



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Friday, October 28, 2022

Scripture: John 6:12-15

TITLE: Which Jesus Will You Follow?

Have you used Cameo? Cameo is an app and website that allows you to pay celebrities to send a personalized message to you or anyone you like. I've noticed this trend where people pay these celebrities to plug or endorse their product or their agenda. It's fascinating to watch the power of celebrity and how quickly it can be used for self-gain.

Well, Jesus experienced the same thing 2,000 years ago. What happened? Let's go back to the Bible for the answer. Here's what John records in John 6:12-15.

And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Here we find Jesus at the end of the miracle of what has been called "the feeding of the 5,000." He does a miracle and feeds the 5,000 men plus the 10-15,000 women and children with just 3 barley loaves and two fish. Everyone is fed and then in verse 12 it says, "And when they had eaten their fill." In other words, they didn't just get a nibble and passed the bread. They didn't lick the fish and handed it off. They ate and ate and ate until they tapped out. They had their fill. And there was an abundance of leftovers so they gathered them up.

We as a culture are a throw away culture. We take our ¾ pizza and toss it. We take our crumbled-up bag of chips and toss it to the birds. Not in Jesus' day. Food was scarce. They worked hard for their resources. So they gathered them up. But not only was it practical, it was spiritually beneficial for the disciples.

Jesus is saying, "Gather up all the leftovers and see the miracles. There was no slight of hand. There was no elevator with fish and bread below me. You saw the miracle. You see the results still!"

But notice who else saw the miracle. Verse 14 says, "When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, 'This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!'" The crowd realizes what just happened. This was amazing! All this food from so little! This Jesus must be the Prophet!

You may remember this is who they thought John the Baptist was in John 1. It goes back to Deuteronomy 18. Is this the great Prophet after Moses that we've been waiting for? Well, they have an idea of what to do with Jesus in verse 15.

“Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.” It was their cameo moment. Hey Jesus! Pretty cool trick! We are looking for a guy who will move our agenda. We need a new leader who can kick butt and tell the Romans who's in charge. Give us the welfare state we want!

Jesus, like a spy or ninja, disappears in the crowds and takes the high ground. They didn't want Jesus for who He really was. They wanted Him as they wanted Him.

So how about you? Do you want Jesus as He is? He's not the social justice warrior or the political activist or the good luck charm many want Him to be. He is the Messiah. He is God. He is our provider. He is our sustainer. He is Lord of all. This is Jesus. Will you follow the real Jesus?