

## John. 6:63 (LD 25) “The Spirit Gives Life”

**For the Children:** If your parents ask you questions about the sermon each week, there might be times when you have to admit that you didn't understand. Hopefully, your parents will then explain it to you. They explain it in different words, and perhaps they use illustrations. Teachers will sometimes use “visual aids” or role-playing to explain something. God explains the Gospel using words – from prophets, apostles and especially His Son; and He gives us further help by His Holy Spirit. He even gives us sacraments as a kind of illustration of the Gospel. We need all the help we can get, because sinful people keep trying to block out the truth of Jesus' words. **Questions:** What were some of the wrong interpretations people kept putting on Jesus' words? What kinds of life does Jesus give to us? How are Jesus' words different than our words?

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### Introduction:

#### **First Point: The Flesh Profits Nothing**

- 1) The Lord and the Fathers: Many of the Jewish leaders – and Jesus' own disciples – took a “fleshly” interpretation of the Lord's words. They took things in a sinful, this-worldly way, often overly-literal. When Jesus said He offered better bread than Moses had in the wilderness, they were offended by His claim (vss. 49-50). Jesus replied that if that offended them, how would they cope with His ascension to glory?! (v. 62).
- 2) Eating His Flesh: They were also offended by the Lord's comments about the life they could gain by eating His flesh (v. 52).
- 3) The Grace of God: In addition, they were offended by the Lord's teaching that they could not come to Him unless the Father draws them (v. 44), Jesus gives them the Bread of Life (v. 51) and the Spirit gives them life (v. 63). Faith has to be “granted” (v. 65). This implies that salvation is by grace alone, Christ alone and faith alone. Acceptance of Christ is not man's doing. Neither is he saved by his own meritorious deeds.

#### **Second Point: The Spirit Gives Life**

- 1) Christ's Spirit or the Holy Spirit?: There is an argument about whether the 2 uses of the word “spirit” in v. 63 refer to Christ's human spirit, Him as God (Who is Spirit); or the Holy Spirit. But all of these truths are necessary for Christ's atoning work to be accomplished and applied. See also 1 Cor. 15:45, Rom. 8:2 for similar language. Given the connection between Christ's work, the Holy Spirit and our life, in 3:34-36, 7:38-39, it would be unwise to reject any reference to the Holy Spirit.
- 2) Three Types of Life: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, give us life in 3 senses. All 3 Persons were involved in creating physical life and in maintaining it. Then there is the gift of *spiritual life*, with the gift of faith from the Holy Spirit on the ground of Christ's work (Eph. 2:5). This leads on to *eternal life* (Rom 8:11) – also due to Christ's work being applied by the Spirit.

#### **Third Point: Jesus' Words Are Spirit and Life**

- 1) Not Ordinary Words: Jesus' words are not like our words. They are full of creative, life-changing power. His words tell of the life He gives and how to obtain it. They are also used by God to bring us that life which Christ won for us.
- 2) Word and Spirit: However, the power of these words is not applied to us without the work of the Holy Spirit. We obtain life from Jesus when the Spirit produces faith in our hearts by exposure to the Word (Q.65)
- 3) Word and Sacrament: Sacraments give further understanding of the Gospel, trust in its promises and focus upon them/upon the Lord Jesus, with the working of the Spirit. They do so as visible “signs and seals” of those promises. We should therefore be serious about God's Word, the preaching of it, as well as the sacraments. We should ask the Lord to give us a spiritual understanding of these things, rather than a fleshly viewpoint.

**Conclusion:**