

Exposition of the Gospel of John CHAPTER 24

CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES

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Transcript

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John 6:60-71

The following is submitted as an Analysis of the passage which is to be before us: 1. Many disciples offended at Christ's discourse: verse 60. 2. Christ's admonition: verses 61-65. 3. Many disciples leave Christ: verse 66. 4. Christ's challenge to the Twelve: verse 67. 5. Simon Peter's confession: verses 68, 69. 6. Christ corrects Peter: verse 70. 7. The betrayer: verse 71. The passage before us is one that is full of pathos. It brings us to the conclusion of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. It shows us the outcome of His ministry there. Here, He had performed some wonderful miracles, and had given out some gracious teachings. It was here, that He had turned the water into wine; here, He had healed the nobleman's son, without so much as seeing him; here, He had fed the hungry multitude. Each of these miracles plainly accredited His Divine mission, and evidenced His Deity. None other ever performed such works as these. Before such evidence unbelief was excuseless. Moreover, He had presented Himself, both to the crowd outside and to the Jews inside the synagogue, as the Bread of life. He had freely offered eternal life to them, and had solemnly warned that, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (verse 53). What, then, was their response to all of this? It is indeed pathetic to find that here in Galilee Christ met with no better reception than had been His in Judea, and it is striking to see how closely the one resembled that of the other. He had begun His ministry in Judea, and, for a season, His success there, judged by human standards, seemed all that could be desired. Crowds followed Him, and many seemed anxious to be His disciples. But all is not gold that glitters. It soon became evident that the crowds were actuated by motives of an earthly and carnal character. Few gave evidence of any sense of spiritual need. Few, if any, seemed to discern the real purpose of His mission. A spirit of partisanship was rife, so we read, "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee" (John 4:1, 3). How was it, then, in Galilee? It was simply a repetition of what had happened in Judea. Human nature is the same wherever it is found: that is why history so constantly repeats itself. Here in Galilee, the crowds, had followed Him. For a brief season, He was their popular idol. And yet, few of them manifested any signs

that their consciences were stirred or their hearts exercised. Fewer still understood the real purport of His mission. And now that He had declared it, now that He had pressed upon them their spiritual need, they were offended: many who had posed as His disciples, turned back, and walked no more with Him. How many of the Lord's servants have had a similar experience. They entered some field of service, and for a time the crowd thronged their ministry. For a season they were popular with those among whom they labored. But, then, if the servant was faithful to his Master, if he pressed the claims of Christ, if he shunned not to declare all the counsel of God,—then, how noticeable the change! Then, arose a "murmuring" (John 6:41); there was a "striving" among those who heard him (John 6:52); there was a querulous "This is a hard saying" (verse 61); there was a "many" of "the disciples" going back, and walking "no more with him" (verse 66). But sufficient for the servant to be as his Master. Let him thank God that there is a little company left who recognize and appreciate "the words of eternal life" (verse 68), for they are of far greater price in the sight of God than "the many" who "went back." Ah! dear reader, this is indeed a living Word, mirroring the fickle and wicked heart as faithfully today as it did two thousand years ago! "Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60). The wonderful discourse in the synagogue, following the one given to the people on the outside, was now over. We are here shown the effect of it on the disciples. A "disciple" means one who is a learner. These "disciples" are carefully distinguished from "the twelve." They were made up of a class of people who were, in measure, attracted by the person of Christ and who were, more especially, impressed by His miracles. But how real this attraction was, and how deep the impression made, we are now given to see. When Christ had presented Himself not as the Wonder-worker, but as the Bread of God; when He had spoken of giving His flesh for the life of the world, and of men drinking His blood, which signified that He would die, and die a death of violence; when He insisted that except they ate His flesh and drank His blood "they had no life" in them; and, above all, when He announced that man is so depraved and so alienated from God, that except the Father draw him, he would never come to Christ for salvation: they were all offended. It will be seen, then, that we take the words, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" as referring to the whole of the discourse which Christ had just delivered in the Capernaum synagogue. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" The simple meaning of this is, that these disciples were offended. It was not that they found the language of Christ so obscure as to be unintelligible, but what they had heard was so irreconcilable with their own views that they would not receive it. What their own views were, comes out plainly in John 12. When Christ signified what death He should die, "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?" (verse 34). In applying the above verse to ourselves, two things should be noted. First, that when today professing Christians criticize a servant of God who is really giving out Divine truth, and complain that his teaching is "An hard saying," it is always to be traced back to the same cause as operated here. Many disciples will still reject the Word of God when it is ministered in the power of the Spirit, and they will do so because it conflicts with their own views and contravenes the traditions of their fathers! In the second place, note that these men complained among themselves. This is evident from the next verse: "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it." They did not come directly to Christ and openly state their difficulties. They did not ask Him to explain His meaning. And why? Because they were not really anxious for light. Had they been so, they would have sought it from Him. Again we say, How like human nature today! When the Lord's messenger delivers a word that is distasteful to his hearers, they are not manly enough to come to him and tell him their grievance, far less will they approach him seeking help. No, like the miserable cowards they are, they will skulk in the background, seeking to sow the seeds of dissension by criticizing what they have heard. And such people the servant of God will have no difficulty in placing: they

may wear the badge of disciples, but he will know from their actions and speech that they are not believers! "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?" (John 6:61). How solemn this is! These men could not deceive Christ. They might have walked with Him for a time (verse 66); they might have posed as His disciples (verse 60); they might have taken their place in the synagogue (verse 59), and listened with seeming attention and reverence while He taught them; but He knew their hearts: those they could not hide from Him. Nor can men do so today. He is not misled by all the religiosity of the day. His eyes of fire pierce through every mask of hypocrisy. Learn, then, the consummate folly and utter worthlessness of "a form of godliness" without its power (2 Tim. 3:5). "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?" How this evidenced, once more, His deity! At the beginning of our chapter He had been regarded as a "prophet"; but a greater than a prophet was here. Later, an insulting contrast had been drawn between Moses and Christ; but a greater than Moses was before them. Neither Moses nor any of the prophets had been able to read the hearts of men. But here was One who knew in Himself when these disciples murmured. He knew, too, why they murmured. He knew they were offended. Plainly, then, this must be God Incarnate, for none but the Lord Himself can read the heart. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (John 6:62). Here we have the third great fact which this chapter brings out concerning Christ. First, He referred to the Divine incarnation: He was the Bread which had "come down from heaven" (verse 41). Second, He was going to die, and die a death of violence: the repeated mention of His "blood," showed that (verses 52, 55, etc.). Third, He would ascend to heaven, thus returning to that place from whence He had come. His ascension involved, of necessity, His resurrection. Thus does our chapter make dear reference to each of the vital crises in the history of Christ. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" Soon would the Son of God return to that sphere of unmingled blessedness and highest glory from whence he came to Bethlehem's manger; and that, in order to go to Calvary's Cross. But He would return there as "the Son of man." This is indeed a marvel. A man is now seated upon the throne of the Father—the God-man. And because of His descent and ascent, heaven is the home of every one who, by eating His flesh and drinking His blood, becomes a partaker of His life. And because of this, earth becomes a wilderness, a place of exile, through which we pass, the children of faith, as strangers and pilgrims. Soon, thank God, shall His prayer be answered: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am" (John 17:24). "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" This is one of several intimations that during the days of His earthly ministry the Lord Jesus looked beyond the Cross, with all its dread horror, to the joy and rest and glory beyond. As the apostle tells us in Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." It is striking to note how the ascension is made typically prominent at the beginning of John 6: see verses 3 and 15—"Jesus went up into a mount." It is to be observed that Christ did not positively declare that these murmurers should "see" Him as He ascended, but He merely asked them if they would be offended at such a sight. It seems to us He designedly left the door open. There is no room for doubt but that many became real believers for the first time after He had risen from the dead. The fact that 1 Corinthians 15:6 tells us He was seen of "above five hundred brethren" proves this. It is quite likely that some of these very men who had listened to His blessed teaching in the Capernaum synagogue were among that number. But at the time of which our lesson treats they were unbelievers, so He continued to address them accordingly. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth" (John 6:63). The Lord here presses upon His critics what He had first said in verse 44. To believe on Him, to appropriate the saving value of His death, was not an act of the flesh: to do this, they must first be "drawn by the Father," that is, be "quickeneth by the Spirit." There must be life before there can be the activities of life. Believing on Christ is a

manifestation of the Divine life already in the one that believes. The writer has no doubt at all that the words, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," refer to the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. John 6:63 is complementary to verse 21. In the former, "quickeneth" is referred to both God the Father, and God the Son; here, to God the Holy Spirit. Thus by linking the two passages together we learn that regeneration is the joint work of the three Persons in the Holy Trinity. So, in like manner, by linking together Ephesians 1:20, John 10:18 and Romans 8:11, we learn that each Person of the Trinity was active in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63). This is indeed a searching word and one that greatly needs emphasizing today. The flesh "profiteth nothing." The flesh has no part in the works of God. All fleshly activities amount to nothing where the regeneration of dead sinners is concerned. Neither the logical arguments advanced by the mind, hypnotic powers brought to bear upon the will, touching appeals made to the emotions, beautiful music and hearty singing to catch the ear, nor sensuous trappings to draw the eye—none of these are of the slightest avail in stirring dead sinners. It is not the choir, nor the preacher, but "the Spirit that quickeneth." This is very distasteful to the natural man, because so humbling; that is why it is completely ignored in the great majority of our modern evangelistic campaigns. What is urgently needed today is not mesmeric experts who have made a study of how to produce a religious "atmosphere," nor religious showmen to make people laugh one minute and weep the next, but faithful preaching of God's Word, with the saints on their faces before God, humbly praying that He may be pleased to send His quickening Spirit into their midst. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). This confirms our interpretation of the first part of the verse. Christ is speaking of regeneration, which was the one great need of those who were offended at His teaching. They could not discern spiritual things till they had spiritual life, and for that they must be "quickeneth" by the Spirit of God. First, He told them who did the quickening—"the Spirit"; now He states what the Spirit uses to bring about that quickening—the "words" of God. The Spirit is the Divine Agent; the Word is the Divine instrument. God begets "with the word of truth" (James 1:18). We are born again of incorruptible seed, "by the word of God" (1 Pet. 1:23). We are made partakers of the Divine nature by God's "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet. 1:4). And here in John 6:63 Christ explains how this is: the words of God are "spirit, and they are life" That is, they are spiritual, and employed by the Holy Spirit to impart life. Thus, we say again, The great need of today, as of every age, is the faithful preaching of God's Word; "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. 2:4). What is needed is less anecdotal preaching, less rhetorical embellishment, less reliance upon logic, and more direct, plain, pointed, simple declaration and ex- position of the Word itself. Sinners will never be saved without this—"the flesh profiteth nothing"! "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." How Christ here maintained the balance of truth! "It is the Spirit that quickeneth" speaks of the Divine side. In connection with it man has no part. There, the "flesh" is ruled out entirely. Are we, then, to fold our arms and act as though we had no obligations at all? Far from it. Christ guards against this by saying, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This was addressed to human responsibility. These "words" are given to be believed; and we are under direct obligation to set to our seal that God is true. Let then the sinner read God's Word; let him see himself mirrored in it. Let him take its searching message to himself; let him follow the light whithersoever it leads him; and if he be sincere, if he is truly seeking God, if he longs to be saved, the Holy Spirit shall quicken him by that same Word of life. "But there are some of you that believe not" (John 6:64). This affords further confirmation of what we have said above. Christ was addressing human responsibility. He was pressing upon His hearers their need of believing on Him. He was not deceived by outward appearances. They might pose as His disciples, they might seem to be very devoted to Him, but He knew that they had not "believed." The remainder of the verse is a parenthetical statement made by John (under the inspiration of God) at the time he wrote the

Gospel. "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." Very striking is this. It is one more of the many evidences furnished by this fourth Gospel, that Christ is none other than the Son of God. "And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:65). Here He repeats what He had said in verse 44. He is still addressing their responsibility. He presses upon them their moral inability. He affirms their need of Divine power working within them. It was very humbling, no doubt. It furnished proof that "the flesh profiteth nothing." It shut them up to God. To the Father they must turn; from Him they must seek that drawing power, without which they would never come to Christ and be saved. Not only "would not" but could not. The language of Christ is unequivocal. It is not "no man will," but "no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father." The will of the natural man has nothing to do with it. John 1:13 expressly declares that the new birth is "not of the will of the flesh." Contrary this may be to our ideas! distasteful to our minds and hearts; but it is God's truth, nevertheless, and all the denials of men will never alter it one whit. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:66). While the preceding verses contain words of Christ which were addressed to human responsibility, we must not overlook the fact that they also expressed the Divine side of things. The "drawing" of the Father is exercised according to His sovereign will. He denies it to none who sincerely seek; but the truth is, that the seeking itself, the desire for Christ, is the initial effect of this "drawing." That all men do not seek Christ may be explained from two view points. From the human side the reason is that, men are so depraved they love the darkness and hate the light. From the Divine side, that any do seek Christ, is because God in His sovereign grace has put forth a power in them which overcomes the resistance of depravity. But God does not work thus in all. He is under no moral obligation so to do. Why should He make an enemy love Him? Why should He "draw" to Christ, one who wants to remain away? That He does so with particular individuals is according to His own eternal counsels and sovereign pleasure. And once this is pressed upon the natural man he is offended. It was so here: "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." What a contrast was this from what occurred at the beginning of that day! Then, the many had crossed the Sea and sought Him out; now, the many turned their backs upon Him: so unreliable and so fickle is human nature. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." This verse is parallel with what we read of in Luke 4: "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman which was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian" (verses 25-27). Here Christ, in the synagogue of Nazareth, pressed upon His hearers how in the past God had most evidently acted according to His mere sovereign pleasure. And what was the effect of this on those who heard? The very next verse tells us: "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath." And human nature has not changed. Let the sovereign rights of God be emphasized today, and people will be "filled with wrath"; not only the men of the world will be, but the respectable attenders of the modern synagogue. So it was here in our lesson: "From that time many of his disciples went back." From what time? From the time that Christ had declared, "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (verse 65). This was too much for them. They would not remain to hear any more. And mark it carefully, that those who left were "many of his disciples." Then let not the one who faithfully preaches the sovereignty of God today be surprised if he meets with a similar experience. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" (John 6:67). Christ desires no unwilling followers; so, on the departure of the "many disciples," He turns to the twelve and inquires if they also desire to leave Him. His question was a test, a challenge. Did they prefer to be found with the popular

crowd, or would they remain with what was, outwardly, a failing cause? Their answer would evidence whether or not a Divine work of grace had been wrought in them. "Will ye also go away?" The same testing question is still being put to those who profess to be the followers of Christ. As He sees some being carried along by the different winds of erroneous doctrines, now blowing in every direction; as He beholds others going back into the world, loving pleasure more than they love God; as He marks others offended by the faithful and searching ministry of His servants, He says to you and to me, "Will ye also go away?" O that Divine grace may enable us to stand and to withstand. O that we may be so attracted by the loveliness of His person that we shall gladly go forth "unto him, without the camp (the camp of Christianized Judaism) hearing his reproach" (Heb. 13:13). "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). A blessed reply was this. The wondrous miracles had attracted the others, but the teaching of Christ had repelled them. It was the very opposite with the apostles, for whom, as usual, Peter acted as spokesman. It was not the supernatural works, but the Divine words of the Lord Jesus which held them. Peter had, what the "many disciples who went back" had not—the hearing ear. Christ had said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (verse 63), and Peter believed and was assured of this: "Thou hast the words of eternal life" he confessed. "The words of Christ had sunk deep into his soul. He had felt their power. He was conscious of the blessing they had imparted to him" (C.E.S.). It is ever this which distinguishes a true Christian from the formal professor. "And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:69). Notice carefully the order here: "We believe and are sure." It is the Divinely appointed and unchanging order in connection with spiritual things, It supplies one out of a thousand illustrations that God's thoughts and ways are different, radically different, always different, from ours. Whoever heard of believing in order to be sure? Man wants to make sure first before he is ready to believe. But God always reverses man's order of things. It is impossible, utterly impossible, to be sure of Divine truth, or of any part thereof, until we have believed it. Other illustrations of this same principle may be adduced from Scripture. For example, the Psalmist said, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13). This also is the very opposite of human philosophy. The natural man says, 'Seeing is believing'; but the spiritual man believes in order to see. So, again, in Hebrews 11:3 we read, "Through faith we understand." How many desire to understand the mystery of the Trinity or the doctrine of election, before they will believe it. They might live to be as old as Methuselah, and they would "understand" neither the one nor the other until they had faith in what God had revealed thereon. It is through faith that we do understand any part of Divine truth. "We believe and are sure." To sum up: assurance, vision, knowledge, are the fruits of "believing." God rewards our faith by giving us assurance, discernment and understanding; but the unbelieving are left in the darkness of ignorance so far as spiritual things are concerned. "And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God." Certainty that Christ is "the Son of the living God" comes not by listening to the labored arguments of seminary professors, nor by studying books on Christian Evidences, but by believing what God has said about His Son in the Holy Scriptures. Peter was sure that Christ was the Son of God, because he had believed "the words of eternal life" which he had heard from His lips. It is indeed striking to note that in Matthew's Gospel this confession is placed right after the apostles had seen Christ walking on the waters and after they had received Him into the ship (Matthew 14:33); for it is thus that Israel, in a coming day, will be brought to believe on Him (cf. Zechariah 12:10). But here in John's Gospel, which treats of the family of God, this confession is evoked by the assurance which comes from believing His words. How beautifully this illustrates the opening verse of John's Gospel, and how evident it is that God Himself has placed everything in these Gospels! "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray

him, being one of the twelve" (John 6:70, 71). "Jesus answered them." This was in reply to Peter's avowal, "We believe and are sure." Christ showed that He knew better than His disciple. It was the omniscience of the Lord Jesus displayed once more. He was not deceived by Judas, though it is evident that all the apostles were. Proof of this is found in the fact that when He said, "One of you shall betray me," instead of them answering, Surely you refer to Judas, they asked, "Lord, is it I?" But from the beginning Christ knew the character of the one who should sell Him to His enemies. Yet not now will Christ openly identify him. What we read of in verse 71 is the apostle's inspired comment, written years afterwards. That Judas was never saved is clear from many considerations. Here in our text Christ is careful to except him from Peter's confession—"We believe." So, too, in John 13. After washing the feet of His disciples, which symbolized the removal of every defilement which hindered communion with Him, He said, "Ye are clean," but then He was careful to add, "but not all" (John 13:10), and then John supplies another explanatory comment—"for he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean" (verse 11). Again; the fact that Christ here calls him a "devil"—and this was six months before he betrayed Him—proves positively that he was not a child of God. Acts 1:25—"Judas by transgression fell"—is sometimes appealed to in proof that he fell from grace. But the first part of the verse makes quite clear what it was from which Judas fell: it was "ministry and apostleship." This raises the question, Why was there a Judas in the apostolate? The Divine answer to our question is furnished in John 17:12, where Christ tells us plainly that "the son of perdition" was lost in order that "the Scriptures might be fulfilled." The reference was to Psalm 41:9 and similar passages. When that prophecy was uttered it seemed well-nigh incredible that the Friend of sinners should be betrayed by one intimate with Him. But no word of God can fall to the ground. It had been written that, "Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me," and the son of perdition was lost in order that this scripture might be accomplished. But why did God ordain this? Why should there be a Judas in the apostolate? Mysterious as this subject is, yet, a number of things seem clear. The following ends, at least, were accomplished:— 1. It furnished an opportunity for Christ to display His perfections. When the Son became incarnate, He declared, "Lo I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7), and this will of God for Him was written "in the volume of the book." Now in that book it was recorded that a familiar friend should lift up his heel against him. This was indeed a sore trial, yet was it part of the Divine will for God's Servant. How, then, does He act? John 6:70 answers: He deliberately "chose" one to be His apostle, whom He knew at the time was a "devil"! How this displays the perfections of Christ! It was in full subjection to the Divine will, "written in the book," that He thus acted. Even though it meant having Judas in closest association with Him for three years (and what must that have been to the Holy One of God!), though it meant that even when He retired from His carping critics to get alone with the twelve, there would then be a devil next to Him, He hesitated not. He bowed to God's will and "chose" him! 2. It provided an impartial witness to the moral excellency of Christ. His Father, His forerunner, His saved apostles, bore testimony to His perfections; but lest it should be thought that these were ex parte witnesses, God saw to it that an enemy should also bear testimony. Here was a man that was "a devil"; a man who was in the closest possible touch with the life of Christ, both in public and in private; a man who would have seized eagerly on the slightest flaw, if it had been possible to find one; but it was not: "I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4), was the unsought testimony of an impartial witness! 3. It gave occasion to uncover the awfulness of sin. The fulness of redemption must bring to light the fulness of the wickedness of that for which atonement is to be made: only thus could we thoroughly see what is that terrible thing from which we are saved. And how could the heinousness of sin be more fittingly exposed at that time than by allowing a man to company with the Savior, to be inside the circle of greatest earthly privilege, and to be himself convinced of the innocency of that One who was to be the sacrificial victim; and yet, notwithstanding, for him to basely betray that One and sell Him into the

hands of His enemies! Never was the vileness of sin more thoroughly uncovered. 4. It supplies sinners with a solemn warning. The example of Judas shows us how near a man may come to Christ and yet be lost. It shows us that outward nearness to Christ, external contact with the things of God, is not sufficient. It reveals the fact that a man may witness the most stupendous marvels, may hear the most spiritual teaching, may company with the most godly characters, and yet himself never be born again. 5. It tells us we may expect to find hypocrites among the followers of Christ. A hypocrite Judas certainly was. He was not a deceived soul, but an out and out impostor. He posed as a believer. He forsook the world and followed Christ. He went out as a preacher and heralded the Gospel (Matthew 10:4). He did not manifest any offense at the teaching of Christ, and did not follow those who turned back and walked no more with Him. Instead, he remained by the Savior's side right up to the last night of all. He even partook of the passover supper, and yet all the time, he was an hypocrite; and his hypocrisy was undetected by the eleven. And history repeats itself. There are still wolves in sheep's clothing. 6. It shows us that a devil is to be expected among the servants of God. It was thus when Christ was here on earth; it is so still. Scripture warns us plainly against "false prophets," and "false apostles" who are "the ministers of Satan." And the case of Judas gives point to these warnings. Whoever would have expected to find a "devil" among the twelve! Whoever would have dreamed of finding a Judas among the apostles chosen by Christ Himself! But there was. And this is a solemn warning to us to place confidence in no man. 7. It affords one more illustration of how radically different are God's thoughts and ways from ours. That God should appoint a "devil" to be one of the closest companions of the Savior; that He should have selected "the son of perdition" to be one of the favored twelve, seemed incredible. Yet so it was. And as we have sought to show above, God had good reasons for this selection; He had wise reasons for this appointment. Let this, then, serve to show us that, however mysterious may be God's ways, they are ever dictated by omniscience! The following questions are to help the student prepare for the next chapter on John 7:1-13:— 1. What relation does verse 1 have to the rest of the lesson? 2. What do you know about the feast of tabernacles? verse 2. Look up Old Testament references. 3. Who are "His brethren" verse 3? 4. Why did His brethren make the request of verse 4? 5. To what was Christ referring in verses 6 and 8? 6. In view of verses 1 and 8, why did Christ go to the feast at all? verse 10. 7. What is the meaning of the last clause of verse 10?

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