

What is your impression/expectation  
of the Christian life?

From the outside:

-various ... for another time!

# What is your impression/expectation of the Christian life?

From the inside:

- God whose love is supposed simply to make my life agreeable and easy?
- in which he gives me what I demand/expect/ feel am entitled to
- God to fit his will around my ease and comfort?

*= this is genie of the lamp: 3 wishes*

*Not the real God! Not the real Christian*

*life!*



# What is your impression/expectation of the Christian life?

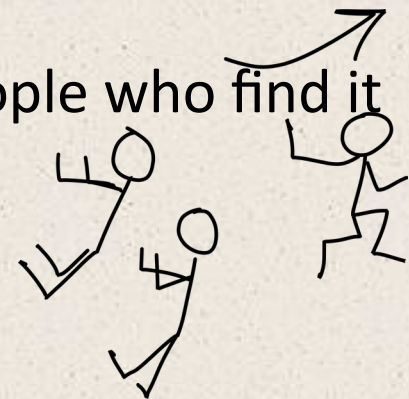
- *not impose on me anything that I am not personally happy with*
- *not daring to tell me things about the world and my place in it that I am not happy with*
- *not interfering with the principles of my relational and sexual life*
- *not asking me to stand up for ideals that will provoke the ridicule and mockery of my peers*

- but the real Jesus says **“hard words”**, and there are people who find it unacceptable and walk away

7:60 *“this is a hard saying”*

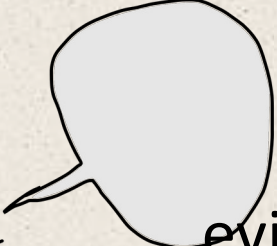
7:66 *“many ... no longer walked with him”*

7:67 *“do you want to go away as well?”*





*“This is a hard word ... will you turn away?”*

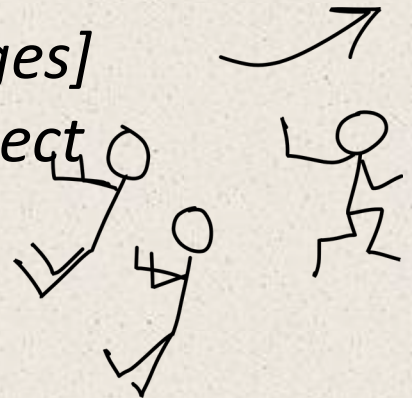


**Objection:** If Jesus is so good, and the evidence (scripture, signs, words) so strong how come anyone turns away?

// the Jews knew the Bible, saw the signs  
... but did not believe!

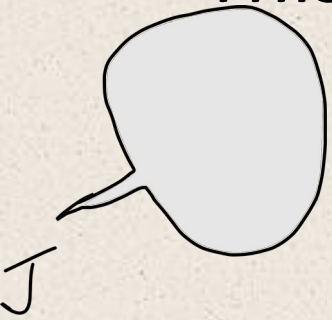
*v.36 you have seen me yet you do not believe*

// Romans 9-11 *“Israel [with all her privileges] failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened...”*

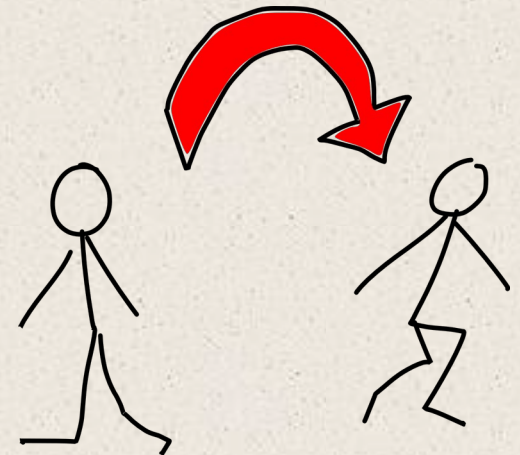
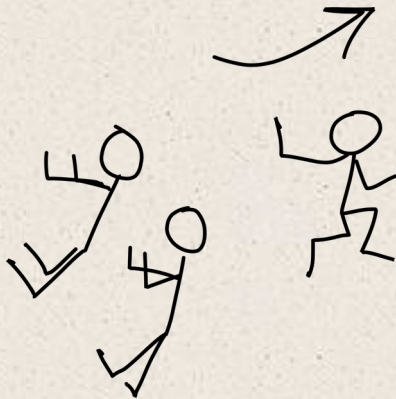


Let's investigate!

*"This is a hard word ... will you turn away?"*



1. The reality of turning away
2. The reason for turning away
3. The remedy for turning away



# 1. The reality of turning away

This is a sad reality – but it is a reality!

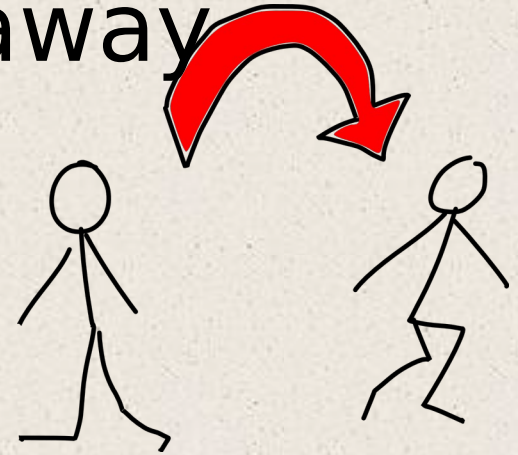
Turning away by ...

(a) grumbling

v.61 they were “**grumbling**” – like Israel in the desert ... spiritually dangerous exercise

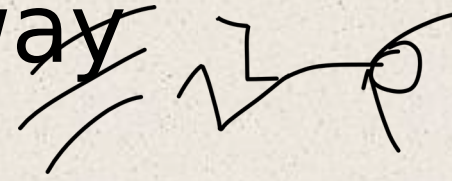
⚠️ beware: grumbling about God

⚠️ don't go down that road



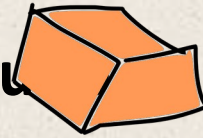


# 1. The reality of turning away



(b) stumbling

v.61 “do you take offence” – lit. **does this cause you  
stumble**



= stumble = “if XYZ then the Christian life is not for  
me!!”

- OT: Isaiah 8:14 “[the LORD] will be a sanctuary AND a  
stone of offence and a rock of stumbling ... many shall  
stumble ...”

⚠️ stumble = “if God doesn’t answer my prayers then  
this is unacceptable”

⚠️ stumble = “if Jesus wants me to put him first above  
everything BAD and GOOD ... this is not for me”

⚠️ woe if you cause someone else to stumble!

⚠️ ***there are trip hazards in the Christian life ... watch  
out where you are walking!***

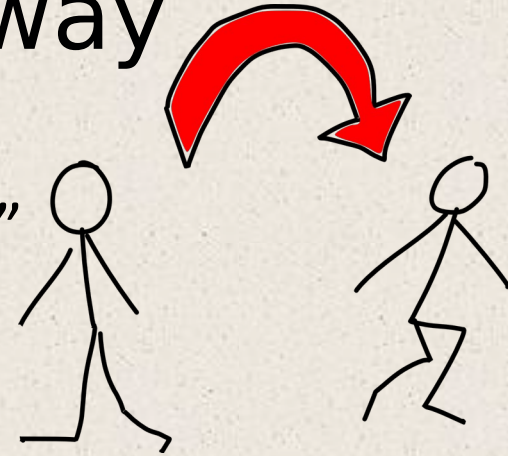
# 1. The reality of turning away

c. Turning back

v.66 “turning back ... no longer walking with...”

v.67 “go away ...”

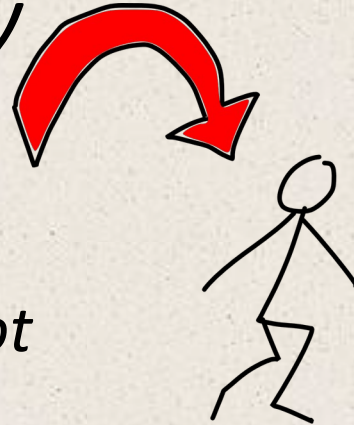
v.71 “betray him ...”



- e.g. Lot's wife – remember Luke 17:32
- The Israelites and golden calf “*quickly turned away*” Deut 9:12
- Galatians 1:6 “*I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him ...*”
- Sower “*tribulation or persecution ...immediately fall away...*” Matt 13:21
- 🏛 Peter (Matt 26:33) “*I will never fall away ... WRONG*”
- 🏛 **beware: neglecting the means of spiritual life – reading scripture, prayer, fellowship, Lord's Supper**
- 🏛 **the reality of turning away – be rightly afraid!**



## 2. *The reasons for turning away*



There are surface reasons for people turning away

1. **Consistently not seeing the point** 6:26 *“you did not see ...”*

⚡ Beware of getting stuck ... never quite getting it

2. **The true nature of Jesus – his divinity** v.41 *“how does he say I came down from heaven”*

⚡ seek to have a high view of Jesus

3. **The necessity of a blood sacrifice** v.52 *how can he give us his flesh to eat*

// “you will never wash my feet”

= human pride

⚡ Responsibility to answer objections, give reasoning and take on board the facts – as previously

## 2. The reasons for turning away



But Jesus turns to the deeper reasons for people turning away.

v.65 “no one can come unless it is given by the Father”

v.70 “did I not choose you, the 12 ...”

v.64 “Jesus knew from the beginning who did not believe ...”

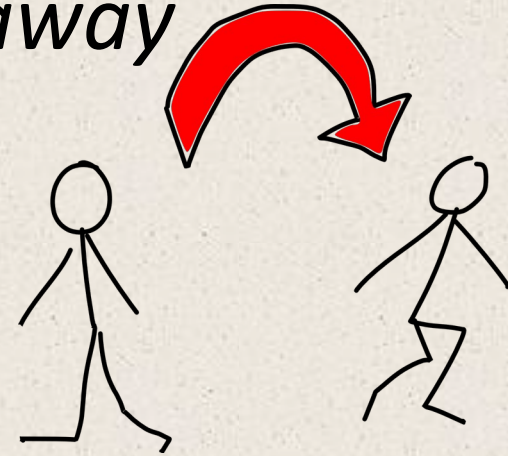
N.B. these reasons are deep within the mysterious purposes of the Sovereign Almighty God. They do not remove responsibility, but Jesus locates the ultimate answer within the purposes of God (rather than “free will”!)

## 2. The reasons for turning away

Deeper reasons:

*Gift: choice: foreknowledge*

Jesus is very bold in saying these things



**Foreknowledge** ✉ he was not taken by surprise,  
maybe he means more (? Romans 8:29)

**Choice** ✉ not just he saw the outcome, but he caused  
the outcome (Ephesians 1:4)

🔧 Q: why am I a Christian?

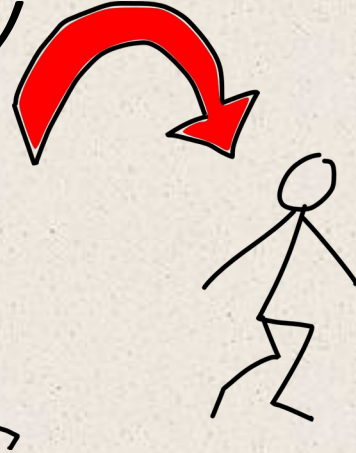
A: Because he chose me.

**Gift:** did you think it was cheap and easy to be a  
Christian? (free gift ... for no reason)

🔧 wonder and grateful amazement



## 2. The reasons for turning away



*i.e. **Responsibility** ... there are good reasons to believe, and adequate evidence!*

*Yes, there are hard sayings – face them, don't imagine they don't exist, but don't be overcome by the objections ... get to grips with the hard parts!*

*i.e. **Sovereignty** ... believing does not come naturally to fallen men and women, faith is supernatural. Not everyone will believe, (not universalist), and those that do believe do so because God gave it to them to believe.*

*People by nature are in unbelief ... because that is where they are at. Unless God gives them [to come] that is where they will stay*

### 3. The remedy for turning away

N.B. woodwork teacher and power tools  
cutting off people's fingers

*- Not to stop people using the tools,  
but to teach them healthy activity - proper  
respect and healthy fear of danger*

- 䄁 Christian life: God brings his elect to glory via teaching them how walk on the path and keep well away from danger
- // Hebrews keep away from the cliff edge!!
- “The elect believe the promises and heed the warnings”
- i.e. we are not left in hopeless passivity, but with encouragement to active faith
- 䄁 healthy path to walk! Walk on it!





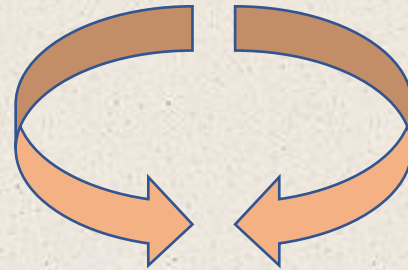
### *3. The remedy for turning away*

#### **1. Be humble enough to realise that you need totally need spiritual help**

- “the Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing”

■ my learning, background, victim-hood, strength, independence won't profit ...

■ Lord give me help from above



Flesh  
profits  
nothing



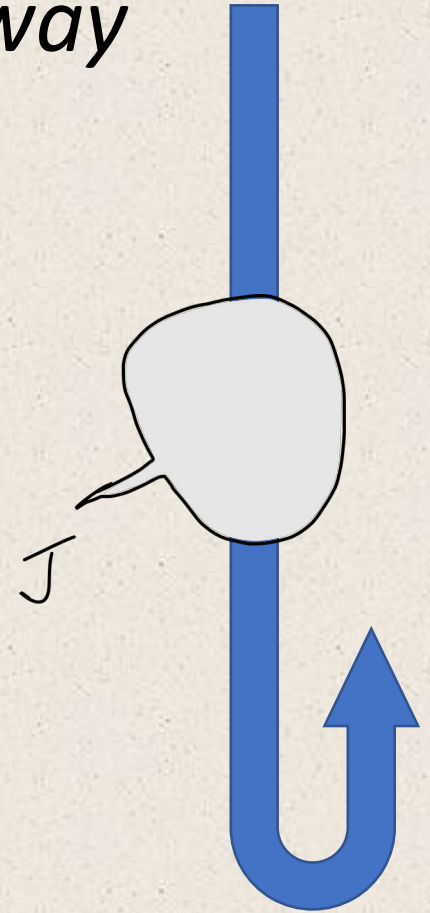
Spirit  
gives life  
(from the  
top!)



### *3. The remedy for turning away*

#### **2. Come back to Jesus' words**

- v.63 “the words I have spoken to you are spirit, and they are life”
- 🏗️ the power of Jesus words (in scripture)
- 🏗️ his word expelled the demons, calmed the sea, raised the dead ... surely we are not going to claim we are exceptions?
- 🏗️ we ignore his words at our peril



Spirit  
gives life  
(from the  
top!)

### *3. The remedy for turning away*

#### **3. Come back to Jesus' deeds – (especially the cross and resurrection)**

*v.62 what if you were to see ...Son of Man ascending to where he was before ...?*

N.B. Could be negative, or positive.

Jesus was “lifted up”



- on the cross
- from the grave
- to the Father

Positively – good idea to go there, (what? why?...)

### *3. The remedy for turning away*

#### **4. Remember that there is no real alternative to Jesus**

*v.68 “to whom shall we go, you have the words of eternal life!”*

- If you turned your back on Jesus, where would you go?
- To ...ism ... Buddhism, Hinduism, psychology-ism, politics-ism! How useless!
- To hopelessness and lostness ...cut off from the source of life ...
-  let's keep coming to him
-  there is no spiritual plan B



*“This is a hard word ... will you turn away?”*



1. The **reality** of turning away ... a real danger, avoid it!
  2. The **reasons** for turning away
    - there are hard words to be faced
    - at root, there is the Sovereignty of a merciful God
  3. The **remedy** for turning away
    - be humble – flesh profits nothing, you need the Spirit
    - come back to Jesus' words
    - come back to Jesus' deeds
    - remember he is the only one ... there is no other way!
- ... will you turn away .... By God's grace ... NO