

Trusting In Our King

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In John 6, the story of Jesus feeding the 5000 is recorded for us. Up to this point, Jesus had done many other miracles, but this one seemed to be even more spectacular in the eyes of the Jews. This miracle didn't affect just one person as did the other miracles of healing a lame man or the nobleman's son. This one benefitted probably well over 5000 people (only the men were numbered). And it signified that Jesus could provide for the people's basic necessities.

As a result, the Jews promptly wanted to make him king (John 6:14-15). This is what they were waiting for and longing for. Someone who would lead them. Someone who would provide for them. Someone who would be able to restore Israel to its former glory. However, what they had in mind regarding the Messiah is not what God had in mind for the Messiah.

It's obvious that Jesus did not want to be made king over Israel: *"Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to a mountain by Himself alone"* (vs. 15). He did not come to be an earthly king. But he is reigning as king, albeit on a heavenly throne (Acts 2:30-33).

What I would like to call our attention to is the change in views of Jesus by the Jews all in the matter of one day. In John 6, they want to make him king. On the following day, Jesus claims to be the bread of life. Yes, he can provide bread for our daily sustenance. But more importantly, he is the living bread come down from heaven. *"If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."* (John 6:51).

While Jesus was providing physical food, the Jews were all in favor of following him, even to the point of making him king. But once he started talking in spiritual terms, claiming to have come from heaven and talking in ways they weren't expecting the Messiah to talk, they quickly left him. *"Therefore, many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can understand it?'"* (vs. 60) Jesus tried to explain that what he was saying was spiritual, and that his words would give life (vs. 63). However, there were many who would have none of it. *"From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more"* (vs. 66). So much for them wanting him to be king!

I wonder how I would have reacted had I witnessed the feeding of the 5000 and then heard him speak the next day about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. I'm sure I would have been confused, but I would like to think that rather than just forsaking him completely, I would have tried harder to understand what he meant. I would like to think that considering I had witnessed and heard about many miracles that I would have given Jesus the benefit of the doubt, knowing that there was obviously something special about him.

Do you realize that we're in very much a similar circumstance today as the Jews were then? While we have not personally witnessed his miracles, we have them recorded for us. The evidence as put forth by John (and the other gospel writers) were *"written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name"* (John 20: 31). And we have his teachings recorded as well. We can hear the same words that the Jews heard in person 2000 years ago.

The question we need to ask is, "Do I respond in the same manner as the Jews?" When it suits us, we'll gladly make Jesus our King. You know, as long as we've got plenty of food and blessings, and as long

as he doesn't require too much of us, and as long as what he says makes sense to us, then we'll honor him as King. But what about when Jesus says something that we don't like? What if he says something that we think doesn't make sense? What if he tells us to go in a certain direction when all our gut instincts are telling us to go in a different direction? There are times that we may believe our way is best. There are times we want to do something that God has told us to abstain from. There are times Jesus says to do something that's not in our comfort zone. There are times Jesus says something we don't understand.

How do we respond in these situations? Do we forsake him as some of the disciples did and no longer desire for him to be our King? Hopefully, we'll respond like Peter did when Jesus asked the twelve if they wanted to leave also. Peter replied, "*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*" (John 6:68-69). That was a statement of faith, of trust. It was a statement that said, "I may not fully understand everything you say. I may not even like everything you say. But I know who you are and what you can provide. Therefore, I trust you."

What an amazing response by Peter. We also should have the same trust in our Lord and respond with the same conviction and faith when confronted with similar circumstances. Let's not forget who we are. Let's not forget who Jesus is. Let's not forget our own feeble minds and understanding. Let's not forget God's infinite wisdom and his love for us, trusting that God's way is best. Let's honor him as King - all the time.