

Deane Parish Church w/b Sunday 21st March 2015
When God seems distant: 5. To whom shall we go?
John 6:47-71

1. When the going gets tough, what keeps a Christ-follower going?

Read John 6:47-71

It was near to Passover time (6:4) when Jews remembered how God saved his people from slavery in Egypt and fed them each day in the desert with manna ('bread from heaven', v31). God in human flesh (Jesus Christ) had just fed 5000+ people (6:1-15) and then walked on water (6:16-24). The next day (v22) the people asked Jesus for a miraculous sign to prove that he is indeed who he says he is (v30)! Jesus then talked to the crowd using the metaphor of bread, explaining that he himself is the bread of life (v35). Later on Jesus would give his own flesh to death on the Cross to save his people.

2. Who has everlasting life (v47 & 3:15)?

3. So when Jesus speaks of those who eat his flesh living for ever (v51) is he:

- (i) speaking literally about cannibalism!?
- (ii) speaking metaphorically (i.e. a figure of speech) about faith?
- (iii) alluding to Holy Communion?

In the synagogue in Capernaum (v59) Jesus' teaching caused division (v52). Some found his teaching hard (v60) and some, after he told them that he was from Heaven and would return to Heaven (v62), fell away from following him (v66).

4. What is it about the Gospel that people today, even those who start to attend church, find difficult, even offensive?

Read John 6:63 again

5. Why is this such a key verse to our understanding of:

- (i) Jesus' teaching;
- (ii) evangelism;
- (iii) conversion (being born-again, John 3:3);
- (vi) perseverance in the Christian life?

6. When God seems distant, how might these Gospel truths encourage us?

7. How might Peter's words (vv68-69) bring encouragement to anyone feeling distant from God?