

WORDS – Part 4

These WORDS are ETERNAL WORDS

John 6

“LORD, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (68)

John 6:25-69

“Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. **Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.**”

(John 6:26-27)

But they ask nonetheless:

“What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them **bread from heaven** to eat.’”

(John 6:30-31)

Jesus then really takes up this theme:

“I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives **life** to the world.”

(John 6:32-33)

Now JESUS delivers his punch line. He fills in the gap and they start to see the picture.

“I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”

(John 6:35)

He is telling them that if they believe in him they will know true satisfaction. He is telling them that if they believe in him they will experience eternal life.

He is promising them life before death and life after death.

"I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

(John 6:48-51)

The Jews who are listening to Jesus talk are non-plussed. They start to argue sharply among themselves **(52)**:

"How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (John 6:52)

Jesus then starts talking about eating his flesh and drinking his blood so that they can have eternal life.

"Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat 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."
(53-54)

Jesus was talking about his death on the cross. "This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." **(51)**

We fast forward to a scene just before his death and once again, Jesus talks about bread..... He is having a last supper with his followers and he lifts up a piece of bread that is on the table...

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

(Matthew 26:27-28)

Of course, this isn't his physical body and blood that they are eating and drinking. He is standing right in front of them as he says these words.

Jesus is saying that the only way to fulfilment in this life and indeed to eternal life is through him. It is to accept that he died for us on the cross, it is to become his follower. It is to believe in him. This is the only way to experience forgiveness and new life.

A conversation that started with the disciples thinking about bread and being full.... ended in Jesus saying that he is the bread of life – that he

gives full satisfaction and fulfilment and that ultimately he gives us eternal life.

Our reaction:

Read verses 60-69:

Teaching that is hard to accept. Grumbling. Unbelieving.

“there are some of you who do not believe.” (John 6:64)

A lot of people stopped following Jesus that day. **(66)**

There is always a choice.

He turns to the Twelve – his close group of disciples and asks them:

“You do not want to leave too do you?” **(67)**

Peter answers him:

“LORD to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” **(68)**

Jesus says of his own words:

“The words I have spoken to you are **spirit** and they are **life**.” **(63)**

Peter says: There is no point leaving. No point going elsewhere. Searching somewhere else for meaning and life. “you have the **words of eternal life**.”

Two groups of people. Similar backgrounds and belief systems. They had heard the same words. They had seen the same deeds. The same miracles. The same Jesus.

Some accepted Jesus' words and believed.

Others rejected Jesus' words and walked away.

We face exactly the same choice today. We can accept the words of Jesus or reject them.

There is no neutral zone with Jesus. There is a choice. Either you will follow him or you will not. Either you will believe in him or you will not. Either you will accept this life before and after death, or you will not. Either you will accept that his words are true, that they are spirit and life – that they are words of eternal life – or you will not.

You can't stand on the fence.

Peter. Are you staying or are you leaving?
Will you believe or won't you?

This is what the Apostle Paul said:

“For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the gospel-- **not with words of human wisdom**, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross is **foolishness** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the **power** of God.”
(1 Cor 1:17-18)

The same message – foolishness or power.

The crux of all of this is summed up in Jesus' words in verse 29:

“The work of God is this: **to believe** in the one he sent.” (John 6:29)

“For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.””

(John 3:34-36 NIV)