

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

“...So Jesus asked the twelve, ‘Do you also wish to go away?’ Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom can we go?’”

—The sixth chapter of the Gospel of John

By Ken Woodley

Jesus had just blown their minds.

“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them,” he had told them. “Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

Nobody in the synagogue in Capernaum had ever heard anything like that before. Say what? Go ahead, pull the other one.

But Jesus wasn't pulling anyone's leg. Everyone who heard him could tell that he was deadly serious. That's why they left. Because Jesus believed in what he was telling them.

“This teaching is difficult,” many of them responded. “Who can accept it?”

Many still find it hard to swallow today. They shouldn't. Swallowing an idea and being utterly transformed by it has been occurring throughout human history, sometimes with wondrous results, at other times starting wars.

We are surrounded by people who've swallowed an idea. Look in the mirror, there's one now. Most people have swallowed dozens of ideas and sometimes found their lives revolutionized.

People swallow an idea about a particular diet and their bodies are visibly transformed. Others swallow yoga or meditation and find inner peace. Some swallow the idea that running or walking every day is the right step toward health and achieve fantastic results.

Look at the advertisements that surround us online, on televisions and radios, in newspapers, magazines and on billboards. They are solely designed to get us to swallow an idea.

Consider all of the people who swallow the idea that they should become a fan of this or that sports team. They start painting their faces in team colors,

dressing up in the team's jersey and watch every game. They plan their lives around the team's schedule.

So, this idea-swallowing ability of human beings is an every-day thing.

"The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life," Jesus tried to explain, but some just didn't understand. Most of them undoubtedly got stuck on the image of literally eating Jesus' flesh and drinking his blood, rather than swallowing the idea that there is a spark of divine love inside them. A spark that is like a seed, waiting to be sown and cultivated, and, then, fully harvested to become the bread of heaven.

A Christ-ness inside them, if they'd only swallow.

But some, like Simon Peter, absolutely got it. No, he didn't yet understand completely. That wouldn't happen until after the resurrection. But Simon Peter knew he'd found something unlike anything else on earth. He is bewildered, mesmerized but intent on following the train of thought.

When everyone else looked at him, Simon Peter knew, they saw only a simple fisherman. But, when Jesus looked at him, he somehow saw the light of the world.

And that blew Simon Peter's mind.

But he wasn't about to walk away. There was no other place he could possibly go. No one else who would ever look at him that way.

The way Jesus looks at us, seeing the light of the world.

If we'd only swallow.

And shine into the darkness.