politicians have some shortcomings.

However, the writer of the Gospel of John clearly shows what Jesus wants is different from the general thoughts of the world and the thoughts of the crowd who had their own expectations for Jesus after the incident of the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes.



So, what is the teaching that Jesus is trying to give us through today's text? Can we accept the teachings Jesus gives? Or are the teachings of Jesus a stumbling block to us?

Body: Do you also wish to go away?

John 6:49-51 says: “Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. (v.49) But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. (v.50) I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. (v.51)”

The crowd who did not understand these words of Jesus argued and quarreled with each other. Then Jesus said, “**Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.**” (John 6:53). Furthermore, Jesus said that “whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.” Also, Jesus said that those who ate this bread will live forever, unlike those who ate manna.

However, it was not only the crowd who did not understand the words of Jesus, but also the disciples of Jesus. Many of Jesus' disciples said they could not agree with what the Lord said. By the way, what we need to look carefully at here is the subsequent actions of the disciples who did not agree with Jesus' words.

John 6:66 says: “Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.” This verse shows that the hearts of the disciples who could not agree with the Lord's thoughts departed from the Lord. We can see in this verse that those who followed Jesus are described by the word '**disciples**'. To become a '**disciple**' and follow the Lord means to completely follow Jesus, even giving up one's daily life. However, they left Jesus because they could not agree with the Lord's thoughts.

By the way, why did the disciples who left Jesus' side have a hard time accepting Jesus' words? It was not because they were interested in Jesus himself, but because they were interested in their own expectations and desires. They followed Jesus believing that he could make their expectations and greed come true.

So, how can we tell if we are interested in Jesus or in the realization of our expectations and desires? **It is whether we have passion and sincerity in our hearts to know the meaning of the kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus and the Lord's Second Coming.** If we forget or miss this part in our life of faith, our lives will be lived according to our desires rather than Jesus himself. If we are in such a situation, we are experiencing a crisis in our life of faith.

Those who did not understand the meaning of Jesus' words all left, and only the twelve remained. Jesus asks them. **"Do you also wish to go away?" (John 6:67)**

By the way, what is the meaning of this question of Jesus? Is this question asking the twelve simply to leave Jesus or to stay with him? Clearly, this question asks us whether we will choose eternal life or death.

However, many people in the world do not know the seriousness of Jesus' question. And in many cases people do not choose life, but rather death. In other words, many people in the world live for food that will spoil, not for eternal life. The reason people make that choice is because they don't know why it's food that spoils. Also, even if they know, it's because they try to turn away from the truth.

Through today's message, the Lord is also asking us the question, **"Do you also wish to go away?"**

By the way, in today's text, we can see Peter's answer to Jesus' question, **"Do you also wish to go away?"** Peter answers in John 6:68-69 as follows. **“Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. (v.68) We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.” (v.69).** Like Peter's confession in this verse, those who have nowhere to go but to Jesus are blessed. They are the people who correspond to the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5.



Peter was able to make this confession that he experienced Jesus as the word of eternal life. Those who have experienced this can focus on the Lord, because there is no more meaningful and happier life than that. To these people, the Lord is not simply the one who solves eating problems or heals our physical ailments and wounds in our hearts. These are things that even good politicians, doctors and counselors cannot do for us. Please remember. Jesus is our only way to life.

However, knowing and accepting Jesus as the truth and life does not come with our will and effort. We need the grace of the Lord. That's why Jesus said in **John 6:65**, "**For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.**" The problem is that many people do not accept the grace of the Lord. This is unfortunate.

Conclusion: Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

Now let's summarize today's message. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Is there anything in your life that you rely on or like more than Jesus? Are you happy with it? Please remember, none of that is forever.

Of course, I want you to live happily and dynamically in the world. But I hope we can focus on the Lord in our lives. And in the process, I hope you will experience the words of eternal life that the Lord gives. Only God's Son, Jesus Christ, can give us true life. I hope everyone has the grace to realize this.

