

John 6: 60-69

**When many of his disciples heard it,  
they said: “This teaching is difficult....  
who can accept it?”**

**But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it,  
said to them: “Does this offend you?”**

**Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?**

**It is the spirit that gives life: the flesh is useless.**

**The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.**

**But among you there are some who do not believe.”**

**For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe,  
and who was the one that would betray him.**

**And he said,**

**“For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me  
unless it is granted by the Father.”**

**Because of this many of his disciples turned back  
and no longer went about with him.**

**So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?”**

**Simon Peter answered him:**

**“Lord, to whom can we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”**

**Meditation**

**You know...**

**His teachings were...and are... hard...**

**but I wonder if it was only his teachings**

**the bread and wine being his body and blood.**

**or was it his teachings about Kingdom of Heaven on Earth....**

**which is already here!**

**That inside the Kingdom we should/would/could**

**forgive each other over and over,**

**we should/would/could offer compassion to our enemies,**

**and we would ..absolutely would experience the**

**inconceivable, seemingly irrational, unconditional love of God.**

**Last week we reflected upon the metaphorical nature of Jesus teachings:**

**that, metaphorically, bread and wine were his body given to us**

**so that we might understand who and whose we truly are...**

**so that we might become aware of the Power of Love**

**that is given to us so that we can make the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth**

**visible in and through our lives here and now,**

**Our lives have been given to us so that the Life and Love of the Holy One**

**might be made visible on this magnificent Planet, this day, in this place.**

**Our lives... all of life is a gift given so that beauty, joy, wonder and love can be experienced**

**in the here and now....by EVERYONE .**

**That is the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth!**

**What Jesus understood better than many of us...**

**what we all need to learn to various degrees**

**is (as Richard Rohr puts it):**

**Life is not about me...I am about Life.**

**Sure, of course, it is good for us to personally**

**experience joy, happiness, beauty and love**

**but when injustice or circumstances or dominating powers prohibit others**

**those same possibilities and opportunities...**

**well...it is our responsibility to do what we can**

**to offer companionship, hope, and possibility.**

**It is our responsibility to do what we can do, to help correct injustice**

**to help alleviate suffering,**

**to help liberate anyone held captive by scarcity and fear.**

**Now...these teachings ARE hard!**

**To be honest...many of us would rather stay in our little corner of the world,**

**helping our friends and our family but not going much further...**

**These teachings are much harder than simply closing our minds and say that we believe**

**some teachings about eating the body of God, talking snakes,**

**and creating the cosmos in 7/24 hour time periods.**

**To do as he did....**

**To live as he lived...**

**to love as he loved**

**isn't easy...**

**We all know that!**

**I've been seriously trying to do so for 50+ years**

**and some times wonder if I've grown spiritually at all!!**

**I understand Peter's response when Jesus asked him if he too is leaving: to whom shall I go?**

**Whom else should I follow??**

**While I see the wisdom that is found in other traditions...**

**For me...I have come to believe Jesus has the words of eternal life.**

**For me, I have come to believe that Jesus,**

**is the teacher, sage and way maker that I will follow.**

**Absolutely sometimes his teachings seem sometimes totally outrageous...**

**turning the other cheek, walking the extra mile, loving my enemy**

**Yes, sometimes his teachings are not popular such as we must**

**Care for and about the immigrant...**

**feed the hungry even though it is their own fault...**

**Yet, I have come to believe that his teaching are the way of Life, capital L.**

**His teachings are the way that humanity will finally break the cycle**

**of vengeance and fear and**

**finally make visible the Kingdom of Heaven visible on Earth.**

**Jesus and his followers were mocked and humiliated...**

**they were told to get real...**

**And the same will be for us, more than likely!**

**We will be accused of being impractical, foolish and naïve ...**

**so what?**

**Tell me...what is the greater loss:**

**to give up what our heart knows to be true**

**or to give up wanting other people's admiration?**

**For some of us, that can be a difficult choice.**

**But it is our choice to make....**

**In spirituality class, we just finished a series entitled:**

**"Saving Jesus"**

**Basically it was pastors, theologians and Scripture scholars trying to save Jesus from the accumulation of ideological beliefs that the institutional church has laid upon him and us.**

**This series taught us about Jesus as an historical human being who risked everything:**

**his reputation, his honor, his family and his life**

**because he knew...he knew not only in his head,**

**but most especially in his heart**

**that his Abba God was not a god who needed to be appeased or flattered or placated...**

**As a real person in history, Jesus knew,**

**that allowing the Love of God to permeate our consciousness would lead to salvation.**

**But salvation did not mean getting into heaven at the end of our earthly lives.**

**It meant liberation here and now...**

**being liberated from feeling unworthy, unloved, and unlovable...**

**being liberated from our ego and**

**being liberated from our fear...**

**our fear of being insignificant,**

**our fear of never having or being enough...**

**our fear of God.**

**and on top of all that, Jesus knew none of this was about him...**

**One time, Peter calls him 'Good' and he immediately turns and reprimands him:**

**"No one is good but God alone"**

**Jesus never wanted to be worshiped...he wanted people to follow him...**

**To live and to love like him...**

**Unfortunately for millennia**

**Christians have been taught to worship Jesus.**

**Worshipping Jesus and worshipping him is MUCH easier  
than loving like him.**

**Enough!**

**No more need to worship...only to love...**

**There is no need for fear,**

**only for feeding...**

**There is no need for worry...**

**only for celebrating the beauty and wonder of life..**

**When we love all peoples, all beings as ourselves...**

**when we desire and work for others what we desire for ourselves:**

**justice and sufficiency,**

**we will experience LIFE in its fullest, possible way...**

**we will know the Presence of the Ultimate Mystery.**

**We will experience the Presence of Power and Love**

**that is beyond our rational minds.**

**We will know that Love is our beginning, our middle and our ending...**

**and then, even if at first His way seems hard**

**we too shall know that it there is no other way we wish to go....  
and we will have nothing left to say, but THANK YOU! amen...**