

CHAPTER 7 "My Church" and "Believing" (John 6)

While the Pope would say it is "my church", also the LDS and Church of Christ, and even some among THE Baptists, THE Methodists, and the Presbyterians; Jesus lays claim naturally to the church which He founded, calling it "My Church". Among the conflicting claims of denominations, and conflicting efforts to define God's people centered around themselves, let us look at the original teachings in the Bible. Back to the Source in the New Testament, and based on the Old Testament, without a rewrite of history for personal benefit and gain!

Never ever would this author or SunGrist_Bible be a part of any disrespect, or cast aspersions, on the real "My Church" of Jesus, the church of the firstborn written in heaven. Jesus started it; He established the means of membership as faith like Peter confessed as the foundation rock for this "My Church", which we will come more to see in this sixth chapter of John as the "believing" and discipleship that goes beyond the initial "believe"; and to have any disrespect for this "My Church" would be synonymous with disrespect for Jesus Himself since the Bible identifies this "My Church" as the very body of Christ. **{Just pray that you can find some measure of correlation between your church and the "My Church" of Jesus. Would it not be wonderful to have a man-made church with many members that are also members of the church of the firstborn, written in heaven!}**

The most famous saying of Jesus on church and churches--"...on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it..." (Matthew 16:18)--is not in John 6, the chapter of the next two miracle-signs of Jesus; however the same confession of faith from Peter is there, indicating that John is describing the same and equivalent event and teachings in the life of Jesus in the last part of John 6 as we also read in Matthew 16 and the Synoptic Gospels. The same teachings about the church are there in terms of the disciples who stay and the disciples who go away (John 6:60-71), and in the study of this passage we come much closer to the real "believing" in Jesus as related to who are the real disciples in "My Church".

"My Church": notice that there is not even a name on it like "Church of Christ", or "The Lutheran", or "Baptist", or "Methodist", or "The Roman Catholic Church". Goodness there is not even in "My Church" the name of Jesus. You have to know about Jesus, let us say by the continuous process of "believing" that goes beyond the initial "believe" of John and of the purpose of John in John 20:30,31. Startling for many today but there is not even a word in the title "My Church" to indicate that it is interdenominational or non-denominational to please the masses. You will not find a local church or larger group, denomination, today with the title of "My Church" on it, primarily because you can not find this Church located today in any one or easily numbered multiple locations. Hopefully down at the Baptist local church and down at the Roman Catholic local church and so on, there are a few members of "My Church" there; and over in Nigeria where they do not have a building of their own, there are more members of the "My Church",

and in Norway where a building is borrowed and a few poor people get together to worship, there are a few more; and on and on we go across the world picking up **{actually it is God and Christ that have done the picking as we will make clear in the last chapter "many are called but few are chosen"}** the total physical living body of Christ. And then are you ready for this, even as in the time of Elijah that were unknown to Elijah and therefore to the organized assembly of God, 7,000 members who had not bowed their knees to Baal, today there are many members of "My Church" who are not even in an organized local church body. Yes, we are talking about "the church of the firstborn, written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:23). There is the distinct possibility that at this point in history, approximately 2000 years after Jesus made the "My Church" statement that more members of this church are physically dead than alive. **{They are not really dead; and in this chapter of the book on John 6 where Peter provided the faith foundation for the "My Church" in the profession of faith that "thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God", we must come to see more about this Living God who is also the God of the Living.}** Sleep is the term that Christ preferred to describe the fact that we no longer see the dead, that their spirits have gone to heaven to wait for the Second Coming and the new Resurrection bodies. Yet Moses is still alive; Elijah is still alive, and these two were seen on the mount of transfiguration, recognizable by the disciples, as they counseled with Jesus on the Crucifixion to follow shortly; Abraham is alive: as announced often in the Bible, "God is a Living God of the Living". Like God told Moses at the burning bush, "I Am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And as Jesus had to explain to the religious leaders of His day: God is not a God of the dead but of the living. Most of the members of "My Church" live today up there in heaven, and I am sure that they are quite aware of what is happening in real church growth of the "My Church" here on earth.

Since we would have to admit that in this country church membership has become more the province of the well-to-do and middle class, and since everything we know about Jesus is that He had a certain preference for the poor-that is, He came in order that "the poor might have the Gospel preached to them" (Luke 4:18), you may not really know many members in the "My Church", especially since there are far more poor in countries other than the United States. Hopefully you have remembered that the word translated "church" is "ecclesia", whether it is here in Matthew 16:18 where Jesus is talking about this church of the firstborn, written in heaven, and of which there are approximately 20 verses which have this meaning in the Bible **{the same meaning is found in the Bible teachings on "the body of Christ"}**; most of the times when ecclesia, church, or assembly is used in the Bible it refers to a local church like at Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, etc.; and then a few places where "ecclesia" is translated "assembly" it has nothing to do with Christ at all like in Ephesus where an assembly of locals came to do harm to Paul and the first Christians there.

And isn't it horrible to think that you may not know any members of "My Church" at all! Even as you will recall the many Scriptures that explain the total body of Christ as the individual parts of the head, the ear, the leg, the arm, and so on and on, you had better hope that you have in your local man-made church some of these members of the total body of "My Church" as some country and denomination and local church has to have the leader parts such as the head and the mouth. Yet what we must learn from the analogy of the Scriptures on body parts, is that none from the perspective of God and

Christ has any more importance than the other and less comely parts. Furthermore, what we should see clearly is that since there is ONLY ONE BODY of Christ, there can not in many local churches or groups for that matter be duplicate body parts. Existing right now in the world is only one ear, or one arm and leg, and where is it? Well, all these matters we must leave in the hands of God; for only He and Christ know in the first place the exact church roll that is written in heaven, that is the way God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ wanted it and intended it in the first place, and since there has to be some correlation between that church roll written up there in heaven, exclusive of the members asleep for the earthly perspective, and our many local churches throughout the world down here on earth, Jesus taught not to try to separate in the churches and the kingdom between the real members and the fake, between the wheat and the tares.

I know it all sounds so theoretical; however much better than both the malarkey that you hear from the Roman Catholics as they strain to make themselves the same as the “My Church” of Peter’s confession of faith, and they bestowed postmortem a pope ship on the Apostle Peter to seal their place, they think, as the “My Church”; or even the landmark Baptists who as set out in the book “Trail of Blood” trace themselves back to John the Baptist, as a baptized believer of a baptized believer, and thus establish themselves as that one the “My Church”. IT IS NOT THEORY, and it is not completely fair to call it derogatorily the “invisible church” as contrasted to the local churches and denominations **{Roman Catholicism is really another denomination and denominations are such a man-made association of local churches}**. All the real members, not asleep, are visible to God and Christ; and while often we would like to think we know the 7,000 of our own generation that have not bowed to Baal or some other false god, similar to the generation of Elijah which never were visible as far as we know to Elijah until he got to heaven, we must leave the final separation at the Second Coming in the hands of Christ and the Angels. You can be assured that the Angels have already been instructed where the living and dead **{asleep}** bodies are; that God and Christ have coordinated the locations of these asleep bodies with the church roll written in heaven, and that it only remains for the Great Gathering of the Second Coming to separate the sheep from the goats, the tares from the wheat.

Rather abstract, yes; but necessitated by this mess in which we find ourselves today with so many denominations, so many splitting churches, and new movements with a preference often for the interdenominational and non-denominational. If you find difficulty in finding your way through the Bible arguments on the three meanings of church and churches in the Bible, how much more do we find difficulties with the navigation today through this maze of churches, denominations, and non-denominations! Thank our God for the concrete over

the abstract, the concrete Bible with its clear teachings on church, churches, and assemblies, and the clear teachings of Christ with events and miracle-signs to which we will come in this chapter from John 6. That men have muddled the water of clarity with so many man-made denominations are readily acknowledged: that it is necessary to wade through all this more abstract in order to come to the more concrete, hopefully is also clear.

NOTE: By the way all his introduction to John 6 and later some parts of it are shown in RED because they are necessary to the bringing together in the last chapter--"Many are called but few are chosen"--the two simultaneous themes of this book: (1) that of the Hideout for Bad Habits, alias the "Den of Thieves"; and (2) the believing in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God. On these most important of all subjects, what you easily might call life and death subjects, we can give no less than our best mentally and scripturally. Even as red is loud, the conclusions of these two important subjects, especially as integrated into one subject in the last chapter, we would also be loud in the best proclamation of such truth. That it often plows new ground is inevitable as the contemporary problem of the "Den of Thieves" is largely ignored.

7-1: Development of the Purpose of John in John 6.

The purpose of the Gospel of John, of course as clearly stated in John 20:30,31, is rapidly advanced in John 6 both based on the Teachings of Jesus centered around the "Bread of Life", and John's own description of the life of Jesus and he and the other disciples saw it. All the key words of the purpose are prominent in John chapter 6: (1) signs, (2) believe, (3) believing and believes, (4) life and everlasting life. Like in so much of the Gospel of John, Jesus the Master Teacher provides the content for John to communicate on this purpose, here in John 6 Jesus provides for John an introduction of 2 miracle-signs--the feeding of the five thousand which introduces the chapter and the walking on water, and primarily the largest content of the chapter centers around the teachings about these key words centered around the teaching of Jesus on Himself as The Bread of Life, with the reaction from the Jews, the disciples who left primarily from the hard saying that He came down from heaven, and then the 12 disciples who chose to stay because: (1) Jesus had the words of eternal life, and (2) they had come to know that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

We will briefly introduce and survey John 6 first in terms of these key words.

1. Signs in John 6.

By the way, John and Jesus did not originate the habit of using the word "sign" to refer to "miracle signs", for a careful study of the Old Testament especially in Exodus and centered around what God did to Egypt to rescue His people from bondage will show that the judgment-miracles that God brought on Egypt through Moses like water turned into blood, lice, frogs, and finally dead on all the firstborn in the land that did not put blood on the post **{The Passover}**, that these acts of God were called signs. {Exodus 7:3}. {By the way also, especially to progress to the concept of "A Place for His Name", and the other simultaneously themes of the "Den of Thieves". While in Exodus, God told His people for the first time what He was to be called and how this name would be His memorial, later the Temple was built to honor that Name.}

- a. John starts the sixth chapter **{actually the chapters and verses came from the King James translators, but they used the time and change of location from Jesus and John to make the chapter transitions for the most part, here it was (John 6:1) as Jesus went over to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, the Sea which the Romans then called the Sea of Tiberias}** with the reason a multitude

followed Jesus across the Sea: “because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.”

It is interesting the wording John uses as he describes the miracles previously witnessed by the people as “signs” which Jesus performed on the sick. So naturally had the Apostle John come to accept that Jesus, “in the beginning as the Word, and the Word was with God and God, so naturally had John come to accept Jesus as the “Word who dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”, that they are just signs. And it seems by the narrative trend of the story that the country was also coming to accept these signs as natural by one who could be Cocreator.

b. Of course, as we go deeper into John and what the crowds thought, as in John 6:14, that what we will find is the multitude was coming to accept Jesus as more the Prophet from Moses, the Prophet like Moses to which the people would listen (Deuteronomy 18:15-22), rather than to accept Jesus also as the Messiah of the book of Isaiah that would die for the sins of the world. While much of the predictions and Jesus on Christ or “Messiah” of the Old Testament can be summarized as “Prophet-Messiah”, it would seem that especially here in the events of John 6 that while one group, the disciples who stayed accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Prophet Messiah--expressed by Peter for this small group of disciples as “thou art the Christ {Messiah}, the Son of the Living God”--the other two response groups of John 6, the Jews who rejected Him and His hard to understand teaching on “He came down from heaven”, and the group of initial disciples who went back and followed Him no more because they could not buy that He came down from heaven. **{What is different today is that many of these quick disciples stay in a church named after Christ, but still do not accept Him as the Son of God that came down from heaven.}** c. It must be added about this usage of the word “sign” by John above in John 6:14, the “this is truly the Prophet”, was the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand with 5 barley loaves and two fishes, where all were filled, and for leftovers so they would not be wasted, the disciples followed the instructions of Jesus to gather 12 baskets of fragments leftover. Was the miracle more the feeding of 5000 with 5 and 2, or the collection of 12 baskets of leftovers? Well, the author of the biography of Jesus, the Apostle John, would say it is just a sign, a sign that will point in this chapter to all the implications of Jesus as the Living Bread of Life that came down from heaven.

d Jesus Himself uses the word “sign” in John 6:26, in the plural here of the “signs” that caused the people to come across the Sea to Capernaum from the other side--in boats, they were serious about the pursuit of Jesus; but Jesus said they sought Him in multitudes not because they saw those same signs of Jesus on the diseased, those same signs that John previously mentioned in John 2:2 as the reason for the multitudes, but they sought Him for the very mercenary reason that He provided a free meal. You see the writing wisdom of John to set up in the first of John 6 for this introduction to the teaching of Jesus on Bread of Life to follow, and primarily the wisdom of Jesus in teaching to provide some focus for the crowd on teachings on the Living Bread of Life. **{It must be mentioned how**

Jesus introduces the very core of meaning of this bread of life, and later the issue that most of the crowd reacted to in order to leave, even cease to be disciples, of eating His flesh and drinking His blood. By the way, in the very nature of parables--a subject on which John does not dwell since the other Gospel writers have done such a good job, John just shows examples of how Jesus used them and how the people could not understand and that was the intention--you will notice that not until some in the crowd, particularly the Jews and the disciples who departed did Jesus slide into the parable category with words like "drink His blood" and "eat His flesh" that confused them.}

NOTE: See how Jesus both uses the miracle-sign of the feeding of the 5,000 to start His teachings on the Living Bread of Life in John 5:26,27 and fully explains up front all the meaning of Himself as the Living Bread of Life that came down from heaven--"the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you..."

e. The crowd reacted; they wanted more signs for believing just like previously in John where Jesus had called them slow to believe. More, more, more they were saying to Jesus: we have doubts and reservations, give us more reasons or signs for believing. This is recorded in John 6:30-34. And how did Jesus respond? In 6:35-40 with the Teaching of Himself as the Bread of Life. **{We must get that the very heart of John 6, and furtherance of the purpose for the writing of the Gospel of John; and which we will as soon as we complete a quick look at the key words.}**

2. Another key word of John 6 is "life" and everlasting life.

a. John 6:27 where Jesus introduces another kind of food, much like the other kind of water previously introduced that was both living water and brought rivers of living water out of the believing individual, a "food," Jesus taught, "which endures" **{how important is that word of endurance}** to everlasting life. Which Jesus really starts teaching, and Jesus is serious about it here as John will tell us later in John 6:59, Jesus taught in the synagogue at Capernaum **{Capernaum is on the Sea of Galilee and a short distance from Cana and Nazareth}**. Jesus in this verse calls Himself "The Son of Man" another favorite phrase of Isaiah to refer to this same predicted Prophet-Messiah.

b. Jesus urged then and still urges today that all humanity labor "for the food which endures to everlasting life" rather than expend all their labors, though of course some are necessary, for food which perishes. (John 6:27) We will try to make that clear in one on the last chapters on the Principle of Priority since so many like God's people of Jeremiah have made idols like "a god" in that they devote themselves more to the bread and other material things of life that perish more than to a "seeking first of the kingdom of God and His righteousness", a "man shall not live by bread alone", and a "man can not serve God and mammon", where mammon are any creations from the hands of man.

- c. Jesus teaches that God Himself provides the real bread, of which the manna from heaven in the wilderness is only a prototype and then only provided temporal food for the body {of course not to be ignored was the facts that God provided bread and quail meat and sandals and clothing which did not wear out to His own people for 40 years in the wilderness}, this true bread from God is Jesus that came down from heaven. (John 6:31-33)
- d. Jesus taught in John 6:40 that anyone who sees the Son and believes in the Son may have “everlasting life”, which begins now but continues as Christ raises him up on the last day of this earth.
- e. Jesus assures all the distinct groups of that day in the synagogue at Capernaum--the Jews from Jerusalem, the disciples that departed, and the few that remained of the Apostles, that with “believes” comes “everlasting life.” (John 6:47)
- f. “Live forever” the equivalent of everlasting life is used by Jesus in John 6:51 where the eating of the living bread from heaven of Jesus is contrasted with any material bread which is eaten. (John 6:51)
- g. It is about this point in John 6:53,54, that Jesus faced by the opposition and challenges and unbelief of the Jews from Jerusalem starts to speak in parables without telling them like in the other Gospels that He is talking now in parables which are given to confuse, to hear without hearing, and to see without seeing. In other words the ones who God has not selected and not called, like the oppressors of Jesus, will not be able to understand when the Bible or Jesus speaks in spiritual parables, only the spiritual can understand. Jesus purposely toys with their confusion and attitude by a reference to “no life in you” except you eat the flesh and drink the blood. Of course most are aware of how the Lutherans and Romans and Presbyterians have also been confused by this parable, trying in unsound doctrine to deceive many that the wine and bread of the Lord’s supper actually become the body and blood of Jesus. You see, parables work for that which they are intended.

“And He said, ‘To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that

‘Seeing they may not see and hearing they may not understand’’. (Luke 8:9)

You would think that nothing so simple as a parable, with hidden spiritual wisdom, could confuse these PhD’s and Th.D.’s, like in the Jesus Seminar, to keep them from getting the real meaning of so much of what Jesus taught, and of the Bible. But you know, as the Bible says, “the natural man {**Doctor’s degree or vast education and knowledge or not**} can not receive the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned.” (I Corinthians 2:14) Anytime you hear one talk like in the Jesus Seminar and in their book The Fifth Gospel of how foolish

the Scriptures and the Bible are, you can bet that you are still listening to a non-born again human no matter what his credentials, reputation, and honor from men is!

h. **{Life and everlasting life are numerous in John 6, but we must hasten on as this chapter grows large.}** Also in John 6:54 with “eternal life” for “everlasting life” Jesus continues to work the parable on the religious leaders from Jerusalem as they must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ.

NOTE: Once again like in previous verses of John where we explained the real meaning of the living bread come down from heaven as faith in Jesus, Jesus does break out of the parable to explain in John 6:56 that to eat his flesh and drink his blood is to “abide in Him”. It they were not so intent on opposition and dissension, and so blocked by the blinkers on the eyes, the sceptics and agnostics and unbelievers in Jesus like the Jesus Seminar, could have caught the real meaning right here, also the false prophets and itching ears teachers of unsound Bible doctrine in churches and denominations today who talk of a literal miracle where the vine and bread literally become the body and blood of Jesus. What tangled webs we mortals over the years weave for ourselves in unsound doctrine and practices!

i. There is a lot of life and living in John 6:57: Jesus teaches that even as the “living” Father sent the “I, who live” **{Jesus}**, so He who feeds on Jesus in the sense of abiding in Jesus as explained in the previous verse, will “live” also. There is the life: it starts with the Living God the Father proceeds with the Son of the Living God, then is passed on with honor from God into life for the responding believer.

j. Jesus goes back to the living bread analogy, or even parable, the same as the body and blood, and the abiding in him; but other words and concepts and parables that He has used to make clear to those at the synagogue in Capernaum who will really listen and who God has given eyes to see and ears to hear. (John 6:58) God’s people in the wilderness ate the manna from heaven and died **{twice as they died in the wilderness after 40 years of unbelief and without the seeing of the Promised Land of Israel and the second time according to Hebrews because they were not allowed to enter into God’s eternal rest}**, Jesus said whoever eats this bread will “live forever”.

k. As Jesus own disciples began to complain about the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood, and in John 6:63, He explained further that: “it is the Spirit that gives life, not the flesh”, and how could it be any plainer, and then continued that the words that Jesus spoke contain the spirit and the life.

l. When many disciple departed to follow Jesus no more, and after Jesus turned to the twelve to say “do you want to go away also” (6:67), Peter replied for them that who else could they go to because it was Jesus who had “the words of eternal life.” (6:68)

3. “Believe”, “Believes”, and “Believing” are other favorite words of John 6.

Actually “believes” replaces “believing” in John 6, where believes has the same sense of faith continuing with time as believing; and of course the opposite of a departure of disciples from Jesus.

- a. Just before the multitude in John 6:28 asked for more signs, they first asked how they could also do the works of God they saw Jesus do; and Jesus identified the real work of God for those on earth, like the will of God also He taught in this chapter, “that you believe in Him whom He sent.” Do you want to do the will and work of God; well, certainly there is no other starting place, and even finishing place for those who would go all the way to the “fruit that remains” of John 15 and the true vine, than to believe in the Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, that the Living God sent to planet earth.
- b. Jesus told the multitude, at least most of them, that although they saw Him they “do not believe”. (John 6:36)
- c. Part of the explanation of the will of God for planet earth that all who see and believe the Son will have everlasting life, and the resurrection of “the last day”. (John 6:40)
- d. Jesus assures the listeners, and John assures all with the recorded words from Jesus in John 6:47 that all who believe in Jesus “will have everlasting life.”
- e. Far more disciples **{we know from other Gospels of more than 500 that Jesus sent out to do His work like the 12 disciples called Apostles}** followed Jesus in this multitude at Capernaum than the twelve, and it was to these that would shortly in John 6:64 “who do not believe”, Jesus said; and certainly John tells us in John 6:66 that “From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more”. **{Once again in keeping with the primary theme of “Den of Thieves”, it would be stated that church members “go back” today, many “walk no more with Jesus today”; but the difference since it is made so easy for them to do so, they stay in the church, sometimes even active, that somehow bares the name of Jesus and God, without the walking and going forward!}**
- f. We come to the very positive response of the few disciples, apart from the backsliding and those that cease to walk forward, that of the 12 minus 1 who are represented by testimony of Simon Peter when he says “we have come to believe and know **{notice that as in any proper church membership or discipleship process that is real and valid, it is a learning process to be a real disciple--to “come to believe and know”}** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. **{Parenthetically, you must also have your doctrine as much straight on the Living God, as well as on the doctrine of Who is the Son of God, as well as Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah.}**

7-2: The Bread of Life Teachings of John 6.

1. Jesus said, “I am the bread of life” just like previously in John 4 He said that He was the living water of life and later in John 14 He would conclude for His disciples that remained that “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6).

2. Jesus said, "he who comes to Me shall never hunger." (John 6:35) It is obvious that Jesus recognized the inherent hunger of all humanity for God, more life, and everlasting life.
3. Jesus said, "he who believes in Me shall never thirst." (John 6:35)

NOTE: Believe you me, or more important believe the Bible and Jesus, that not one church member who learns to practice this kind of "believes" of "believing"--the opposite of an "evil heart of unbelief that departs from the living God"--will be among the "Den of Thieves".

4. Jesus told them that they just did not believe although they had seen Him (John 6:36). Each word or words are critical in the teachings of Jesus, just as later every word is of John 13-17 on the disciples that remain versus the disciples that are cast off.
5. The remaining disciples, opposite of those who depart or are cast off by God to use the words of John 13-17, are identified by Jesus as the "All that the Father gives Me", as "All that will {really} come to Me", and the assurance is added by Jesus that this small and unique group--shortly of course before the end of John 6 the Jews will reject Him and many disciples will go away to follow Him no more--that of that very small group Jesus will reject or "cast out" none of them. And right here in John 6:36 do we have an introduction to the "cast off" concept in the teachings of Jesus that will come in John 15:2, after the introduction to Himself as "the true vine" and God the Father as the "vinedresser". **{A teaching at which we must look in "Den of Thieves" as both an explanation of why so many church members have fallen away from their first motivations, as well as a brief look at the "Friends of Jesus" challenge, from Jesus Himself in John 13-17, that provides a challenge sufficient for the Falling Away.}**
6. Jesus had in mind no personal goals or kingdoms unto Himself, of course, when He came down from heaven. **{It was this "come down from heaven" of Jesus and John 6:38 that perked up the ears of the Jews, so that by John 6:41 they started to complain about Jesus as "the bread that came down from heaven", and Jesus had to explain further how Him as the Bread of Life was related as to who could really eat this special bread and how.}**
7. So what is the will of God for planet earth: (John 6:39) that Jesus should lose none of the believers that God has given Him and would raise all of them up on the "last day".

NOTE: It is an aside, but an important aside, especially in the light of the all the malarkey from fundamentalists today that confuses the last days as running from the coming of the Holy Spirit in power on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension to this "last day". Contrary to all their confusion based on Scofield Notes and other imaginations, it is all over in One Day. That One Day is the Day of Lord and LORD when Christ Comes Again.

The will of God for planet earth is further expanded in John 6:40 as: that everyone who SEES the Son and “believes in Him” may have everlasting life; and further that Jesus Himself at the Second Coming of the “last day” will raise that seeing and believing person up from the dead. “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” (I Thessalonians 4:16)

7-3: Jesus Answer to the Jews, “How Can He Say I Came Down from Heaven?”

1. Don’t murmur among yourselves, Jesus said to the Jews from Jerusalem **{I bet you could tell these city slickers just by the clothes that they wore}**, no one can come to the Me unless the Father draws Him. They were wrapped up in their own self-importance, and the honors they received from men, and looked down on the origin of Jesus which they knew to be Joseph and Mary and of Nazareth, so Jesus put things in right perspective as the initiative to follow Jesus must come from God the Father.

2. Jesus gets the attention of these religious scholars with a quote from Isaiah 54:14 of how all the people “will be taught by God” Himself (John 6:45), and then properly interprets this Old Testament quote as He does so often as this means: (1) anyone that hears and learns from God the Father comes to Jesus; and (2) not that anyone has literally seen the Father except the One standing before you that came from the Father (6:46)

3. Jesus gets back on the subject of Himself as the Living Bread of Life that came down from heaven (6:51) after an assurance that everlasting life comes to any who believe in Him (6:47) and the contrast of the manna in the heaven where the eaters died and this bread of heaven which when eaten prevents death (6:49-51)

7-4: Jesus Answer to the Jews, “How Can This Man Give Us His flesh?”

Presbyterians and Lutherans need to read this answer again today; for either like the Jews who originally heard it they failed to read the initial explanation of Himself as the Living Bread that came down from heaven as recorded in John 6:35; or also like the Jews as Jesus went into the parables after a recognition of the hard of seeing and hearing, could not understand because God has not meant that they should understand. I suspect that they have not personally and spiritually even read these words from Jesus independently of what they are officially told to believe and practice as doctrine.

Previously in John 6:41 it was a complaint from the Jews, by the time of John 6:52 a quarrel broke out among the Jews about “the flesh to eat”. And you know how by now they could not understand because of the parable of eating His flesh and drinking His blood; but with the clear explanations still provided to them that: (1) that the eternal life would continue after physical life here as Jesus raised them up on “the last day” of this old earth age; (2) that the eating of flesh and drinking of blood was a parabolic metaphor for abiding in Jesus (6:56); and that this drinking and eating was of the bread that came down from heaven, the eating of which would provide life forever (6:58)

7-5: The Concrete of “Believe”, “Believing”, and “Disciples” in John 6.

You see when John writes the purpose of John in John 20:30,31 as both “believe” and “believing” --in order first of all that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and then secondly by a continuous “believing” for years, you may have the life of life and everlasting life, he is addressing subtly as only John the experienced Pastor and the last living Apostle with all that personal experience with Jesus, the two categories of disciples, those who remain and those who go away. In other words, we find in John a message for both God’s people who remain in faith, “believing”; and those who “depart from the living God” because of “an evil heart of unbelief”.

Consistent with what we have found in our study of the Gospel of John up to this point, and will find in all seven of the chapters centered around the 7 miracle signs of the Gospel of John, the miracles are indeed signs that point beyond themselves to the teachings and doings of Jesus on earth. This consistency and pointing characteristic of the way John wrote this life of Jesus is glaring as welcome to chapter 6 of John. There are two miracles at the beginning of the chapter--Jesus walking on water, and the feeding of the five thousand; and these two miracles, which certainly get your attention as unique in history are a preface to the teachings and other historical events of the same chapter: (1) Jesus as the Bread of Life from heaven, obviously related to Jesus feeding the five thousand with five barley loaves and two fishes; (2) the incident where Jesus was rejected by His own around Capernaum as the rejection starts with a rejection of His hard teaching that He came down from heaven and with the Bread of Life, certainly Jesus has the backing of such outlandish claims from the 12 disciples who saw Him walk on water, and certainly with those who recognized like John in the beginning that there could be no limitations even on earth to the Word who cocreated the universe; and (3) the disciples who went away and the disciples who stayed incident of John 6:60-71.

You will notice the reason that Peter offered for the rest of the 12 disciples to stay, and when Jesus said “will you go away also?”, was not that Jesus had performed the two miracles earlier of feeding the five thousand or the walking on water, or even earlier the water into wine and the healing of the Nobleman’s son or the healing of the man infirm for 38 years, rather the reason was that Jesus had the words of eternal life. **{And much more in Peter’s testimony of faith for us all which we will discuss in this chapter as part of the exegesis of John 6.}**

7-6: The Two Miracle-Signs of John 6.

1. Jesus feeds five thousand not counting women and children. (John 6:1-14)

Once again to conclude on this miracle and what the people of Galilee thought of Jesus, John uses the word “sign” in John 6:14. Most of the men who saw the sign recognized Jesus as the Prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18) who would come into the world. Unfortunately when Jesus got closer to his own home country by crossing the Sea of Galilee, yes, the time He walked on water, there was less acceptance by his most “own” of His own people. **{By the way while we see less use of the word “Jews” by John, we do see it coming again as in 6:41 the Jews complained about this hard teaching on the Bread from Heaven, and we do remember the Bible beginnings of the word “Jews” as a short form for the residents of Jerusalem.}**

2. Jesus Walking on Water. (John 6:15-21).

Faith began to be engendered in the special 12 disciples, the apostles, even as in John 6 the Jews complained about His teachings that He came down from heaven, and quarreled, many disciples followed Him no more because of the hard sayings about eating flesh and drinking blood. This was fifth of seven miracle-signs in the book of John, with only two more to complete the purpose of John of John 20:30,31, only two more around which to see the character and personality of the "Word made flesh" at the introduction to John, and miracles almost taken for granted as they accepted the first words of John about Jesus as the Co-Creator of the Universe. If they did not believe it before, and you will recall that it is was during the miracle-sign at the wedding feast of Cana where John announces that the disciples "began to believe in Him". Goodness, John knew; for he was one of those 12 disciples.

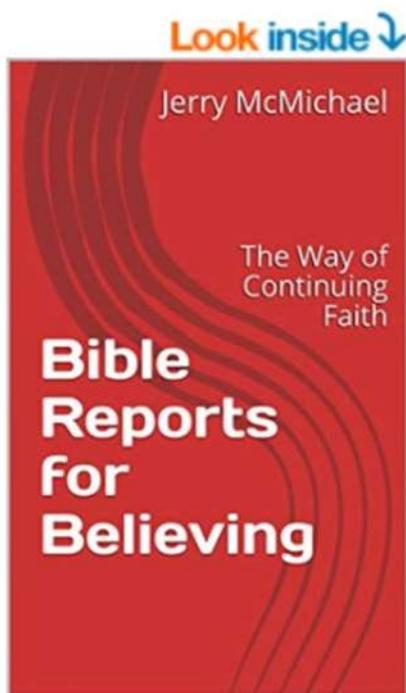
7-7: Teaching of Jesus: The Living Bread from Heaven.

Even as Jesus taught in John 4 the difference between water and the water which He could offer to the world as "living water", so now in John 6 Jesus teaches the difference between the bread which he provided in the miracles of feeding five thousand with five barley loaves and two fishes as He can also provide as Son of God, and as Co-Creator of the Universe, sent by God for that very purpose, a "living bread". So we continue to learn more about the "life" that Jesus provides; and how He Himself is the way of life as well as truth and way.

Hopefully the picture is beginning to dawn on the reader that the difference between the tares and the wheat is greatly encompassed in the difference

between "believe" and continuing to believe called often "believing". It is also the difference between fruit that remains and is pruned by God, and fruit that does not remain which God the master vinedresser casts off.

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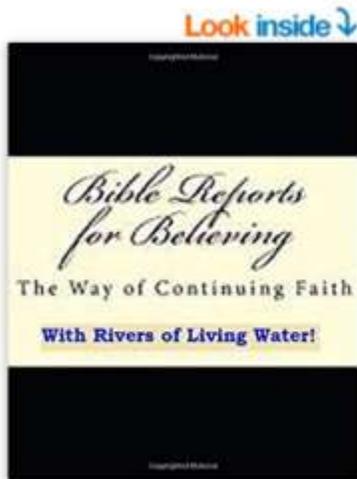


Jerry
Vaughan
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✓ Following

"Believing", part of the purpose of the Gospel of John, given in John 20:30,31, is about 'Continuing Faith'. If you miss it in the reading of the purpose, or the 7 miracle signs of John as highlighted in this book, you will get it with the additional chapters, especially those based on the purpose of I John in I John 5:13, "that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God".

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