

John 6:64

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

Analysis

But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. This verse reveals the tragedy of false profession and the sovereignty of Christ's knowledge. 'Some of you' indicates not all claiming discipleship are genuine believers. The phrase 'from the beginning' (ex archēs) shows Jesus knew from the start—before calling them—who would prove false. This demonstrates divine omniscience and undercuts any notion of Christ being surprised or defeated by betrayal. The mention of the betrayer (Judas, though unnamed here) alongside generic unbelievers shows that Judas's apostasy, though uniquely tragic, fits the pattern of false profession. Reformed theology distinguishes between visible church (those who profess) and invisible church (those who truly believe). Not all who follow Christ are His; not all profession is genuine. This warns against presumption while encouraging true believers—Christ knows His own (2 Timothy 2:19).

Historical Context

John's Gospel uniquely emphasizes Jesus's foreknowledge of Judas's betrayal (6:64, 6:70-71, 13:11, 13:18). Writing decades after the events, John clarifies that Judas's betrayal didn't catch Jesus off-guard or thwart His mission—it was foreseen and incorporated into God's redemptive plan (Acts 2:23). The broader context addresses the problem of apostasy that troubled the early church. Many who initially followed Christ fell away when discipleship proved costly (1 John 2:19:

'They went out from us, but they were not of us'). For John's persecuted audience, this was sobering comfort—Christ foreknew who would prove faithful and who wouldn't. The Judas reference anticipates chapter 13's foot-washing and betrayal narrative. Church history repeatedly proves this pattern: not all who profess Christ belong to Him; genuine faith perseveres.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's foreknowledge of unbelief and betrayal affect your understanding of His sovereignty?
2. What distinguishes genuine faith from mere profession or superficial following?
3. How should the warning about false disciples affect our assurance and church membership standards?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν τινες οἱ οὐ πιστεύοντες ἤδει
But there are from you some ^{G3739} **not that believe** **knew**
G235 G1526 G1537 G5216 G5100 G3756 G4100 G1492

γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τίς εἰσὶν οἱ μὴ
For from the beginning ^{G3588} **Jesus who there are** ^{G3588} **not**
G1063 G1537 G746 G2424 G5101 G1526 G3361

πιστεύοντες καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ παραδώσω αὐτόν
that believe and who should ^{G3588} **betray him**
G4100 G2532 G5101 G2076 G3860 G846

Additional Cross-References

John 10:26 (Faith): But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

Hebrews 4:13 (Parallel theme): Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Romans 8:29 (Parallel theme): For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

John 6:61 (References Jesus): When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

John 5:42 (Parallel theme): But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

2 Timothy 2:19 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Acts 15:18 (Parallel theme): Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

John 6:66 (Parallel theme): From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

John 6:36 (Faith): But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org