

Seeing What We Want and Missing What We Need

You guys will have to suffer through one more week of me today, because originally Pastor John was supposed to be up here today as he is back from sabbatical, but on Thursday the Luhmann house was blessed with some much needed estrogen as Korinda gave birth to the newest Luhmann, Ruth Luhmann 8lbs 1 oz. So we wanted to continue to bless them as they have poured out so much into this church and we want to pour love and blessings back upon them.

Now you may notice in the bulletin that it is all dolled up for the part two of the Raising Church sermons that was intended to be a follow up to the sermon I gave on parenting a couple weeks ago, but things got kind of shifted around so we will be covering that stuff next week, so be sure you are here for that, but this week we will be continuing in the book of John.

Just one quick announcement that will be spoken to at greater length next week, this summer there will be no Sunday school for 4-11 year olds. This is a decision that we have made for a couple of reasons, the first and most important being we are taking the summer months and giving you parents the opportunity to do church with you children, to do worship together, this is the most important reason for this break, also it provides a much needed break and time for training for the leaders who pour into your kids each and every Sunday. As I said, there will be much more information on this next week so please come, but now lets get back to John.

And we are in a really neat spot in the book of John because everything is building now. There is less and less time between events and it reads more as an hour by hour timeline rather than a disconnected narrative. Chapters 5-7 in John take place in a time frame that sits in about a week's window. So there is a lot of Jesus preaching and explaining that comes to these people in a short amount of time and the reason Jesus is talking so much is because people are dumb.

We can be so confident that we are getting something, but the problem is we don't really get it. We miss so easily what is sitting right in front of us. Let me prove this for you, I got this copy of an advice column the other day, the person who runs the advice column is a guy and a woman wrote into him one day with an issue and this is how it went.

See we miss things. We sometimes only see what we want to see, but ended up missing what we really need, and that is what we are going to see today in the book of John.

We need to really focus this morning for two reasons, 1.) because we are looking at Jesus feeding the five thousand, and because most of us heard this story in Sunday school and were told that we need to share things with others we think we know the totality of the story, and 2.) Because we need to examine the hearts of the people and the disciples in this story so that we can avoid the same mistakes and see not only what we want to see, but see what we need.

Lets **Pray**

We are going to read this story straight through and then we are going to go back and look at it.
John 6:1-15

Alright now this is a very interesting story, because this story is not meant to stand on it's own, it is directly tied to the remainder of this chapter. In fact the first two stories in this chapter, the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus walking on water are completed in the largest portion of this chapter, verses 22-71 where we meet slow turn Jesus again.

In verses 22-71 Jesus is firm with his words again, and when Jesus is mad it's not out of a sinful annoyance, but it is because people are blatantly missing out on the righteousness and meaning that is standing and preaching right in front of them.

In fact people start asking Jesus all of these questions and he keeps giving them the same answer, I don't want to steal the thunder from the upcoming sermons, but six times in the upcoming verses Jesus says, I am the bread of life, stop being so blinded by that event I did on that hill in Galilee and see the true meaning behind it.

So that is where we are going to end up, but I want to take this story that we all know so well and start to break down the events that happen that lead up to Jesus' famous disputation in verses 22-71.

Now at the beginning of this account we see thousands and thousands of people following Jesus because he has become a sort of celebrity. And just as we struggle with celebrity culture now, they struggled with it way back then.

People followed Jesus because he was doing cool things. They really didn't want to know him, they just wanted to be associated with him. We get this here in America, we are star whores, we are so obsessed with celebrities and their star power.

I was reading an article the other day and it was this girl who was at an event where Robert Pattinson was, one of the twilight guys, and she was so set on getting his attention that she began scratching her throat until she bled just so he would look her way. We have mastered this shallow fame orientated approach to things, and right now as we see this story Jesus is being chased around like a petty movie star, and it's not that Jesus hates the attention, but Jesus knows he is getting the attention for the wrong reasons.

We can see the heart of the people when we look at the second verse and last two verses of our text today. **John 6:2, 14-15.**

People were following Christ not because he was the Christ, but because he did cool miracles, and then after he did another miracle the people went crazy and tried to capture Jesus because they saw what they wanted to see in Jesus and not what they needed to see in Jesus.

What they saw was a man who worked on blight of society, a man who healed the sick, and a man who ended poverty. The barley bread that Jesus broke, that was the staple food of the poor, Jesus was not only performing a miraculous miracle in the eyes of those who were gathered, but he was doing it with the most insignificant foods proving that not even poverty is an issue under his power.

These things are all great to look at, wonderful realities of a great priest savior who came to serve and not be served, these are things that we need to replicate more, working with the sick, helping the lame, feeding the poor, but in the end the people were blinded by this. Now you have to understand the entire area was under Roman rule, and they were not happy about it. They were being over taxed, they were being taken advantage of, they were having their rights relocated to the service of Rome. These people knew the prophecies, they had heard of a coming king who was coming to conquer kingdoms of sin and establish a kingdom for his people forever.

So when they see Jesus doing this, they are assuming that he is the Prophesied King (which is a correct assumption) but then they are making the assumption that the kingdom he came to conquer was Rome and the one he was going to establish was Israel. And the problem with this is that Jesus has no desire to rework a kingdom corrupted by sin, he rather wants to conquer sin itself and set up his own kingdom where he is Lord over all and sin and Satan lie defeated. They understood the prophecies about a lion coming from the tribe of Judah, but they failed to see that before the lion roared a lamb was slain.

And these people are so blinded by their own pride and own desires in life that they try to forcefully take God and make him into their puppet by setting him up as a physical king. And we see that literally they are so set in their ways that Jesus runs away from them. The crowd missed Jesus amongst the miracles.

Now this is the response of the crowd, who were not part of the intimate circle. Can we really blame them for being attracted to this man they barely knew because he did amazing works? No. We would probably be amazed and want to see more as well. What is really astonishing is that the disciples still missed the point in this miracle.

At this point the disciples have seen a lot right. Water into wine, John the Baptist saying this is who you have been waiting for, Jesus reading the mind of the Samaritan woman, Jesus healing the official's son from miles away, Jesus healing the cripple at the pool of Bethesda, and Jesus dismantling Jerusalem's most religious minds. So if anyone were to get the power wonder and deity of Jesus it should be them. But they still missed it and not only did they miss it, but they doubted the ability of Christ to do this miracle.

This is the only miracle that is accounted for in all four gospels. And that's because this is a pivotal point in God's master plan. And throughout the four gospels the disciples did not respond well when Jesus said, "How are we supposed to feed these people." And we saw in today's text in verse 5 Jesus did this so that he could test his disciples, to see where they are at.

Here is how the disciples responded in all four gospels.

Matt 14:15-16

Mark 6:37-36

Luke 9:13

And then we saw in John that Philip said there is no way you could buy enough food for this crowd and then Andrew says and all we have are two fish and five loaves.

The disciples were so caught up in the details of taking care of the people that they failed to realize that they had the chief shepherd sitting among them. While the crowds lost Jesus in the miracles, the disciples lost Jesus in the ministry. And then the Chief shepherd blessed and broke the bread and gave it to the disciples to distribute and then charged the disciples with the task of reaping the fruits and seeing the vastness of the miracle.

But still the disciples were just along for the ride, which is to be enjoyed, but it is also to be understood, the vastness and power of our God needs to go deeper in your heart than a simple superficial wonder.

The disciples were so focused on doing wonderful things for Jesus, that they failed to see the wonder of Jesus amidst them. We see this even more clearly in **Matthew 16:5-11**

See I love how the disciples are just like us. The disciples are all worried about bread and what they are to eat and then Jesus says some spiritual metaphor that goes completely over their head, but they pause and then start asking about the bread again. Jesus is trying to get the point across that it's not about the bread.

We as a church, as modern day disciples need to be wary of the mistakes of the disciples who sat in the presence and miracles of the Christ, but failed to see the full wonder of him. Can you imagine what could have followed on the hills of Galilee where 5,000 men and many more women and children sat, if the disciples would have realized the vastness of their teacher. Imagine if instead of letting people leave with a fullness of stomach they explained to them that Jesus came to also offer a fullness of spirit, what wonderful worship and glory would have followed.

Jesus wanted to do this miracle to astonish these crowds with his power and bless them with the sustaining substance but the end goal was to use these things to draw them to the fullness of him not the incomplete picture of him.

See look here at **Colossians 1:16**, all things were created by him, through him and for him. Meaning that if God created bread by his own power, through his own perfection and for his own glory, the miracle of the feeding the five thousand is not that Jesus manipulated his creation into something through his power for his own purposes, but the miracle at the sea of Galilee is that Jesus is. Jesus is frustrated with unbelief because we are too easily pleased in our belief because before Colossians 1:16 there is Colossians 1:15 says "He is the image of the

invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”

The miracle is not that the son of the creator can create, the miracle is that the son of the creator is I am. I am the miracle. I am the God, I am the reason we do this.

Jesus’ main point is not about the physical bread that he is making, and the fish that he is reproducing, it is that days before the feast of the Passover the feast designed to celebrate the plague of the firstborn that ushered in Israel’s exodus from the slavery of Egypt, that the Firstborn of all creation, the perfect lamb sat breaking bread and blessing his people knowing full well that it is through his own flesh that these people with calloused hearts and closed eyes will be ushered out of their slavery of sin and into the Kingdom of Christ’s imputed righteousness.

See the disciples were so caught up in seeing what they saw instead of seeing the bread of life that they needed. They said, let the people find bread on their own. And Jesus says, you have the bread give it to them, you have me, show me to them. They said well this bread and fish we have is not sufficient, and Jesus says there is not sufficient bread for them except what I can offer, no amount of sacrifice on your end and add to what I am about to give. Then they say in John 6:9 “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many.”

The apostle Paul later answer that question in **Romans 5:17** “For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of the grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in the life through the one man Jesus Christ.”

Church we need more than a buffet line for a savior. We need more than bread to survive, we need a savior and we need to repent of our inability to see him in his fullness, and we need to take the true gift of himself that he has given us, and multiply it among the masses.

He is the author of a complete and total redemption, and we are the carriers of this wonderful news. So see him, serve him, worship him.