

Movies at Church? {continued from 335102}

by Wayne Goff

.... *Prophet who is to come into the world*" (v. 14). They were referring to the prophecy given to Moses in Deuteronomy 18.

This carnal-minded crowd tried to force Jesus to become their earthly king (v. 15)! But Jesus disappeared from their midst and went up into a mountain. His disciples took a boat across the Sea of Galilee toward Capernaum. The crowds followed. Jesus eventually made His way across the sea by walking on water (vv. 19-21). The next day the multitude caught up with Jesus and He then said to them:

"Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him" (vv. 26-27).

Consequently, a lengthy exchange took place between Jesus and the Jewish followers regarding physical bread versus spiritual food (vv. 28-65). Jesus announced that He was *"the bread of life"* (v. 48) whose flesh would give people eternal life if only they would partake of it (v. 51)! But in order to *"eat"* His flesh, one would have to *"be taught by God"* (v. 45). Jesus even reminded His Jewish audience that the Old Testament prophets had foretold, *"And they shall all be taught by God"* (v. 45). Therefore, those who heard and learned from the Father came to Jesus (v. 46).

Jesus spoke in *figurative language* which confused many in His audience. Much like the parables, one would have to study further, investigate, learn the meaning of Jesus' words, in order to come to Him. The scoffers and negligent would not put in that much effort, and would be lost as a result.

Sadly, this materialistic crowd was there for the *"loaves and fish"* not for spiritual lessons! ***"From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more"*** (v. 66). **WHY?** Jesus didn't give them what they **wanted** — *physical* food, a *physical* kingdom, and a *physical* king! When Jesus offered them **spiritual** food, a **spiritual** kingdom, and a **spiritual** king — they politely declined and disappeared. Nothing has changed in the succeeding centuries! Men prefer the material and carnal over the spiritual and eternal! So offering people today a *"carnival"* of food, fun, and festivities is not going to develop in them a spiritual appetite about loving God and man!

In my lifetime, some churches of Christ have offered every material enticement they could think of to draw people to Jesus, the Gospel, and His church — hot dogs & coke; potluck dinners; mother's day out daycare; gymnasiums and ball teams; busses to bring the children to church; hot air balloons and carnivals, *literally!* All of this has failed to accomplish the long-term results. This should be no surprise.

Jesus said, ***"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life"*** (v. 63). People are going to have to learn to nurture their faith and develop a great heart of belief and obedience if they hope to be true disciples of Jesus. *"Christmas at the Movies"* isn't going to cut it.

When I am confronted by sincere believers with this *"method"*(?) of evangelism, I always point them to John 6 and Jesus' words. It's a chilling revelation that makes some of them stop and think.

Dear friend, be sure that you understand **the power** that draws men and women, young and old, to Jesus Christ — it is the message called ***"the Gospel"*** (**The Good News**)! It is the *power* of God unto salvation and it alone accomplishes that purpose, Romans 1:16-17. I do appreciate the sincere desire to save souls, but we can save ourselves a lot of time, effort and expense if we will study Jesus' Word first! John 6 is in the Bible for a reason!

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