

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

Introduction

We saw last time how that a multitude of people followed our Lord and His disciples out into a desert place and were on the receiving end of the magnificent miracle of the multiplying of the loaves and fishes .

When Jesus walked this earth, there were multitudes of people who followed Him around for a variety of different reasons. But not everyone who followed Jesus or even appeared to be close to Jesus was a true Believer! The same is true today! In fact, it is a sad reality that not everyone who is near the things of Jesus is a true Believer!

Let's see today some **REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS:**

1. **Let' Take The Scribes, Pharisees, And Sadducees Who Followed Jesus (Or Had Him Followed) For What I Will Call The Fault Factor!**

They kept showing up where Jesus was...judgmentally observing what was going on...sometimes questioning what was going on...and usually making unfair judgments about Jesus (What He said, what He did, and those he was in the company of!) **And not only railing against Jesus, but also railing against His Disciples, and even sometimes those whom Jesus healed!**

Understand that the vast majority of these Jewish Leaders were NOT true Believers in the LORD. (There were some exceptions!)

Instead, they were jealous of Jesus and saw Him as an affront to their self-imposed authority and to their religious traditions that they had concocted and held above the very Law of God!

They were constantly FINDING FAULT with Jesus...they TEMPTED Him ...they tried to trip Him up in His words...and even tried to find an opportunity where they might kill Him!

When we read the Gospels we can actually see this happening over and over again during the short 3 to 3 ½ years of Jesus' ministry!

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

Remember we saw it in *John 4* after Jesus healed the impotent man by the pool of Bethesda...they had a problem with that...Jesus healing a man on the Sabbath day telling him to take up his bed!

In reality, Jesus' LIFE—His Wisdom, His Words, and His Works—were convicting to these Jewish leaders. On top of that Jesus made the egregious mistake of not recognizing their authority!

And what really stirred these religious leaders up was the fact that many of the people who had before looked to THEM were now looking to HIM and they just COULD NOT HAVE THAT!

But you know what? Jesus wasn't afraid to butt heads with them ... to call them out...and to take them head on with the Truth!

So, we find that many of these Jewish leaders followed Jesus around, but the vast majority of them did so to find fault!

Did you know that there are still folks around today who are similar to these Jewish leaders! I've seen this so many times in my 35+ years of ministry...people who are not busy themselves but are intent on finding fault with those who are...many times making unfair judgments of motives...and even some who are entrenched in their own traditions of men and who slough off the Authority of the Word! It's not good for the Church and it's not good for the cause of Christ!

2. **Let's Take Those Who Followed Jesus For What I Will Call The Entertainment Factor Even Though Jesus Didn't Come To Entertain! (*Vs 2*)**

Think of the many folks who **personally witnessed many of the things that Jesus did!** I'm sure it was something to behold, don't you?! Some, no doubt, were **curious about what Jesus would do next!** They looked at Jesus as being some kind of magician.

Now, that's somewhat understandable, but listen, **none of what Jesus did was to entertain anybody!** What Jesus did was ministry!

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

He did the miracles that He did to glorify His Heavenly Father and to show the reality that He was indeed the Messiah that the Prophets said would come! (Vs 14)

There are still folks today who are looking to be entertained! And sadly there are so-called Churches out there that will oblige them!

I have all kinds of **entertainers** contacting me wanting me to have them in to **“minister”** in our Church. (Musicians, comedians, magicians, you name it!) Many of these folks are on the road trying to make a living at what they do and I’ll not fault them for that...BUT...
ENTERTAINMENT IS NOT WHAT WE ARE ABOUT!

I can assure you that most of them are **heavy on the entertainment and light on the ministry!**
(e.g. The “Gospel” quartet I invited to come to the Church I pastored in Indiana because a fellow Pastor’s son was a part of the group.)

So anymore I’m very cautious and guarded about folks coming in from the outside to minister to us here. I want to try to make sure they are truly coming to minister!

3. Let’s Take Those Who Followed Jesus For What I Will Call The Benefit Factor, That Is, They Followed Him To See How They And Their Loved Ones Might Benefit From His Works!

Understand that many folks were on the receiving end of what Jesus did in His ministry!

Many folks received a touch of healing from Jesus!

Some were raised from the dead!

Some had demons cast out of them!

Many other wonderful things were done by Jesus!

We saw last time how that about 5000 men plus an unknown number of women and children were on the receiving end of one of the most amazing miracles of Jesus—the multiplying of the bread and fishes!

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

Some of them probably thought, *“Wow, this is great! I wonder what’s on the menu for tomorrow!”*

There were many people right then and there who wanted to make Jesus their king on the spot, and they were prepared to do so by force! Who wouldn’t want a leader that could do all these things for you? (Vote for Jesus! Free food and free quality healthcare without cost!)

But listen, Jesus wasn’t going to have any part of that! That is **NOT** why He had come into this world this first time! *(Vs 14-15)*

Oh there will be a time in the future at His Second Coming when He will come to rule and reign on this earth for a literal 1000 year period, but that was not why He came this first time! **He came to die for the sins of men!**

So, when Jesus perceived what was happening here, He sent His disciples back to the ship to return while He sent the crowd away *(according the account in Matthew 14:23)* and He went up into a mountain Himself alone to pray!

These folks **didn’t really understand the full implication of what it meant to be a Believer and a follower of Christ. Jesus was just someone they could follow around and get something out of!**

Many of these people woke up the next morning, and they were hungry again! Imagine that! It happens on a regular basis each and every day! Some of you are like me...you’re hungry right now!

So...many of these folks **went looking for Jesus again, hoping for a repeat of the previous day’s miracle.** Well, they didn’t find Him there where He had been, but they finally discovered that he had crossed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, so they got in ships and went over to the other side as well and they found Him there.

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

And when they found Jesus, **Jesus exposed their motives and gave them a mild rebuke!** (*Vs 26-27*)

Listen, there are still folks today who only show an interest in Jesus and His Church when they have a need or want something or when they think they can garner something for their flesh!

The phone calls come in and sometimes people just show up knocking on my door looking for help and it happens...ALL...THE...TIME!

The vast majority of these people are not in Church...don't have a Church and are really not really interested in Church at all!

What they are interested in is help with their rent, with their utility bills, with food, with gas, with Christmas presents...I could go on! And, if you do help them this month, guess what...They'll be back next month looking for help again!

Now understand that I'm not against helping folks...in fact we have helped many folks over the last 11+years, but that's not why the Lord Jesus started the Church!

He did NOT leave us here to be the welfare program for the World! I'll leave that right there. **Suffice it to say that some folks follow Jesus for the benefit factor!**

4. Take Those Who Followed Jesus To Hear And Receive His Word!

a. His Disciples And Others Were Recipients Of His Teaching And Preaching! (The Sermon on The Mount, The Olivet Discourse, plus many other occasions and even private teachings!) (Vs 67-71)

Eleven of His disciples received His teaching and preaching as they should and consequently they were changed by Jesus and were used by Him in many marvelous ways both during Christ's earthly ministry and in the ministry of the early Church!

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

Sadly though, **it didn't click with or stick with Judas Iscariot!** He saw the same things the others did but his life was unaffected by Jesus and His Word! He heard most of what the others heard, but sadly, it went in one ear and out the other!

To be so close to Jesus and then to miss out on heaven...how sad is that! There are some folks in Churches all across our land that are like that! **They are close to Jesus and the things of Jesus but His salvation hasn't clicked with them yet and their lives remain unaffected by Jesus and His Word!**

b. There Were Also Some Others Who Came To Hear Him, But Didn't Like What He Had To Say! (Vs 59-66)

Not everybody received Jesus and His Word well!

We've already talked about the Jewish Leaders that were all the time giving the Lord grief over what He had to say!

How about the rich young ruler who when Jesus answered his question truthfully he went away sorrowfully?

How about the folks here in *verse 66*?

We have folks sometime that will come for a visit to our Church and they don't like the Word of God that they hear and they walk out the door and we may never see them again!
(It is happening more and more in these politically correct times we live in.)

Others may visit for a while and then they hear something they don't like and boom they are out of here like a firecracker!
(Again, it's happening more and more!)

I have preached messages from God's Word before and had someone come up afterward and tell me how much they were blessed by the message.

GOSPEL OF JOHN
REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS
JOHN 6:2; 14-30; 64-71

And I've had someone else come up right after them and give me grief over the same exact sermon!

Not everybody who follows Jesus wants to hear His Word!

I can't help but think about our own culture here in the United States. We have large percentages of Americans that call themselves "*Christians*," but how many have genuinely been born again? Calling yourself a "*Christian*" certainly doesn't make you one!

According to a Gallup poll taken eight years ago in 2012, there were 77 percent of Americans at that time that identified with a "*Christian*" religion of some sort. But listen, identifying with a "*Christian*" religion doesn't make you a true *Christian*!

Even attending an Independent, Fundamental, Bible Believing Church doesn't make one a *Christian*!

But one thing is for sure, **Christ knows the hearts of those who follow Him for whatever reason it may be. (Vs 64)**

Conclusion

In closing, we've looked at these four REASONS PEOPLE FOLLOW JESUS.

Are you following Jesus? Why are you following Jesus?

I hope that it is because you truly want to hear His Word and obey Him!

Listen, the LORD wants us to follow Him! He wants us to hear His Gospel and believe on Him and trust Him for our salvation! And then He wants us to continue to follow Him that we might obey Him and serve Him!

Are you Saved? If not, come today and let us share how you can be saved and know that you have home in Heaven!

And if you are saved...are you following Jesus closely or at a distance?
Oh my friend, Jesus saved us for His purposes! Are you fulfilling Jesus' purposes for your life? I pray that you are! And if not, that you'll change that this very day and draw near to Him and follow Him closely!