

Jesus does not walk it back.

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This week we come to the end of chapter 6. We started in the desert place where Jesus fed the 5,000. Many of them crossed the sea to find him. They did, asked him a bunch of questions. That is good. If you don't understand it is good to ask questions. And today we end up end the synagogue in Capernaum. And before it is all over *many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him.*

Why was that? Why would many walk away when after they had witnessed such a great sign? St. John tells us, *This is a hard teaching, Who can accept it?*

You know a politician makes outrageous statements or claims. The media goes crazy and gets critical. What does said politician do? They take to the public airways, and try to explain their statement, that they really did not mean what they said. That the offensive word that was used wasn't really what was meant. The politician is trying calm the firestorm so to speak. In today we call this, Walking it back.

In this morning's gospel and for the past two Sunday we have heard Jesus make claims about himself. He said that is, *"I am the Bread that comes down from heaven," "I am the Bread of Life." "Whoever eats of this bread shall never die and believes in this will never thirst." "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day. They remain in me who does this. You Fathers ate manna in the wilderness, but who eats of this bread (Jesus pointing to Himself will live forever.*

They understand completely what Jesus is teaching. So, it is not a lack of understanding, it is a lack of faith. At this point I would have thought that Jesus would have tried to beg them to come back. Given that so many are walking away. Maybe try to explain himself a little better so they might better understand what he is getting at. You know soften the message, to make it easier to swallow or more palatable.

Now a politician would try to explain his/herself, try to soften the message a bit to help them understand. You know what? Jesus does not walk it back. The Truth is not a popularity contest.

Jesus is not running for and hoping to get elected the Messiah, like politician would. Because he is already the Messiah. Jesus is the savior. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. He does not need to walk back His statements because they are true. He is the Bread of Life; He is bread which has come from heaven. He is this bread which gives life to the world. This is all true and there is nothing to walk back. Jesus will/did lay down His life on the cross for the world Unless we feed on Him, Unless we are born again, unless we receive His word of forgiveness, unless we live in Him and He in us, That; is, living a relationship with Him, we do not and will not have life in Him. **THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD.**

Even today this truth might make many people grumble. These things just are not popular in the mainstream today. The culture likes to say, are not all religions the same? The culture loves to say we are strong, and wise, and you rely on your own self, and all I must do is be a nice person and I have it made. This makes sense. But that would be rejecting the word of Christ's teaching.

When God looks down from above, He does not see potential, He does not see a lot of folks who need just a little push or encouragement to get over the hump. No, He sees, rebellion, rejection, a world deceived by Satan, a world of death. A world that needs Salvation.

And here is the good news. Jesus does not walk it back. Jesus does not walk back from His Father's will to appease our self-promoting, self-glorifying ways. And here's the truth. Jesus does not walk back from the Truth of His Words and His promises. What Jesus says is Truth. When He had to face our sin and rebellion, He said, *I will do it!*

Know this too, **HE WILL NOT WALK AWAY FROM YOU.** We come here wallowing in sin. Another week of failing to do what we ought to have done. Another week of doing what we ought not to have done – failing to love neighbor and God, serving self. Another week of half-truths, and carefully parsed words to get what you want. Another week of unclean desires, bitterness, grudges, wicked thoughts. **WOW**, steeped and marinated in sin. We walk in here like bums from the streets of hell.... **AND....YOUR SAVIOR DOES NOT WALK BACK FORM YOU.** Instead, He embraces you with His love. He kisses you with His forgiveness. Jesus came for you and He is still coming for you! There is no other place, doing no other thing than being right with us, rejoicing and forgiving sinners like us.

WOW, that sure sounds different. Maybe you aren't used to that! We are used to people who walk away for a lot less than that, and sometimes for the stupidest things. Friends, family, who cut us off and who won't let us in for a chance to repent. Who hold grudges. Maybe you done it your self. Maybe I too have fallen into that trap. Hold the grudge rather than forgive. Walk away when I get ticked off and stew about it for weeks and months and maybe even years.

I don't know about you, I am so thankful that God is not like that. I am so thankful that God's love burns for bums and serves sinners. I am thankful that God sent his Son where whose glory is found in a cross. If you won't believe this then you will not believe Christ did these things for you. You'll grumble like the people did of old. "This teaching is too Hard!" You complain that you aren't getting the credit and praise you think you deserve. You'll be offended by being called a sinner and walk away. Whoever gets stuck preaching my funeral, you permission to tell the people that Pastor Dave was a sinner, saved by God's grace in Jesus.

But if you don't walk away and just hang in there just a bit longer, you'll hear the most beautiful words that you can hear on this side of Heaven. **I BAPTIZE YOU. I FORGIVE YOU. YOU ARE MY CHILD. TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE. THIS IS BODY AND BLOOD GIVEN FORR YOU. MY PEACE I GIVE TO YOU... AND FINALLY, WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT.** These are the words of eternal life. AND they come from God in Christ who does not walk it back. These are words of eternal proclaimed so that you too may believe and know that Jesus is the Holy one of God.

And so, the call goes out again today. Don't walk away. Repent. Don't walk away, Listen. Hear the words of eternal life. Don't walk away and go back to old life of sin that does not satisfy. The food of the old life is full of junk calories. This food, Jesus' words are rich and nutritious and satisfying.

You may not understand it all or have all the answers. You don't have to have them. But the God who does not walk it back does. He knows you, He knows what you need. And he come to fill you with Himself. So, if you tempted to walk away. Don't, Instead walk back to your baptism. Walk to his forgiveness. Remember you are his child.

What happened to the folks that walked away. We are not told. I'll bet Jesus prayed for them. From that day on Jesus went to the cross and died for you for them. Maybe, later they came back and were among the 3,000 who were baptized on Pentecost.

What about those who have walked away today? Well pray for them. Ask God to lead you an opportunity to tell them about a God who did not walk away. A God who never lets us down. Ask to let God lead you to an opportunity to invite them to come to church with you, and experience to satisfying words of eternal life.

And a place that feeds you well. With God's love, forgiveness, and Hope.

Amen.