

The Road to Deconstruction

John 6.66-71

If you've followed religious trends in recent years, you've probably heard of 'deconstruction.' This describes a person who comes to a point in their Christian life that they doubt what they previously believed, and begin to 'deconstruct' their faith. It can be good, or not. Let's talk about it.

What Jesus knows

- God knows our hearts, and the future.
- He knew those who didn't (and did) believe.
- He knew that Judas would betray Him (see 70-71).
- Was Judas saved? (What do you think?)

The dangerous downward spiral of unbelief

- Unbelievers grumble, then grow violent (41, 52)
- Doubts can infect the minds of believers (60-63)
- Believers can abandon their faith in Jesus (66)
- Can doubting ever be good?

What Jesus was looking for

- He's not seeking acclaim; He is 'thinning the crowd'!
- "Will you go away too?" Jesus is looking for loyal followers!



1. The narrative of John 6 begins with acclaim: Jesus feeds the 5000 and they try to make Him king! It ends with abandonment – many of His disciples decide not to follow Him anymore. What changed? Review the progression – or *regression* – starting with verse 35 and going through verse 66. What did the Jews do first (v41)? What did they do next (v52)? What did the disciples do first (vv60-61)? What did they do next (v66)? Do you see a parallel here with the way that many today – Christians or not – progressively turn away from God?
2. We have seen repeatedly through John's gospel account that Jesus is omniscient. To refresh your memory, see 1.47-49; 2.24-25; 4.17-18; 5.25, 28-29; 6.15, 61, 64, 70-71. From John 6.60-71, what does He know about His disciples? Do they all believe in Him? What did He know *specifically* about Judas?
3. Most commentators are confident that Judas was not saved – that he was condemned to hell. One thing for sure: No one in human history is more vilified than Judas (maybe Hitler?). What do you think, and why? (For reflection: Why are some Christians so quick to declare the eternal destiny of others?) What Judas did is terrible, but how does it compare with Peter denying Jesus three times? Do we ever 'betray' Jesus by our actions? Satan did 'enter Judas' heart' (John 13.2, 27) and induce him to sin. Did Satan influence other disciples? (Compare John 6.70 with Matt. 16.22-23)! Did Judas repent of his sin (Matt. 27.3-4)? Is any sin too big (or any 'betrayal' too awful) for God to forgive? Question: If Judas *is* in heaven, what kind of 'exhibit' would he be throughout eternity to God's grace?
4. In John 6.68-69, Peter gives a stellar statement of faith: Although he may not understand all that Jesus has said, what he *does know* is that Jesus is "the Holy One of God." Mark Twain famously said, "It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand!" There are questions about God we won't have answered until this life is over, but the things we *can* know are what matter! Is your faith based on knowing everything, or on knowing what God has revealed?