

Christ's Words are Alive and Powerful as the Spirit

John 6:60-71 (v. 63)

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I. Biblical Context and Historical Background

To appreciate what Jesus said in verse 63, we need to go back and review Genesis chapter 1. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and **the Spirit of God** was hovering over the waters" (vv. 1-2). At the Time of Creation, God the Father, Jesus the Son (The Word; John 1:1-3) and the Holy Spirit were there. All Three were *present* and *involved* in the Creation process.

1. **The Spirit of God Hovered Over the Earth.** The **Spirit of God** was *involved* in Creation and the formation of the Earth. The Bible says, "the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the face of the deep."
2. **God spoke things into Existence.** When God **spoke**, everything that He *declared* came into being. When God said, "Let there be," and "there was light." And so on! We know that "the Sun" is the source of "light" for the earth. We also know that "the Sun" *sustains* life on earth.
3. By the end of "**the Sixth Day**,"
 - a) the Continents, the Oceans, Seas, Lakes, Rivers and Springs came into being;
 - b) the Plants – trees of all kinds, Vegetation – grass, shrubs, etc.,
 - c) the Animals – wild animals of all kinds, cattle, etc., as well as various types of fish and birds, etc.
 - d) Adam and Eve – in the image of God

had come into being. The Earth was *bustling* with living things! The Oceans, Seas and Lakes were *teeming* with all kinds and sizes of fish! The vast Sky was clean, bright and blue sprinkled with clouds and various kinds of birds. The Earth *abounded* with **Living Things!** The Earth became **full of Life! God Ordained it to be so!**

It was God who gave Life to all living things! It is God who spoke things into existence! By His Word, God gives Life! It is God who gives Life! It is God who sustains Life!

II. The Lesson: Christ's Words are Alive and Powerful as the Spirit

Let us recall that the Holy Spirit was also present and active at the Birth of Jesus. The Holy Spirit and the Angels were *active* at the Birth of Jesus (Luke 1:11-45; 2:1-20). Thirty years later, the Bible says, the Holy Spirit led Jesus "into the desert to be tempted by the devil" (Matthew 4:1-11). In addition, during His baptism, Jesus was confirmed by both God the Father and the Holy Spirit who "descended like a dove and rested on Him" (Luke 3:13-17). After the

completion of the 40 days of praying and fasting, Jesus “returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit and news about Him spread throughout the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him” (Luke 4:14-15). *All of these things took place for the benefit of the people – for them to believe that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are real.* For three years, Jesus preached, taught and performed numerous miracles to:

- a) Confirm and affirm the prophecies of the Old Testament;
- b) Continue God’s Plan of Salvation;
- c) Demonstrate God’s Love, Grace and Redemptive Power;
- d) Proclaim the Truth and expose the lies of the devil;
- e) Make known that there is Eternal Life beyond life on earth for those who believe.

In John chapter 6, Jesus referred to Himself as “**the Bread of God**” who came down from heaven to give life to the world” (vv. 32-33). Jesus also declared several things about Himself in relation to heaven and eternal life. Jesus said/declared:

- a) “I am the **Bread of Life**” (vv. 35, 47);
- b) “I am **the Bread** that came down from heaven” (vv. 35-59);
- c) “I am the **Living Bread** that came down from heaven”
- d) That He will “raise up those who believe in Him at the last day” (vv. 39-40, 44);
- e) “I tell you the truth, unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. **Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ...**” (vv. 53-59).

1. vv. 60-62: **Hard Teaching is Good for Us.**

The Bible says, “many of His disciples” found the teaching of Jesus very hard to understand. They said, “**This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?**” They “**grumbled**” among themselves! So, let us pose for a moment and closely examine what is behind such a reaction from “many of His disciples.”

- a) Did Jesus *know* that His teaching were “hard” for them?
- b) Did Jesus *deliberately* choose to speak the way He did?
- c) Did Jesus *make* some of His teaching “hard” so that people will **not** (i) understand His Word and (ii) believe in Him?
- d) Why do some Christians find God’s Word “**hard**” to accept?

Many of His disciples “grumbled” and reacted so strongly because His words **challenged** them. God’s Word is **designed to challenge** people so that they realize:

- a) They are sinners in desperate need for salvation; it is hard to accept that you are “wrong, lost, etc.” when you are convinced you are “right, going in the right direction, etc.”

- b) They need to *change radically* – spiritually, morally and ethically. Changing your behavior, habits, life-style is not easy;
- c) They need the Savior. People don't easily give up their "idols" for Jesus. The words of Jesus mess up people's thinking! God's Word will mess with *you* when you begin to really listen to it!
 - It challenges you to **admit** your **weaknesses**!
 - It challenges you to **give up** your **bad habits**!
 - It challenges you to **grow up in knowledge** and **understanding**!
 - **Hard Teaching is Good for Us!**

That is why they "**grumbled.**" That is why they said, "**This is a hard teaching.** Who can accept it?" Let us be real: have you ever felt the same way?

2. v. 63: My Words Are Spirit and Alive.

Jesus pushed even harder! "Does this **offend** you? What if you see the Son of man **ascend** to where He was before? The words I have spoken to you are **spirit** and **they are alive.**" Three different things we need to unpack in this section. (a) **Offended by the Truth.** Why should anyone be "**offended**" by the Truth? *Only those who don't want to accept it!* In other words, those who are satisfied with the **lies**, don't mind being **deceived** or continue to be part of the **deception** will be "offended" by the Truth of God! (b) **The Ascension of Christ.** Jesus was saying, you are now "offended" because I told you that "I am the Bread of Life who *descended* from heaven." How much more will you be "offended" when I tell you that I "will *ascend* back to heaven where I belong?" Those **who refuse to believe** that Jesus is the Son of God will continue to be "offended" even in this generation! (c) **My Words are Spirit and Alive.** Recall that God brought the universe into existence by **His Word.** Recall that the **Holy Spirit** was present and actively involved in Creation. Recall that God gave Life to that which He created! **Therefore, God's Word is Alive and Powerful! The Holy Spirit is Alive and Powerful. The words that Jesus spoke are Alive and Powerful!** The Bible says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 16-17).

The Bible is filled with divine words which are Alive and Powerful!

Christ's Words are Alive and Powerful!

3. vv. 64-66: Those Who Don't Believe in Jesus Doubt His Word.

Jesus **knew** from the get go that there will be doubters. Jesus **knew** that even among His disciples there will be those who don't believe in Him (v. 64). That is why His teachings were **hard** on them! Because they **didn't believe** that Jesus is God, His words didn't come alive in them! Even today, there are people who find God's Word **hard** to believe for the exact same reason! **Those Who Don't Believe in Jesus Doubt His Word!**

Jesus also **knew** that those who didn't believe in Him will **betray** Him. Those who doubt His Word will also betray Him. The Bible says in verse 66 that "**many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him.**" These were the disciples who "grumbled" and "complained" about His teaching! After they *grumbled* and *complained*, they *abandoned* Jesus! They went back to doing what they did before! *They didn't want to change!* The teachings of Christ made them very uncomfortable. **Christ's Words are Alive and Powerful! They could not bear the Power of His Word!**

4. vv. 67-70: Jesus Confronted the Twelve with a Question.

Jesus asked the Twelve, "You don't want to leave too, do you?" **This question is still relevant.** Jesus will *challenge* us today in the same way that He *challenged* His disciples back then. Each of us have to decide whether we are going to remain with Christ all the way or not! Each of us will be *confronted* with troubling events, challenging circumstances or difficult questions about our faith in this world. **God will test our Faith in Jesus Christ in all of those situations.** Our response should be the answer Peter gave in verse 68-69: "Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life.** We **believe** and **know** that you are the **Holy One of God.**"

5. v. 71: The Twelve Remained, Yet One of them was a devil.

Jesus **knew** from the beginning that **Judas** would eventually betray Him. But Jesus never treated Judas any different than the rest. Jesus knew that Judas was **stealing money** from them. Jesus **knew** that Judas will betray Him for **30 pieces of silver!** Jesus referred to Judas as "**a devil,**" not "**the devil.**" The *distinction* is very important. Judas was a man who was **influenced** by "**the devil**" even while he was *pretending* to be the disciple of Jesus. Judas had 3 years to choose between Jesus and "**the devil.**" Unfortunately, Judas listened to "**the devil**" rather than Jesus! Judas missed out on the Salvation which comes only by faith through Jesus Christ! Even today there are those people who claim to be followers of Christ while serving "**the devil.**" They need to *listen* to the Word of God before it is too late! They need to accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God before it is too late!

III. The Applications

1. Yield to the Word of God. Allow God's Word to mold and shape you.
2. Jesus is the **Bread of Life.** Therefore, *feed* on Him every day.
3. Don't be *discouraged* by the "**hard teaching**" of Christ. Instead, ask God to help you understand His Word.
4. The Word of God is Alive and Powerful. Believe and have Life more abundantly!
5. Don't Resist God's Word; instead, resist the devil.