

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #58

The Journey

Jim Hoffman

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The Gospel of John

- We find out at the end of the chapter 6 that “many” of his disciples went away when they saw an end to the “gravy train” of food and healings.
- The “why” is simple – they could not see beyond their immediate needs. They were not interested in spiritual things.
- The very ones who should be urgent and desperate for God are strangely unmoved and uninterested.

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- We look at the crowds in John 6 and think we know why they were following him – when we look at ourselves do we know why we follow him?
- The right response to the greatness of God is to humbly bow (perhaps even fall) in worship – and then to serve him is the normal response to seeing him.
- The crowd had an inverted sense of Jesus – they wanted him to serve them and seemed to have no interest in serving him.

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So why do we follow him? I hope it's because we can do nothing less. I suspect it's because not following him never has been and never will be a path we will consider. Christians do not sit around thinking, "I wish I were not a disciple of Jesus" – Far more likely it is that we would think, "I can't imagine life without him." So, why do we follow him? Because he is not just the only sensible option, but he is the only desirable option.

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- John 6:27 "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."
- Don't work for things that perish, things that spoil.
- Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal."

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- Instead of always chasing the temporary, (by definition, "a fool's errand") if you are going to chase something at least chase the things that last.
- Matthew 6:20 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."
- Everything the world offers is temporary, yet we seem to chase it as though it is all there is.

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- Amazingly, even as Christians, we tend to use the temporary to measure the worth of others.
- Look at their car, look at their house, look at their looks – we know better, but the temptation is often overwhelmingly seductive to chase chaff.
- When we do, we are falling for the bait of Satan – if all that we see will one day be burned up, how is it that we are so easily distracted from the eternal?

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- You know there is a reason why everything we see will one day be burned up – because it is corrupted and in need of redemption.
- Acts 3:20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, 21 whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things, about which God spoke by the mouths of His holy prophets from ancient times.

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2nd Peter 3:11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

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Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

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• **“Do not work for the food that perishes”** – John is not saying, do not provide for your family, he is saying be careful what motivates you to work.

• We only know there are such things as “temporary” and “eternal” because God has disclosed it to us – a completely separate eternal reality exists.

• Solomon told us God has put eternity in our hearts so that we can comprehend eternal things.

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So, we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2nd Corinthians 4:16-18

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- It really is an amazing thing that we intuitively know this life is not all there is – this is true for the saved and lost alike.
- Why else would there be so many false religions in the world? – We mock them, but we should not mock what drives men to seek more than what is seen.
- Pascal is credited with saying, “there is a God shaped hole in every heart that only Christ can fill”.

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Here is the rest of the Pascal quote, “*This infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words, by God.*” If Pascal is right, it’s easy to see the glory of God even in that unfilled space in the heart of men. We are fashioned by God to want meaning for our lives, but no meaning or purpose other than God himself will ever satisfy. When Jesus said, “Do not work for the food that perishes” he might just as well have said, “do not work for the things rot, spoil, and waste away as they will always leave you wanting”.

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And it gets even worse – the temporary things that perish not only rot but when left unused for God they also eventually become unwanted baggage. The things the world valued in us may become our shame when the time comes for us to give an account of what we did with what we were given. We are saved by grace, but we will be judged by our works.

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- **“work for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you”.**
- Strange words for the 1st century Jew who might seek God – if what you really want is to please God, then the “work” you need will be done for you. Huh?
- He is pointing them to “grace” – they want to “do” when their only hope was to “receive”.

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- And who is this “Son of Man”? The Son of Man turns out to be the same one John had focused on – the Son of Man is the Son of God!
- Okay, now we have something big in front of us – Jesus is self-proclaiming his own duality.
- What! Within the Trinity one of its members is in fact a duality? Yep!

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The Hypostatic Union is the term theologians use to describe the holy entity known to us as a Jesus. It means to say that the Son of God added humanity to his deity when he was placed in the womb of Mary. An egg in her womb was infused with deity, the egg was fertilized, and would begin to develop in the usual fashion without any genetic material from a natural man. The fact that Jesus added humanity to his deity means he did not become less, he became more.

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- For Jesus to become our Savior, it becomes apparent the God-man set aside his omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence at least for a time.
- When he says, “no one knows the timing of the second coming” we see he was not omniscient.
- When he shows signs of fatigue (at the well in Sychar) he is showing evidence he was not omnipotent.

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- It seems he took back possession of his omniscience incrementally over time.
- When he was twelve, he didn't seem to know his parents were looking for him, but he could answer the questions of the teachers of the law.
- He will take full possession again of his omniscience and his omnipotence after his resurrection.

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- But then comes the stunner – he may have surrendered his omnipresence permanently and if true, it magnifies his sacrifice for us to another level!
- Philippians 3:19 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

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When Paul says, “who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body” he is speaking of the body of Christ thirty years after the resurrection as though he is still in that resurrected body. Could it be that he still is in that body that is capable of living in a physical world like ours and in the eternal world of God? The new heaven and earth will be a physical world just like the one God created in Genesis. We speak of going to be with Jesus, but ultimately it seems Jesus is coming to live with us.

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- Thomas is invited to touch his post-resurrection body - “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side.”
- On resurrection morning Mary was told, “do not cling to me” thus proving his glorified body was touchable.
- A day or so after the resurrection he eats breakfast with his disciples in his glorified body.

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- In the millennial kingdom he will rule and reign from a throne in Jerusalem – Matthew 25:31-46.
- We’ve been promised glorified bodies like his post-resurrection body.
- I think the only reason this is a controversial teaching is because it’s so hard to grasp, but I find it even harder to believe he is omnipresent and in a body.

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I think the only choices are – the second person of the Trinity has set aside his omnipresence for eternity as a consequence of paying for mankind’s sins, or he is somehow both omnipresent and in a body like we, the saints, will one day have. If I am right, that he has set aside his omnipresence to redeem us, well that only serves to magnify him and increases my love for him.

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**Lord, may be so wise as
to work for that which
lasts!!**

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Questions?

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