

Sue, slow down, you're following too closely.

Brake lights ahead, take it easy.

Watch out, there's a chuck hole on my side.

Change lanes, we don't want to get caught in this one.

Do you think it is fun to be the driver with me as the passenger in the car? ~~You are right. it's not.~~

How I hate to be out of control, to depend on another. I want to be in charge, the one holding the wheel when the going is tough. Not because I am a better driver, though, I am not. But when I am driving I do not need to count on anyone but me.

I do not like experts who will tell me what to do. I'll be the expert. Sue can tell you how many times we wander lost in a strange place because I am behind the wheel and refuse to ask for directions. Stop, ask, she says. I'll figure it out, I assure her.

I am not alone in this. Some of the people who followed Jesus were like me.

They had heard Jesus say, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

They had heard Jesus say, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

They had heard Jesus say, "Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.

Then we read, When many of his disciples heard it they said, "This teaching is difficult, who can accept it?"

Many parts of this teaching may be difficult. That God has descended from heaven to be Son of God, son of Mary is difficult for some to accept.

That in Jesus will be satisfied our deepest hunger and thirst is difficult for others.

That Jesus' flesh is given for us to eat in the bread of Holy Communion is difficult for others.

That there is life beyond this life, eternal life may be difficult for still others.

Jesus responded, 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 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 who 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 my Father)

They have not witnessed the cross yet, nor the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The cross is how Jesus will ascend to where he was before, this will be an even more difficult teaching, that in Jesus dying is our life. How many have said, I can believe Jesus was a good man, a teacher, a model for living, but I can't believe Jesus is God dying for me.

~~And I can't believe in the resurrection of the dead. Dead is dead.~~

On that day so long ago, there was a great tragedy. People who had followed Jesus who had been disciples along with the twelve, walked away. We read, Because of this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.

It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is useless. This is the issue that divides.

From the moment we are born we learn to trust in our own flesh, in our own power, in our own judgement. We trust in others, they fail us and we learn even more that to live is to be the one with the wheel in my hands. My flesh, my power, my skill.

Then along comes Jesus. He declares that everything life has taught us is wrong. God cannot be discovered through my flesh. Seeking God on my own is always wandering lost in a strange city. Jesus alone can direct us to life.

Not my flesh, my good deeds, my wisdom, my understanding, but only what I receive from Jesus will bring life. His flesh, his spirit, his word will bring me home.

To follow Jesus means to turn over the wheel to him. To follow Jesus is to daily let God be the one in charge.

To follow Jesus is to trust that everything that God requires of you Jesus provides. Daily, eternally.

To follow Jesus is to daily stop & ask direction from him -

Jesus asked the twelve, Do you also wish to go away?

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom ^{can} shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.

Peter found out through the years that life is just fine with Jesus in the drivers seat.

for he knows the road & he can go. There will be the car with the driver's seat. Jesus is the driver & you are the passenger. You and I are only beginning to find out the same.

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