

John # 118 “Leave It To Peter” *John 6:66-71*

My friends, this is Peter in our story today. Perhaps his family members, business partners, hunting and fishing buddies and his close friends were among those who have been stimulated by the miracles but now have had it with Jesus and therefore, are not willing to stick it out with Him and give Him a chance to continue to prove His point in declaring the Father’s identity and His grace plan for mankind which includes His Son’s dying for the sins of the world on the cross and not yet wearing His crown and kicking Rome out of Jerusalem at that time.

People try to apply logic, so-called human wisdom or philosophy to try to explain some hard teachings in God’s Word but that’s not the way to rightly divide the Word of truth because human viewpoint wisdom just won’t cut with God and His divine viewpoint plan.

Witnessing for Jesus Christ is the responsibility of every believer.

The effectiveness of our witnessing depends on our understanding of the Last Judgment.

At the Last Judgment sins will not be mentioned, good works will be mentioned; so the basis for the unbeliever’s indictment at the Great White Throne is his human good works because the energy of the flesh comes from the sin nature and those that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Gospel passages in the Bible are our most effective weapon in witnessing.

Success in witnessing depends on our mental attitude; Romans 1:14-16.

The foolishness of God is wiser than the brilliance of man and just what is this foolish act of God?

To what does it refer? The cross of His Son, Jesus Christ.

This is sarcasm; the foolish act of God from the world's perspective is His only Son dying on a cross for our sins.

Death ends man’s plans but God’s plan begins at death!

Man’s plans all terminate at death, therefore the foolish act of God (Jesus Christ dying on the cross) is wiser than anything that man could ever develop because death ends man’s plans and begins God’s plan!

Humanly speaking, Jesus Christ was weak during the crucifixion; He was physically strong but was weakened from the terrible beatings He received and then what weakened Him much further was the bearing our sins and suffering the judgment for them from God the Father.

In Greek and Roman culture, people actually worshipped great public speakers but God

has commissioned witnesses for His Son who are not eloquent communicators and yet they can powerfully and clearly declare His simple Gospel.

That's why the simple Gospel from humble simple-minded people with their simple lips results in something amazing that lasts forever: eternal salvation!

The Lord Jesus was much more concerned with those who truly believed His Words than those who were simply curious about Him and it was His Words that chased 5,000 men and their families away from Him!

So do we want to stay with a large group with their popular opinions or do we want Jesus Christ because His Words are Spirit and they are Life?

Peter knew that Jesus was his Teacher, his Messiah, the Son of the Living God who proclaimed the only true Gospel of eternal life.

Yes indeed, the truth will make you free and as the Lord Jesus, Peter and almost all the disciples learned; the truth will also get you ridiculed, ostracized and quite possibly killed!

So, many of Jesus' disciples come and are initially stimulated by what He does but quickly turned off

by what He says.

Just as physical life is sustained by physical food, spiritual life is sustained by the Way, the Truth and

the Life, none other than Jesus Christ, Himself.

Eating is a perfect illustration of faith, assimilating into our souls what Christ has accomplished on the cross for all sinners.

Did you notice that the Lord Jesus didn't coddle His inner circle of Twelve by saying: 'Thank you so much for staying with Me, boys; come over here and get your participation trophies'; oh no it was, 'Are you fellas leaving too like all these others?'

Knowing Jesus, His question was not asked to scold them but to encourage them and it certainly wasn't that He became insecure at losing the majority of His congregation in rapid succession.

"Do you all wish to continue a strict diet of the Bread of life or do you want what those who left wanted, the crown before the cross?"

If it's not pressure from your family and friends, it will come from your co-workers; being publicly mocked or having your livelihood threatened and that's never fun.

Peter was always willing to continue his quest to follow his Lord no matter what happened to him.

Just for most people the least little crisis can affect their commitment to Jesus but we must remember that our commitment to Him is founded on and sustained by His commitment to us!

Notice that Jesus didn't say: "Will you maintain your commitment to Me?", no it was:

"Will you go away and stop following Me and listening to Me?"

Peter first heard Jesus' Words when Jesus called him to follow Him and he'll later be privy to Jesus' Words of forgiveness like few others.

Having experienced the grace, mercy, forgiveness and power of Jesus' teaching, made it impossible for Peter to seek someone else.

Peter's question is one we must ask ourselves from time to time, 'If not You, Jesus, then who, for there is no one else that compares to You; where else could we find the peace, hope and fulfillment You offer to all who follow You?

Peter had confirmed that what his brother Andrew told him was true when he brought him to Jesus; 'We have found the Messiah' all verified by His miracles of calming violent storms at sea, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and if that weren't enough, how about raising the dead; that was more than enough evidence to convince Peter that Jesus Christ was everything He claimed to be!

In fairness, Peter didn't have a complete grasp of who Jesus was and why He came but he was consistently making progress because he was consistently feeding on the wonderful Words of Jesus, the Words that forever remain spirit and life.

Peter was a fiercely loyal man who left his livelihood to follow Jesus for 3 years so he could learn from Him about the Kingdom of Heaven and once he was filled with the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, it was game on and he was a virtually unstoppable fearless witness for his Savior.

The question for all of us is the question Peter had to answer for himself; Are we willing to follow Jesus Christ even if practically no one else is?

Do we believe in Him and in His Words that much?