

WARM-UP

- Recall a time you experienced a rollercoaster of emotions. What happened?
- Do you usually go with the flow or chart your own course? Recall an instance explaining this.
- Who is one person you would follow blindly—no questions asked? Why?

WORD *⁶⁶After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”* **JOHN 6:66-69**

(Read also **JOHN 6:53-61**.)

From the very beginning, God designed us for a relationship with Him. This starts by following Jesus, which is the most important decision we can make in our lives. It is also the most difficult decision. In John 6, we see how many people turned their back on Christ, while some stayed. Jesus had just fed the 5,000 and taught them *a hard saying* (John 6:60). In our own lives, we are called to follow Jesus, even when it is hard and when others do not. From this passage, what does following Jesus mean?

1 | Following Jesus starts with a desire to know and understand Him.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" ⁶¹But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this?" **JOHN 6:60-61**

What did Jesus mean by eating His flesh and drinking His blood? How were His disciples supposed to do this? They had given up easily and concluded that this was a *hard saying*. Because of this, they left. The truth is, following Jesus does not always make sense given our limited human understanding. Even when we cannot figure out the circumstances behind the teaching of Jesus, we should continue seeking and following Him. What is one teaching of Jesus that is hard for you to accept?

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2 | Following Jesus may mean going against the flow.

⁶⁶After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" **JOHN 6:66-67**

Not everyone will follow Jesus. Not everyone will keep following Jesus. Not everyone will agree with your decision to follow Jesus. When this happens, will you still follow Him? When everyone else is turning away from Him, may we choose to do what is right, even when it means going against the flow. Why do you think Jesus asked His twelve disciples if they wanted to leave Him as well? Why was it important for Jesus to ask them this?

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Following Jesus means believing in who He is and His word.

⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." **JOHN 6:68-69**

Simon Peter and the eleven other disciples probably did not understand all that Jesus was teaching, and they could see others turning away from Christ. Yet Simon knew that they had nowhere else to go. They had believed in Jesus and followed Him for who He is. Even when we don't understand a lot of things in life or our faith, we can trust Jesus who has "*the words of eternal life.*" We believe and follow Him despite confusion, pain, and suffering. Do you feel and think as Simon Peter did? Why?

If the disciples who left only continued to remain with Jesus and seek understanding, they would have known that eating His flesh and drinking His blood meant believing in Him (John 6:27-29, 35, 40, 47). When we encounter difficult teachings and things we don't understand, let us continue to trust in the person of Jesus and seek Him for guidance.

APPLICATION

- Tell us about how and when you decided to follow Jesus. What has it meant for you since?
- In what area of your life is following Jesus difficult? How do you think you will be able to go against the flow?
- Do you believe that Jesus has "*the words of eternal life*" and is "*the Holy One of God*"? How will this belief affect your daily life?

