



Are You Going to Leave? Tim Ross

Focus In John 6, Jesus told a crowd of people that they needed to eat His flesh and drink His blood to follow Him. Their faith was tested, and many people left Jesus. In life, our faith is tested when God tells us something difficult, or we go through a difficult situation that we don't understand. When our faith is tested, our response should be like Peter's: "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life." (John 6:68, NLT)

Fun What is your favorite theme park, national park, or museum and why?

Review Key Scriptures: John 6:22–71

1. Jesus may tell us something hard, or allow us to go through difficult things.

In John 6, the crowd of people got into boats and followed Jesus across the lake after eating loaves and fish from His miracle. They liked Jesus' miracles and teachings, but they did not know how to handle a difficult message He shared: they needed to eat His flesh and drink His blood to follow Him. Jesus didn't explain it, but He did reiterate it. Sometimes Jesus will tell us to do something we don't understand, or we will encounter an aspect of God we don't understand. Other times we are tested like Job and go through dark, confusing seasons or hard circumstances. In these challenging life situations, Jesus asks us the same thing He asked the disciples: "Are you also going to leave?"

2. Jesus is the only one with the words of eternal life.

When God tells us things that are hard to understand, or life brings difficult situations, many people walk away from God. However, our response needs to be the same as Peter's response to Jesus in this story: "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life." There is a difference between

trust and faith. We *trust* God when we see His faithfulness and the ways He has worked in our lives before. We trust Him because He came through before and He will come through again. But we need *faith* when we go through something we have never been through before. In times when our faith gets tested, we need to respond to Jesus that He is the only one who has the words of eternal life.

Group Dynamics Idea As the Fourth of July approaches, consider doing something as a group and using this as an opportunity for everyone to invite new families or people to join you. Whether it's a picnic, a day at the lake, watching fireworks, or just having fun at the house, this can be a great time to extend the invitation to friends and neighbors to come be part of a fun group activity.

Discuss

1. What would you have thought if you were in the crowd when Jesus told everyone to eat His flesh and drink His blood?
2. Have there been times in your life when God told you something that was hard for you to understand? What was it?
3. Have you been through a difficult situation when your faith was really tested and you had to choose to continue following Jesus? What was that experience like?
4. Why do you think God lets us choose to follow Him or not?
5. Why do you think so many people walk away from God when they don't understand or when life gets too hard?
6. Are you going through a time of testing where you need to choose by faith to follow Jesus?
7. What do you think of Peter's response to Jesus: "Lord to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life"?
8. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

Take Home

As we conclude, remember the following:

- It is inevitable that we will face things in life we don't understand.
- When trials come, choose to continue following Jesus.
- Jesus is the only one with the words of eternal life.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the words of eternal life through Jesus. There is nowhere else we can go to find true life—You are the only source. We pray for those going through challenging situations that they may not understand. Give them the grace to follow You. Help us in those difficult moments to always choose to follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

New Leader Tip When people are in some of these dark or difficult situations where they don't understand why God has allowed something to happen, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit when you respond. You may have some serious things come up in your conversations, or someone may admit they are really wrestling with God on some issues. Be careful not to give religious answers or platitudes. Listen sincerely and know it's okay if you don't have the answers. It's better to give no answer than to give a religious answer. If this comes up in your group, listen, show genuine care and concern, and simply pray.