

47 – When Jesus uses the word “believes” here, it means “to continue to believe.” We do not believe in Jesus merely once; we keep on believing in and trusting Jesus.

48-51 - The religious leaders frequently asked Jesus to prove to them why he was better than the prophets they already had. Jesus here referred to the manna that Moses had given their ancestors in the wilderness (see Exodus 16). This bread was physical and temporal. The people ate it, and it sustained them for a day. But they had to get more bread every day, and this bread could not keep them from dying. Jesus, who is much greater than Moses, offers himself as the spiritual bread from heaven that satisfies completely and leads to eternal life.

How can Jesus give us his flesh as bread to eat? To eat living bread means to accept Christ into our lives and become united with him. We are united with Christ in two ways: (1) by believing in his death (the sacrifice of his flesh for the forgiveness of our sins) and his resurrection from the dead, and (2) by devoting ourselves to living as he requires, depending on his teaching for guidance, and trusting in the Holy Spirit for power.

52-59 - This was a shocking message for many – to eat flesh and drink blood sounded cannibalistic. And, the idea of drinking any blood, let alone human blood, was repugnant to the religious leaders because the law forbade it (Leviticus 17:10, 11). But Jesus was not talking about literal blood. He was saying that his life had to become their own.

Now think about this for a moment – Jesus’ life has to become our own. What does that mean? Jesus came to give his life as the sacrifice to atone for all sin. He willingly died to self to bring God glory. Is Jesus saying that we must do the same – to die to self in order to bring God

glory? Yes! We must turn from self-centeredness and toward being God-centered, allowing God's Holy Spirit to work through us, bearing spiritual fruit that brings glory to God. Are you doing that in your life?

60-65 – Again, it is the Holy Spirit who gives spiritual life, and without the work of the Holy Spirit, we cannot even see our need for new life. All spiritual renewal begins and ends with God. He reveals truth to us, lives within us, and enables us to respond to that truth. Jesus is stating clearly here, as it is done in other places in God's Word, that faith is a gift from God!

66 - Why did Jesus' words cause many of his followers to desert him? Perhaps some realized that he wasn't going to be the conquering Messiah-King they expected. Perhaps Jesus refused to give in to some of their self-centered requests. Jesus emphasized faith in him for salvation, instead of earning it by obeying the law to the letter. This turned some away. And of course, some complained that his teachings were difficult to understand, or were offensive to them.

As we grow in our faith, we may be tempted to turn away because Jesus' lessons and expectations of holy living are difficult. Will our response be to give up, to ignore certain teachings, or to reject Christ altogether? Instead, we should ask God to show us what Jesus teachings mean, and how they apply to our life personally. We can also ask God to give us the courage to act on His truth.

67-69 - There is no middle ground with Jesus. When he asked the disciples if they would also leave, he was showing that they could either accept or reject him. Jesus was not trying to repel people with his teachings. He was simply telling the truth. The more the people heard Jesus' real message, the more they divided into two camps—the honest

seekers who wanted to understand more, and those who rejected Jesus because they didn't like what they had heard. It is no different today, and this is evidenced by all the denominations and divisions we have in the church over what Jesus meant when he said it.

After many of Jesus' followers had deserted him, he asked the 12 disciples if they were also going to leave. Peter replied, "To whom would we go?" In his straightforward way, Peter answered - there is no other way. People look everywhere for meaning in life, for an assurance of eternal life, and for many reasons, they miss Christ, the only source.

70-71 - In response to Jesus' message, some people left; others stayed and truly believed; and some, like Judas, stayed but tried to use Jesus for personal gain. There are only two real responses to Jesus—you either accept him or reject him. How have you responded to Christ's offer of salvation and eternal life?

Chapter 7

1-9 - Because the world hated Jesus, we who follow him can expect that some people just may hate us as well. We are hearing more and more about the persecution of Christians and their beliefs – even right here in America where we boast of our religious freedom – even right here in the Bible Belt of the South.

God promises His blessings and the gift of eternal life to those who remain faithful in their witness to Christ as Savior and Lord of all.

May God add his blessings to the reading and hearing of His Word, and may God bless you all. Amen.