

## Words of Spirit and Life

- **Jesus' Understanding of Words:**
  - Jesus states, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life," highlighting the profound significance of words.
  - In John's Gospel, Jesus is described as the "Word of God made flesh," underscoring the divine power and authority of His words.
- **Modern Distrust of Words:**
  - In the age of information, we are overwhelmed by words, leading to a distrust in their ability to convey truth.
  - Professions that rely heavily on words—such as journalism, law, and politics—are often viewed with scepticism due to the manipulation of language.
- **Words as Sacraments:**
  - Words are described as sacraments, pointing beyond themselves to a greater reality, much like how the word 'hand' symbolizes the actual limb.
  - Although words may seem inadequate, they are powerful tools for evoking deeper spiritual truths.
- **The Inadequacy and Power of Words:**
  - Words can never fully capture the reality they refer to, making them inherently limited.
  - However, this limitation is also what makes words effective in conveying the mystery and depth of God, as they hint at a reality beyond their literal meaning.
- **The Challenge of Belief:**
  - Jesus' teachings, such as being the "bread of life," were too difficult for some to accept, leading them to turn away.
  - True belief requires seeing beyond the literal words to the greater spiritual reality they signify.
- **Peter's Response and Our Call:**
  - Peter's declaration, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life," reflects the profound trust in Jesus' words as the foundation for life and faith.
  - Believers are called to trust in the words of Jesus, recognizing them as the pathway to eternal life and a deeper relationship with God.

Questions:

1. **The Power of Words:** Jesus claims that His words are "spirit and life." In a world where words are often mistrusted, how can we reconcile this with Jesus' assertion? What makes His words different from the words we encounter daily?
2. **Words as Sacraments:** The sermon suggests that words are sacraments, pointing beyond themselves to a greater reality. How can we apply this understanding to our daily communication? Can you think of examples where words have conveyed deeper spiritual truths in your life?
3. **The Challenge of Belief:** John 6 describes some followers turning away because Jesus' teachings were too difficult. What does this tell us about the nature of belief and the challenges of accepting spiritual truths that transcend literal understanding?
4. **Trust in Words:** Peter declares, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." How can we cultivate trust in Jesus' words in a culture that often devalues or distorts truth? What practices can help deepen our confidence in Scripture?
5. **Words and Reality:** The sermon discusses how words can either reveal or hide the truth. How can we discern when words are leading us towards the reality of God or away from it? What role does the Holy Spirit play in this discernment?
6. **Spiritual Food:** Jesus speaks of being the bread of life, offering spiritual nourishment. How can we ensure that we are truly "feeding" on Jesus' words in our spiritual lives? What does it mean to receive and internalise the words of Jesus in a way that brings life?