

To Whom Shall We Go?

JOHN 6:60-69 (BSB) · TEACHER GUIDE · DIGDEEPER.AI

THE BIG IDEA · SAY IT AT LEAST FIVE TIMES

When Jesus' words are hard, no one else has words of life.

Open with it, bring it back after every section, close with it. By the end they should be able to finish the sentence for you.

- Before this passage (day 9): John 6:35-51, The Bread of Life. Its big idea: Jesus is the bread from heaven, and he keeps everyone who comes.
- After this passage (day 11): John 7:37-52, Never Anyone Spoke Like This. Its big idea: Jesus is living water for the thirsty; everyone must decide about him.

Open

Recall last time: Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.' Then he went further. People must eat his flesh and drink his blood to have life (6:51-58). Ask: 'Have you ever stayed with someone after they told you something hard to hear? Why did you stay?' Take two or three answers. Read John 6:60 aloud. Big idea: When Jesus' words are hard, no one else has words of life. Ask one person what stuck from last time.

Run Sheet

1. A Teaching Too Hard to Accept (John 6:60-62, about 10 min)

The one thing: These followers understood Jesus well enough to be offended, and he did not back down.

Ask: What about Jesus do people today find hardest to accept?

2. Words That Are Spirit and Life (John 6:63-65, about 12 min)

The one thing: The words that offend are the same words that give life, and coming to him is God's gift.

Ask: What is the difference between words that inform you and words that give you life?

3. Many Leave, Peter Stays (John 6:66-69, about 13 min)

The one thing: Jesus doesn't chase the crowd. He asks the question, and Peter answers with who Jesus is.

Ask: Peter never says the teaching got easier. So why does he stay?

Close (never cut it)

Land on Jesus himself: the Holy One of God, whose words are spirit and life, and who knew all along who would stay. Read v.67-69 slowly. Let his question stand beside Peter's answer, with no call to decide and nothing to do.

PROTECT THE ENDING

If the last section starts late, drop its discussion and optional points, but always read v.67-69 aloud and leave Jesus' question with the room.

KIDS SIDE ANSWERS

Story order: 1, 5, 2, 4, 3 (top to bottom) · Feelings: The grumbling followers worried, Jesus sad, The Twelve worried, Peter happy · Code: WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

Act it out: The teacher plays Jesus. Choose a few kids to play the crowd and walk away to one side. The teacher asks the rest, 'Do you want to leave too?' They answer together: 'Lord, to whom would we go?'

1. A Teaching Too Hard to Accept

JOHN 6:60-62 · ABOUT 10 MIN · SECTION 1 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- The ones who struggled were disciples, not enemies.
- Jesus knew they were grumbling and asked them straight out.
- He did not soften his words. He pointed higher.

Many of His disciples said, 'This is a DIFFICULT teaching.'

Jesus asked them, 'Does this OFFEND you?'

Discuss: What about Jesus do people today find hardest to accept?

These followers understood Jesus well enough to be offended, and he did not back down.

MUST COVER

- v.60: Disciples ask 'Who can accept it?' The problem is accepting, not understanding.
- v.61-62: Jesus names the grumbling and raises the stakes: the Son of Man will 'ascend to where He was before.'

IF THERE'S TIME

- Grumbling recalls Israel in the desert complaining about food (Exodus 16, the story of the journey out of Egypt). The crowd had just compared Jesus to that manna.
- v.62: If 'eat my flesh' offends, what about a man who says he came from heaven and will go back?

Illustration idea: A doctor gives you news you don't want. You understand every word. That is exactly why it hurts.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: That he claims to be the only way to God.
- Listen for: That he asks for all of us, not just part.

If it drifts: Bring it back to v.60. These were followers. Ask what exactly they were refusing to accept here.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

They weren't confused. They were offended, and Jesus didn't take it back. Hard words, but his are the ones with life.

Short on time? Cut both optional points. Read v.60-62 and go straight to the discussion question.

Bridge → If his words are this hard, why keep them? Jesus tells us what his words are.

2. Words That Are Spirit and Life

JOHN 6:63-65 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 2 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Life comes from God's Spirit, not from human effort.
- Jesus' words do more than inform. They give life.
- Coming to Jesus is a gift the Father grants.

The words I have spoken to you are SPIRIT and they are LIFE.

No one can come to Me unless the FATHER has granted it to him.

Discuss: What is the difference between words that inform you and words that give you life?

The words that offend are the same words that give life, and coming to him is God's gift.

MUST COVER

- v.63: 'The Spirit gives life; the flesh profits nothing.' Life comes from God, not from us.
- v.64-65: Jesus already knew who didn't believe and who would betray him. Coming to him is 'granted' by the Father.

IF THERE'S TIME

- Jesus is repeating what he said earlier in this chapter (John 6:44): no one comes unless the Father draws him.
- Paul, an early Christian leader, writes in 1 Corinthians 2:14 that the things of God are grasped by the Spirit, not by natural reasoning.

Illustration idea: A car with a dead battery can't start itself. The power has to come from outside it.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: Life-giving words change you. Other words only tell you things.
- Listen for: It feels unfair that the Father must grant it.

If it drifts: If it turns into a debate about who is chosen, point to 'This is why' in v.65. Jesus is explaining the leaving, not shutting anyone out. Return to what his words are.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

The hard words are the life-giving words. No one else speaks like that.

Short on time? Skip the optional cross-references. Mention the betrayal in v.64 in one line.

Bridge → Now we watch what people do with those words.

3. Many Leave, Peter Stays

JOHN 6:66-69 · ABOUT 13 MIN · SECTION 3 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Many stopped walking with Jesus.
- Jesus let them go and asked the Twelve if they would leave too.
- Peter stayed because of who Jesus is.

Many of His disciples TURNED BACK and no longer walked with Him.

Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of ETERNAL LIFE.

Discuss: Peter never says the teaching got easier. So why does he stay?

Jesus doesn't chase the crowd. He asks the question, and Peter answers with who Jesus is.

MUST COVER

- v.66-67: 'Do you want to leave too?' Jesus lets people choose. He doesn't bargain.
- v.68-69: Peter's reason is a person: 'You are the Holy One of God.'

IF THERE'S TIME

- 'Holy One of God' means set apart, sent from God. It is a title for the one who belongs wholly to God.
- Later Peter preached that salvation is found in no one else (Acts 4:12; Acts is the history of the early church).

Illustration idea: Lost at sea, the only lifeboat is cramped and uncomfortable. You stay in it because there is no other boat.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He had nowhere better to go.
- Listen for: He knew who Jesus was.

If it drifts: If it turns to people we know who left, honor that. Then note that Jesus puts the question to those in front of him. Go back to Peter's words in v.68-69.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Peter didn't have every answer. He had the one that mattered: to whom would we go? Only Jesus has words of life.

Short on time? Drop the optional points. Read v.66-69 slowly and go to the discussion question.

Bridge → Let Jesus' question and Peter's answer carry us into the close.

With One Friend, Over Coffee

ABOUT 30 MINUTES · FOR A FRIEND WHO IS CURIOUS, OR NOT SURE

1. Set the scene. Explain briefly: Jesus had said he is bread from heaven and that people must eat his flesh and drink his blood (6:51-58). Many found it outrageous.
2. Read the hard part. Read John 6:60-65 together. Ask what stands out, then wait.
3. Name the objection honestly. Say it plainly: many followers left, and Peter doesn't solve the difficulty. Agree that this is hard.
4. Look at Peter's reason. Read v.66-69. Notice that Peter stays because of who he believes Jesus is, not because the teaching got easier.
5. Leave his question. Point to Jesus' words in v.67: 'Do you want to leave too?' Leave the question with your friend. No answer is needed now.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR

"Isn't eating flesh and drinking blood a strange thing to say?"

It was strange to them too. In v.63 Jesus says 'the flesh profits nothing.' His point is that life comes from him and his words. Christians discuss how this connects to communion, but here the focus is receiving life from him.

"Peter doesn't answer the difficulty. Isn't staying just loyalty?"

It's true that he doesn't solve it. But his reason is a claim, not a habit: 'We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God.' That claim is the thing worth weighing.

"If the Father has to grant it, what if I'm not one of them?"

Jesus says it to explain why many left, not to lock anyone out. It is a hard teaching, and people wrestle with it. You are still here, still listening.

"Why would Jesus let so many followers walk away?"

He told the truth and would not trade it for a crowd. He let people choose, and then he asked the ones who remained.

Evergreen Principles

Four standards every week. The rest rotate: each lesson brings the few that fit its passage best.

EVERY LESSON

1. Pray before you prepare

Teaching the Bible is spiritual work first (John 15:5).

If you're new: Pray for your class by name during the week.

If you've taught for years: Pray for the one person you find hardest to reach.

2. Study the text first

Understand the passage yourself before any help.

If you're new: Read it in two translations; write your own questions first.

If you've taught for years: Don't lean on old notes. What did you miss last time?

3. Teach one big idea

People remember one sentence, not four points.

If you're new: Write it in 12 words or fewer before anything else.

If you've taught for years: Test every story against it. If it doesn't serve it, cut it.

4. Point to Christ

All of Scripture points to him (Luke 24:27).

If you're new: Ask: what does this show about Jesus?

If you've taught for years: Show grace as the reason for obedience, not just the rule.

FOR THIS LESSON

1. Admit what is hard

The disciples themselves called this 'a difficult teaching.'

If you're new: Say out loud that this passage is hard, before anyone else has to.

If you've taught for years: Model wrestling honestly with v.65 without rushing to tidy it up.

2. Plan for the skeptic and the grieving

Newcomers will hear v.60, and drifters and those whose loved ones left will feel v.66.

If you're new: Expect someone to think of a person who walked away, and have one gentle sentence ready.

If you've taught for years: Invite the skeptic's objection openly and treat it as Jesus' own disciples' question.

3. Let the passage land the way it lands

It ends on who Jesus is and his question, not on a task.

If you're new: End with v.67-69 read aloud. Don't add homework.

If you've taught for years: Resist pressing for a response. Let his question do the work.

BEFORE CLASS

- ☐ Read the passage three times
- ☐ Big idea in one sentence
- ☐ Opening and close chosen
- ☐ Know what you'll cut
- ☐ Handouts, pens, extra Bibles
- ☐ Prayed for the class by name

Openings, Closings & Hard Moments

Pick one opening and one close; rotate so class doesn't get predictable.

OPENINGS

- ask a real-life question: Have you ever stayed with someone after they told you something hard to

hear? Why?

- raise a problem: Most leaders soften the message when people start leaving. Jesus doesn't. Why not?
- start in the text: Read v.60 cold: 'This is a difficult teaching. Who can accept it?' Ask who is speaking.

CLOSINGS

- restate the big idea: When Jesus' words are hard, no one else has words of life.
- allow quiet reflection: Read v.67 and give thirty seconds of silence with his question: 'Do you want to leave too?'
- call back to the opening: We asked why people stay after hard words. Peter's answer: 'Lord, to whom would we go?'

WHEN CLASS GETS HARD

- Someone thinks of a child, spouse, or friend who walked away from faith, or of their own drifting (v.66).: Slow down and acknowledge it. Note that Jesus was not caught off guard (v.64), and that he asks, rather than drives people off. Don't try to fix it in the room.
- V.65 raises fear or argument: 'What if I'm not granted to come?': Admit it's hard. Point to 'This is why' in v.65: Jesus is explaining the leaving. Anyone asking this is still listening to him. Offer to talk more afterward.
- Silence after a question: Wait. Then rephrase simpler, or ask them to talk to a neighbor first.
- One person dominates: "Thanks. Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet." Talk privately if it continues.
- A question you can't answer: Say so, write it down, bring an answer next week.
- A tangent takes over: "Great question. Let's catch it after class so we can finish the passage."

READ THIS WEEK

- John 6:52-59
- Matthew 16:13-17
- Acts 4:8-12

Free at digdeeper.ai/devotionals/john/6-60-69/lesson

To Whom Shall We Go?

JOHN 6:60-69 (BSB) · WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? · DIGDEEPER.AI

Key verse: “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life.” John 6:68

THE BIG IDEA

When Jesus' words are hard, no one else has words of life.

1. A TEACHING TOO HARD TO ACCEPT · JOHN 6:60-62

- The ones who struggled were disciples, not enemies.
- Jesus knew they were grumbling and asked them straight out.
- He did not soften his words. He pointed higher.

Many of His disciples said, 'This is a _____ teaching.'

Jesus asked them, 'Does this _____ you?'

Discuss: What about Jesus do people today find hardest to accept?

2. WORDS THAT ARE SPIRIT AND LIFE · JOHN 6:63-65

- Life comes from God's Spirit, not from human effort.
- Jesus' words do more than inform. They give life.
- Coming to Jesus is a gift the Father grants.

The words I have spoken to you are _____ and they are _____.

No one can come to Me unless the _____ has granted it to him.

Discuss: What is the difference between words that inform you and words that give you life?

3. MANY LEAVE, PETER STAYS · JOHN 6:66-69

- Many stopped walking with Jesus.
- Jesus let them go and asked the Twelve if they would leave too.
- Peter stayed because of who Jesus is.

Many of His disciples _____ and no longer walked with Him.

Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of _____.

Discuss: Peter never says the teaching got easier. So why does he stay?

Read this week: John 6:52-59 · Matthew 16:13-17 · Acts 4:8-12

For Kids: To Whom Shall We Go?

JOHN 6:60-69 · NAME: _____

Big idea: Only Jesus has words that give life.

1. PUT THE STORY IN ORDER! NUMBER THE BOXES.

- ☐ Jesus teaches something hard to hear.
- ☐ Peter says Jesus has words of life.
- ☐ Many followers grumble about his words.
- ☐ Many followers turn back and leave.
- ☐ Jesus says his words give life.

2. HOW DID THEY FEEL? CIRCLE ONE.

The grumbling followers: happy · sad · worried

Jesus: happy · sad · worried

The Twelve: happy · sad · worried

Peter: happy · sad · worried

3. WORD SEARCH

Y B L R B P D Y V
R P I P E J F P P
W E F F L E A S C
O T E G I S T R V
R E B R E U H G H
D R V G V S E C N
S C H H E H R U O
N G C S P I R I T
V C V T W E L V E

JESUS · PETER · SPIRIT · LIFE · WORDS · TWELVE · FATHER · BELIEVE

4. SECRET CODE

1=A 2=D 3=E 4=F 5=I 6=L 7=N 8=O 9=R 10=S 11=T 12=W

12 8 9 2 10 8 4 3 11 3 9 7 1 6 6 5 4 3

5. DRAW IT!

Draw Peter standing next to Jesus while a crowd walks away down the road.

6. MEMORY VERSE

"You have the words of eternal life." John 6:68 Say it to a grown-up: ☐ ☐ ☐

I can go to Jesus because _____. _____