

## **John 6:55 – 7:6**

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~ The theme of the Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. We set out on this expedition to discover the Lord Jesus on every page of the Bible. While I have failed to point Him out on every page, you may have seen Him anyways. Even on the pages where we don't think we saw Him – He was there – and He saw us. I do not use the psychological method of teaching the Bible, as is so popular today, because nothing but the Word of God can bring conviction, learning and the transformational raising of the spiritually dead man or woman to a real spiritual life in that person. The modern methods being used, even by men who are seemingly very close to Christ, are all cheap cop-outs, because they replace the Word of God with their own humanistic theory or philosophy. Why not try a steady approach – a sincere approach? I always say there is nothing that shocks or amazes me, but there is one thing that does shock and amaze me, and that is this: how completely and woefully ignorant people are about the Bible and what it has to say to us. If you say you love Christ, but you do not desire to know the Word of God properly, correctly and completely - my friends, may I say, you will do well to examine yourself because there is a high likelihood that you have never been born again....

### **VI**

*55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

*56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.*

*57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.*

*58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.*

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~ The Lord Jesus was speaking of Himself as being the true manna from Heaven in our previous report. Jesus is the true and living bread that came down from Heaven. Christ is what God gave to the nation Israel. What we have here, friends, is a statement that is just a little bit above you and me. The Lord Jesus is preparing these men for their last supper together with Him; at which time the Lord's Supper will be instituted as a sacrament for the early church. Jesus isn't telling them to eat His literal flesh and drink His physical blood; what He is saying is that we partake of Him spiritually. Jesus makes it clear in the upper room that the blood is symbolic, as the life of the flesh is in the blood. God has taught us this truth repeatedly and very definitely since we began studying the Bible. When the blood is shed, then He will give His life so that we might accept Him and receive Him in a most intimate way - a spiritual way.

This passage constitutes the basis of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There is just as much disagreement among believers today over the interpretation of the Lord's Supper as there is about baptism - and it has been that way throughout the ages - but I digress, sort of. The bread speaks of His body; but there have been different emphasis put on that. The Roman Catholic Church emphasized this is His body. They assert to transfer that bread into the actual flesh of Christ. My observation concerning that is: I seriously doubt the Lord Jesus taught cannibalism in any way, shape or form. So, that is unquestionably the wrong emphasis. However, there are also those who have taken the position that the Lutheran church has taken, which emphasizes, "... this is My body." They maintain that by, with and through the bread you get the body of Christ; and, again, that religious philosophy falls short of what the Lord Jesus really means. Then, there is a spiritual interpretation from one of the reformers. They look at all of this as just symbolism and religious ritual. They posit that God said go through with it so that's what they do. I feel that's the interpretation that most of Protestantism posits today. Ultimately, all of these interpretations fall into the woefully inadequate category.

The bread will always be bread, that doesn't change; and the same goes for the water and the wine. We don't get the body of Christ by going through

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some ritual – and the Lord’s Supper is much more than just a ritual – but there is a very definite spiritual blessing to be had from observing it. Bread in the mouth and Christ in your heart brings a blessing that is very real to your life. Christ ministers to our obedience when we observe the Lord’s Supper together. A real, intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is what is important, though, and the Lord’s Supper brings that relationship very close, indeed. When Israel ate the manna in the wilderness, they ate a temporary arrangement for food. Here, we have something that is eternal. God is talking to us about life through what Jesus brings to us. Remember, in the beginning of this Gospel we were told that Christ is the light of men. This is deeply profound truth, and difficult to lay hold of, to be sure....

*59 These things said he in the synagoge, as he taught in Capernaum.*

*60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?*

~ Alright, we’re going to hear it. That’s who. This ‘many disciples’ group represents a whole lot of different people. Let’s suffice to say there is a great difference of opinion from the very beginning of His ministry. Jesus says they aren’t going to cannibalize Him because He is going bodily back to Heaven. Jesus says the flesh profits nothing – it’s the WORDS that are the Spirit and the WORDS that are life. When you and I appropriate the Word of God in faith is when the Spirit of God comes alive in our minute-to-minute activities. When we observe the Lord’s Supper, we can taste the sweet drink; and we do well to remember that the Lord Jesus bore such a bitter cup. Christ bore the bitter cup of the cross that we might have the sweet cup of life eternal.

The Lord’s Supper should be a reminder that He took that bitter cup. A tremendous spiritual blessing will be found if we remember that fact while partaking in the Lord’s Supper. I should add that the Word of God must be read from during the institution of the Lord’s Supper as a sacrament; and if you’ll observe it that way, you will realize a supernatural spiritual blessing while witnessing the Word of God ministering directly to the hearts of individuals. The Words are spirit and life....

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*61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?*

*62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?*

*63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*

*64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.*

*65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.*

~ Let's not lose sight of the phrase 'whosoever will may come' as we consider and process the doctrine of election. At the time in which we are studying, we look around and see the hostile religious leaders standing around everywhere. Then, there were His disciples who were not of the twelve. Then there were the twelve apostles; and within that group was Judas, which totals four separate interest groups clashing over the Lord...

*66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*

*67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?*

*68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*

*69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*

~ That may be the most marvelous statement Simon Peter makes during the entire three-year ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is also a very good question for us today. Maybe, by chance, an unbeliever has somehow

managed to read this report. They may say that the Lord Jesus is not their Savior. They may say He doesn't meet their needs on any level. Well, my questions are, where are they going? Are they finding satisfaction in life? Are they absolutely sure about what happens when we die? Christians are absolutely sure; and yet, atheists insist that Christian's don't know for sure, either. Well, here's what I know for sure: if we die and there is no God then we end exactly the same, no harm no foul - except the Christian will have had purpose and meaning in this life. Alright, what if we die and you're wrong, my atheistic friend? What then? Then they say they will explain to God their good works - or they begin comparing other religions to divert the subject; but the Word of God has already addressed that, and the True and Living God has said they won't be saved by their works. He doesn't have to accept them, and He says He won't. The man who says they do not believe in God today is either insincere, or he is insane.

By contrast, many other people have a picture of Jesus on the wall, and they sing some monotonous and boring song with a forced smile – but – Christ doesn't mean anything to them or in their hearts and lives. A grand disillusion has come over so many people today, and we find people turning in every imaginable direction chasing every imagined thought. It's the light they are searching for - but they are blinded by Satan. To Whom will you go is my question to all of you. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One in the universe Who has the words of eternal life....

*70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*

*71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.*

~ Here we have a sneak peak into a great mystery, and I think we are expected to note it carefully. Judas is rendered with the twelve, and Jesus says He chose Judas. Judas was a demon; that is, a demon possessed man. Every step of the way Judas went with Jesus was another opportunity for Judas to repent and turn to Him. Even after the betrayal, Judas could have fell at Jesus feet and cried out, "Lord, forgive me" - and he would have

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been forgiven. Instead, Judas committed suicide. Interpreting evil is, perhaps, the most difficult undertaking one can commit to. Evil is a mystery and that's why it's always attractive and alluring.

If I were to ask one thousand people to draw a straight line, I would get one thousand lines that look exactly the same. If I asked one thousand people to draw a crooked line, I would get one thousand different lines drawn. Something can be crooked a million different ways, but it can be straight only ONE way! The ways of God are straight paths of righteousness. That's the mystery of evil. The walk of Judas across our pages of Scripture is extremely difficult to interpret; and we will do well to ask for the leading and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit to understand exactly what we are reading. The Lord Jesus certainly ends this passage with a strange statement. This must have been a terribly awkward moment amongst them....

## **VII**

*1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.*

*2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.*

*3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.*

*4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.*

*5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.*

*6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready.*

~ So, we have reached chapter seven in study thirteen of the Spiritual Safari's consideration of the Gospel of John. We read 'after these things' and we will pause for one moment here. What that means is after the things that have just taken place in the previous chapter. The first verse of this chapter is a summary of what we have had previously. We see Jesus walked in Galilee because the Jews wanted to kill Him before the appointed time. Note that Jesus isn't forcing the issue of going to the cross at all. The first verse of chapter seven is quite a revelation in and of itself.

Most fundamental conservative scholars agree that the events of chapter seven happened at least six months after what transpired in the chapter six. Further, the events of chapter seven took place about six months before the cross. That might sound a little complicated, but it enables us to almost pinpoint this event. Our safari has reached the close of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. During the last year of His ministry, His activities were confined to Galilee; Jesus is walking no longer in Judaea. Jesus only went back to Jerusalem because of the command for all males to do so under Mosaic Law for the feast of Tabernacles. We have learned all about the feast of tabernacles in Leviticus on safari. This feast celebrates their coming out of the land of Egypt and dwelling in the wilderness in tents. That's specifically what the feast of tabernacles means – the feast of dwelling in tents. Remember, God came down to earth and pitched His tent amongst men. They all celebrated this feast by making booths. They would have been camping out all over Jerusalem while they were making a most joyful feast. Seventy bullocks would have been offered while trumpets were being blown.

This feast also commemorates the water that had come from the rock in the wilderness that Moses smote. So, water is being poured out in the temple as a commemorative of the water from the rock at Horeb. Paul says, "... that Rock that followed them was Christ!" Jesus says, "if any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink freely." Friends, if your soul is thirsty, Christ can quench that thirst. They also had a torch commemorating the pillar of fire that led them in the wilderness by night. It should come as no surprise to you that the next chapter will find Jesus giving the discourse on how He is the light of the world. If we follow Jesus, we shall not walk in

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darkness. Of course, the cloud by day and the fire by night that led the nation Israel through the wilderness is also a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice that Jesus was with His brethren in verse five – not with the apostles – not disciples – but with His family. These are the half brothers of the Lord Jesus. Matthew chapter thirteen gave us their names: Joseph, Simon and Judas; but Mary had other children. James is the same James who wrote the epistle of James; and this Judas is the writer of the epistle of Jude. Well, they aren't writing anything right now because they don't believe Him. They did see the following of people and the miracles, so they could only half-deny Him at this time. Here, they're giving Jesus advice that Jesus can't and won't follow. These are brethren only according to the flesh at this time.

Jesus doesn't take advice from the wisdom of the world, my beloved; I think we have seen that clearly on safari. Jesus isn't even listening to His own family – life is just not something He needs advice on – because He IS life. Either way, His brothers didn't believe in Him at this time. His time was not yet because He is following a very definite schedule – the Father's schedule. We see Jesus following the will of God to the cross now. Jesus never tells you to follow the wisdom of the world; and He never even appeals to His Own thinking, either, by the way – it's all about the Father Who sent Him. Our study at this time is on schedule.

A storm is brewing around the person of Christ as we move forward in our Spiritual Safari. Within six months, it will break forth in full fury – culminating at the cross. There is still more difference of opinion about the Lord Jesus Christ today in modern society than there is about any other person who ever lived. Christ is still the most controversial Person and the most well-known, make no mistake; men blaspheme Jesus and say the worst things that can be said - and sometimes it's done right in the sanctuary of the church ~

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