

Sermon Title: Jesus, the only way to the Father

There is a hot button word in our society today that I want us to talk about this morning, and that word is inclusion.

- Far too long the people with power or with majority have tried to shut other people out of things, painting a picture that because what they belong to is exclusive, that they are better than everyone else.
- But now the trend in our society is to make things inclusive.

“Disability inclusion means understanding the relationship between the way people function and how they participate in society, and making sure everybody has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life to the best of their abilities and desires.”

Should the Church be a place of inclusion or exclusion?

John 6:60-71

“This is a hard saying, who can listen to it?”

- These are the words of Jesus’ disciples, the large crowd that just ate food miraculously multiplied by Jesus, the crowd that saw him cross a lake but not get in a boat, but they were bothered by words.
- I think I understand the people that left, I’m not saying it was the right decision, but I understand. Following Jesus is hard!
- I have learned in my years here on earth, nothing in this life worth doing or having is easy, it’s the hard that makes it great.
- My hope is is that you will take some time and think about your life, and your relationship with Jesus, and when hard sayings come your way or you don’t understand, can you still have faith and put your trust in Jesus in that moment?

So what are some of the hard sayings of Jesus, especially the ones that might be a bit exclusive?

- **John 6:54** We must eat his flesh and drink his blood.
- **John 10:7b-10** Jesus is the door of the sheep.
- **John 14:6** Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.
- **Luke 12:51-52** The truth about Jesus will divide people and families.

What can we learn from these difficult sayings?

1. Jesus is the only way to the Father in heaven.
 - a. These passages are not the only ones that speak to the exclusivity of God the Father and of heaven.
 - b. We have to take all of Jesus!
 - c. **H.C. #30**
2. Jesus’ truth is a spiritual truth.
 - a. Jesus often used metaphors of everyday earthly life to describe truths about God and heaven.
 - b. It is harder to believe and put faith in an invisible God, one we can hug or touch or see in a physical way, but the benefits of our faith are also Spiritual benefits, forgiveness, love, eternal life, and relationship with the Father.

How should we react to these truths?

1. To make our church completely inclusive, even though these truths we have talked about are a bit exclusive.
 - a. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, but we are not the judges of who is following that way or not, and we are not in charge of who is allowed to believe in that truth or not.
 - b. Kelly said “my heart aches every time I see one of them standing by themselves because they are not engaged in an activity, or they don’t feel like they belong. Or they are left out because individuals are not willing, able, or know how to engage them.”
 - c. If you are out there thinking to yourself, how can I make BRC a more inclusive place, let me give you one step to start with. Try to remember that church isn’t just about you.
2. The key to truly being a disciple of Jesus and following him and connecting with him is to truly place a higher value on what Scripture says than on what we think or even know.

Challenges:

1. Think about how you can make BRC a more inclusive church, and then to make sure that every Sunday you are here, you think about others, visitors, and new members as much as you think about yourself.
2. Take some time this week to think about if there are any hard sayings of Jesus that might make us want to stop following him?

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John 6:60-71

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- These are the words of Jesus’ disciples, the large crowd that just ate food miraculously multiplied by Jesus, the crowd that saw him cross a lake but not get in a boat, but they were bothered by words.
- I think I understand the people that left, I’m not saying it was the right decision, but I understand. Following Jesus is _____!
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1. Think about how you can make BRC a more inclusive church, and then to make sure that every Sunday you are here, you think about others, visitors, and new members as much as you think about yourself.
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Scripture passages to go up on the Screen:

John 6:60-71 - “⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they 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, “Do you take offense at this? ⁶² Then what 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 at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ⁶⁵ And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.” ⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹ and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” ⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” ⁷¹ He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.”

John 6:54 - “Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

John 10: 7b-10 - “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

John 14:6 “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Luke 12:51-52 - “⁵¹ Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. ⁵² For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three.”