

Let us also be ready to receive the hard words of Christ. Not every word spoken by the Lord was easy to accept in the natural sense.

There were moments when Jesus spoke directly to His disciples:

Matthew 10:37-39 (ESV)

“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

Imagine the scene: Christ had not yet been crucified, and no one could have anticipated that He would one day hang on a cross like a common criminal. Yet here, He is already speaking to His disciples about taking up the cross, as if they already understood what that meant—or perhaps they had already witnessed Him bearing His own cross spiritually.

In ordinary terms, this word is difficult to accept. It is like hearing a modern president say: “If you want to become my minister, you must carry a live bomb in your hand every day and be ready to detonate it at any time.” You would naturally think, “What is he saying?”

Similarly, Christ spoke of the cross, which was ultimately for the redemption of sinful humanity, yet His words were hard for people to hear.

Another challenging word He gave was:

John 6:53-56 (ESV)

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.’”

Think about it: if someone today told you to eat their flesh and drink their blood, you would likely consider them a madman. Yet Jesus used this imagery to describe the deep spiritual reality of abiding in Him—receiving His life and grace.

Words like these caused many of His disciples to turn away:

John 6:60-63 (ESV)

“Many of his disciples said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?’

61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, ‘Does this offend you?’

62 What then if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.’”

Even today, Christ still calls people to follow Him without always giving immediate reasons for His commands. What is required is obedience and trust: if He tells you to leave something behind, even if you don’t fully understand, you obey. If He tells you to change certain practices,

surrender possessions, or separate from relationships, do not overthink—it is a test of faith and discipleship.

The apostles exemplified this:

Acts 12: Following Christ

When the apostles were called, they were simply told, “Follow me.” They left everything immediately and followed without a full explanation of where they were going. They endured hard words and challenging circumstances until the time came for them to understand fully. Some disciples could not accept these words and therefore did not reach Pentecost. But the eleven apostles (and Matthias, who replaced Judas) obeyed and became pillars of the Church.

The principle is clear: the words of Christ are spirit and life, even when they are difficult to understand now. Obedience and trust bring eventual revelation and blessing.

Consider Abraham, who was told to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Hebrews 11:18-19 explains:

*“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,
19 of whom it was said, ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.’ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.”*

Though the act seemed extreme, Abraham’s faith aligned with God’s will, and in the end, it was a demonstration of God’s provision and power.

Application:

Be willing to “lose yourself” today for Christ. Trust Him, obey Him, and follow His words—even when you don’t fully understand. In doing so, you participate in the spiritual life and power that Christ promises.

Blessings.

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THIS WORD IS HARD—WHO CAN LISTEN?

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